Toro OKs wetting agents in HydroJect

By HAL PHILLIPS

Good news for all those maintenance crew members who've been using wetting agents in their Hydrojects on the sly: The heat's off.

The Toro Company has approved the use of wetting agents in the Toro Hydroject 3000 water injection aerator. The approval is limited to liquid, soil-wetting agents that can be applied directly through the machine.

Officials at Toro have long been aware that superintendents across the country have been running dispersants through the Hydroject. However, "They won't admit to it because they'd void their warranty," said Ben Street, market manager for Toro's Commercial Products Division.

In fact, Hydroject owners have raised the issue with Toro since the technology was introduced in 1990.

"They've been wanting to do it almost from the beginning, but we've never approved it," Street continued. "We've always had concerns about what we could run through the Hydroject without damaging the machine."

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OVERSEEDING: NOT MUCH FUN, BUT NECESSARY

By ANN SCHREIFELS and DR. DOUGLAS HOUSEWORTH

Overseeding turf is like taking medicine you wouldn't take — if it weren't good for you. In the case of golf courses in the South, overseeding definitely is good for the grass.

The process requires extra work, but it pays off fast. Managing the transition from summer to winter turf, however, requires preparation well in advance of the planting date.

Peer and disease pressure both play big roles as golf course superintendents determine whether to overseed. Peer pressure boils down to one question: What is the competition doing? Once one course in an area begins overseeding, others most often follow suit.

From a marketing standpoint, year-round, wall-to-wall green is a big attraction. The course that isn't green is perceived to be "worse than its competitors," Dr. Gerald Pepin, director of research at Pikeseed West, said the trend has grown rapidly in recent years.

"Overseeding began many years ago in the Midwest and 10 years ago on greens and tees in California," he said.

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NTEP bentgrass results are in; more specific testing in offing

By MARK LESLIE

National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) officials plan to more closely study weed tolerance, close mowing and aggressiveness in a new battery of tests on bentgrasses.

The publishing second-year data from the NTEP's first bentgrass plots ever, National Turfgrass Federation National Director Kevin N. Morris said more specific studies are needed. "These tests are a starting place," Morris said. "We have been able to show there are a lot of good varieties available besides the standards. We've also been able to get good disease data."

"But bentgrass is very specific to golf course use. We have to do more in-depth work on wear tolerance and other factors that are what superintendents encounter in the real world. For instance, aggressiveness. Competition with poa annua is important. And more intense maintenance would be important to superintendents."

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Table: Modified Soil Results

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Table: Native Soil Results

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IMPROVEMENTS in the testing system will be evident in a new group of bentgrasses that will be planted in the fall of 1993. Results will be published in 1995.

Striving to address the variance in how different sites are maintained and gain more complete data, the NTEP this year will start paying cooperators in the tests as they submit information.

"Basically, that will give us more freedom and flexibility to get better tests in place and pay people to do a better job," Morris said. "We will be able to do some of these tests like wear tolerance that take more time, resources and power."

He explained that bentgrass tests require cooperators to more intensively mow, water and treat the grass with pesticides. "In many cases you have to have an area set up particularly to do that — graded, irrigated and with the right soil. It is more expensive to set up an area initially, so not
Bentgrass
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as many places do it and do it well."
Funding will come from fees charged to enter grass varieties in the tests. Those fees are now being used to finance 23 grants started in 1990 and 1991.
Morris said: "We've raised our entry fees. We'll continue to fund the grants we have. Whether we fund more past them, I don't know."

Modified soil test sites
CA1: Santa Clara, Calif, sand, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
GA1: Griffin, Ga, sand, 4.6-5.5, 4.1-5.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
KS1: Manhattan, Kan, sandy loam and silt, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
KY1: Lexington, Ky, silt loam and silt, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
MA1: Deerfield, Mass, sand, 5.6-6.0, 5.1-6.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
Mil: East Lansing, Mich, N/A, 7.6-8.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
MS 1: Mississippi State, sand, 6.1-6.5, 7.1-8.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent dormancy.
TX1: Dallas, Tex, loamy sand, 6.1-6.5, 7.1-8.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
WA3: Puyallup, Wash, sand, 5.6-6.0, 5.1-6.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.

Native soil test sites
AL1: Auburn University, sandy loam, 6.6-6.5, 2.1-3.0, N/A, N/A.
CA1: Santa Clara, Calif, loam, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
IA1: Ames, Iowa, sandy clay loam, 7.1-7.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
IL1: Carbondale, Ill, loam and clay, 6.1-6.5, 5.1-6.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent dormancy.
IL2: Urbana, Ill, loam and silt, N/A, 2.1-3.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
NJ1: North Brunswick, N.J., loam, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
NJ3: Martinsville, N.J, N/A, N/A, N/A, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
ON1: Guelph, Ontario, loamy sand, 6.6-7.0, 1.1-2.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
OR3: Halsey, Ore, loam and silt, 4.6-5.5, 5.1-6.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
RI1: Kingston, R.I, silt loam and silt, 6.6-7.0, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
WA1: Pullman, Wash, loam and silt, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
WA2: Spokane, Wash, loam, 5.6-6.0, 2.1-3.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.

Fairway/Tee test sites
CA1: Santa Clara, Calif, loam, 6.1-6.5, 3.1-4.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
IL1: Urbana, Ill, loam and silt, 7.1-7.5, 2.1-3.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.
IN1: W. Lafayette, Ind, silt loam and silt, 7.1-7.5, 1.1-2.0, 0.0-0.5, to prevent stress.

Word is spreading almost as fast as our bentgrasses.

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Andy Adler, Golf Course Superintendent
Seasons Ridge Golf Course, Eldon, Missouri

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Ian Grimshaw, Golf Course Superintendent
Coolangatta Tweed Heads Golf Course
Queensland, Australia

David A. Hein, Golf Course Superintendent
"The Experience at Koele"
Lanai City, Hawaii