

IPM for Audubon

Cost Effective and Smart

ROB KLOSKA, GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT
THE CHAMPIONS CLUB AT SUMMERFIELD

Most golf course superintendents have some kind of integrated pest management program at work on their course, even if it isn't a specific written program. It could be their aerification program, their vertical mowing program, or their method and frequency of pesticide application.

One of the requirements to earning Signature status in the Audubon Society of New York State's Cooperative Sanctuary Program is the creation of an integrated pest management program. Our program here at Summerfield, as anywhere else, is a function of our budget. Therefore, we stress the "basics" in our program, and we practice "tolerance" when it comes to certain pests. We try to let particular problems run their course so to speak, while staying on top of others to prevent them from becoming "budget killers." Because we don't treat any area on the course on a preventive basis, we must be extremely attentive to day-to-day changes on the course.

With an annual operating budget well below the average used by private facilities in the area, the centerpiece of our program is our basic cultural practices. Aerification of greens, tees and fairways, and vertical mowing of greens and tees are the cornerstones of our cultural practices. Our greens are topdressed one or two times per week, year round. The use of slow release fertilizers is also important. The computer irrigation system, in combination with all of these programs, has allowed us to gain maximum root growth and turf density.

Our herbicide program is where we practice the most tolerance. Greens are obviously a priority, however problems in the

fairways and roughs are left to run their course unless catastrophic. When we do spray, we try to use chemicals with the least residual values. This year, we will use a nematode product to control mole crickets.

Fungicides are only used during overseeding establishment. Our choice of fungicides is one that has contact and systemic control.

Because of these programs, our chemical budget was well below \$20,000 last year. We are expecting an increase this year due to the 100 inches of rain that fell on our site in 1994. Our turf vigor has suffered drastically in the early months of 1995 and the cool temperatures have hampered our recovery efforts.

Our equipment maintenance program is another key part of our IPM program. The reels of the greens mowers are ground once per week and the tee mowers every other week. This insures the best possible mowing results and at the same time helps minimize the amount of mechanical stress exerted on the turf. Back lapping has been completely eliminated.

In 1995, we are hoping the introduction of growth regulator treatments on our tees and fairways will further help our IPM program. The objective here is to minimize mowing requirements and thatch while not compromising turf quality.

IPM programs are as different as the courses they are used on, but their goals and effects on the environment are the same. Our program has served us well and will undoubtedly be refined throughout this year. For this Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Golf Course, our IPM program is truly cost effective and smart.

Editor's Note: *The Champions Club at Summerfield is the first "public" golf course designated a Signature Audubon Sanctuary.*

ACSP Certification Tips

When applying for certification through the ACSP for your IPM category, you are asked to obtain a signed statement from the Green Committee showing the course management's commitment to IPM and proper turf management. This statement of support will help you gain the backing of the Green Committee.

Here are some examples of IPM Statements:

The Jiminy Cricket Golf Course is committed to the management of the golf course through the use of integrated

pest management (IPM) techniques. It is our intent to continually upgrade this management approach with new information, equipment, or materials which will reduce the need for pesticides.

Pesticide use has been, and remains, a last resort decision due to membership concern, environmental unknowns, and economical reasons.

Mr. Tom Bird, President
Mr. Jon Cage, General Manager
Mr. Joe Bone,
Golf Course Superintendent



The Blue Bird Country Club is committed to the principles of integrated pest management. Current practices and future plans are compatible with the concept of maintaining adequate playing surfaces while keeping our use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides to a minimum. We will continue to educate ourselves in IPM methods and apply management strategies that promote a high degree of environmental quality on our golf course.

Mr. Jim Dandy
Green Committee Chairman