New England Turf Show presents solutions

Take-all patch may have met its match, says Rutgers professor

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — After three years of research, Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers University has developed a new approach managing take-all patch that introduces new management practices, and recommends properly timed and rotated cultural practices.

Since identifying *gaumannomyces graminis* in the Pacific Northwest in the late 1970s, superintendents on bentgrass golf courses have struggled to control what they commonly call take-all patch. The perennial root disease, which is identified by large doughnut-shaped patches of damaged turf, is especially difficult to combat because by the time symptoms are evident, the disease has been present for six to eight weeks.

Knowing that, however, is one of the keys to controlling take-all patch. This year’s Turf Expo will be held Jan. 18-20 in Indianapolis. For more information, contact Rich Hamilton at Penn State at 814-865-3007.

Baker’s Dozen: Young crew keeps The Links atop pack

By TERRY BUCHEN

WILLISTON (RAY), N.D. — Nicole Baker once rode her horse on this land, enjoyed picnics here, grew up. Today she may be the youngest golf course superintendent in the country, charged with maintaining the standards of a golf course named No. 2 Best New Affordable Course in the country when it opened in 1996, and striving to establish her place in a man-dominated profession.

"Some people were skeptical that a 21-year-old woman superintendent with a 19-year-old assistant could do the job," Baker said. "But with our previous experience and what my assistant, Cory Anderson, calls a 'young course with young minds,' we have prevailed with good success."

Indeed, The Links retains its ranking as No. 1 in North Dakota, and, in 1998, was given a 4-1/2 by *Golf Digest* in its listing of Places To Play.

"There was pressure from Day One to keep the course's ranking up as we were rated No. 2 Best New Affordable Course in the country in 1996 by *Golf Digest*," Baker said. "How does a young leadership continue such high standards?"

Finish the season with an Intern Olympics

By KEVIN ROSS

EDWARDS, Colo. — Many golf course operations have developed strong internship programs through various turf universities throughout the United States and abroad. We host four interns per season at Country Club of the Rockies. The interns become a valuable part of our management team. Our club benefits greatly from their dedication and willingness to learn.

At the end of their internship — usually late-August — we have a final staff barbecue. During this barbecue, we have a workplace safety program he feels every golf course could use.

"You must have the mindset that every single accident could have been prevented and that you as the superintendent have the opportunity to prevent them," Horton told an audience at the New England Turfgrass Conference and Show here.

His latest program, STOP for Safety, emphasizes observation skills on the part of superintendents and works to improve communication between superintendents and their employees.

"This program ensures that the entire workforce will be..."
OB Sports forms agronomy consulting division

OB Sports has formed a new consulting division under the direction of agronomist Tom Christy, director of golf course maintenance for the company.

OB Sports, headquartered in Kirkland, owns eight courses and manages facilities in Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Texas. As part of the new service, Christy will visit each property on a regular basis and will establish a customized golf course maintenance program. If necessary, he identifies and hires a first-class golf course superintendent to implement the program. Weekly updates and periodic visits to the property ensure that quality turf conditions and cultural practices are established.

Christy, who joined OB Sports in 1998, previously worked as a superintendent at courses in California, Washington and Oregon. He is the recipient of the Golf Course Superintendents Association Environmental Stewardship Award and was the Oregon Golf Course Superintendent’s Superintendents of the Year in 1995. He is a two-time president of the North West Turfgrass Association, a charitable trust that raises money for turfgrass research.

Ironwood Country Club in Palm Desert, Cali. and The Reserve, a 36-hole facility near Portland, Oregon, are among the first two clients to sign maintenance contracts. In addition, the courses already on the OB Sports Trail will continue to receive the benefit of Christy’s expertise.

Members of golf courses under contract with OB Sports also enjoy the privilege of membership in the OB Sports Trail, which allows preferred starting times and discounted fees at all OB Sports-managed facilities.

Take-all patch

Continued from page 13

patch, according to Clarke, who shared his findings at the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show here.

Under Clarke’s regime, the first step is evaluating the health of the affected soil. “The symptoms occur when the soil has a high pH between 6.5-8.0,” he said.

Therefore, in order to control the disease, you must first control the pH of the soil, said Clarke. Over three years, Clarke found best results when using acidifying fertilizers. The optimum pH, he said, is around 6.0.

This approach works even better in combination with a sub-surface application of magnesium sulfate, according to Clarke. In the study, magnesium was applied in April-May at a rate of 1-2 tenths of a pound and then repeated every six weeks. This was found to be extremely effective in reducing disease and strengthening turf.

“Reducing the pH and adding magnesium goes hand in hand with combating take-all patch,” said Clarke. “It enhances the plant’s natural defenses against the disease and the magnesium is toxic to the fungus.”

Compaction must also be controlled since shallow rooting and stressed turf leave the plant wide open to the disease. Therefore, Clarke recommended that the turf be aerated in the spring and fall, but emphasized that it should not be done when symptoms are evident on the turf.

As the aerifying method suggests, timing is key in controlling take-all patch. According to Clarke, the best time to attack the disease is from October to November — before the disease goes into dormancy but after the symptoms have shown themselves — and in the spring before the disease begins to take hold again.

“You can affect potential infections that may develop in the winter or early spring by doing two fall applications and one spring application,” said Clarke.

In tandem, these approaches have proven to reduce the impact of take-all patch. Clarke expects that new fungicides using strobilurin chemistry and new turf injection equipment will increase the superintendent’s ability to fight take-all patch.
Safety saves
Continued from page 13

taking positive steps toward ensuring workplace safety,” said Horton. While he has shaped the program specifically for his Pebble Beach, which has 1,700 employees, five golf courses, 5,300 acres and two major resorts, Horton maintains that the practices can be used by courses of any size. Built around what Horton calls the Safety Observation Cycle, “the program helps to change behavior in regards to safety as well as helping your observation and communication skills to take positive steps to ensure safety,” he said.

The program has five steps. The first involves deciding to stop and take a look at what an individual worker is doing. The second is stopping to observe the individual and to see if they change their unsafe behavior. The next step is to act, to talk to the individual about what it is they are doing that is a potential safety risk. The fourth element focuses on positive reinforcement. “When you recognize safe behavior,” said Horton, “you are sending a signal that safety is important.”

The fifth step involves report cards which are used to consistently discuss workplace safety and what can be done to ensure that workers are acting safely. Ultimately, Horton has found that the program improves communication between the superintendent and his workers and motivates workers to behave in a safe manner. The program, however, must be followed rigorously if it is to be effective.

“If you walk by someone who is being unsafe and you don’t correct them, then the standard has been set that other employees are going to emulate and adhere to,” Horton said.

Further, safety must be given the same importance as job efficiency and cost, a lesson Horton learned the hard way.

While hurriedly completing course preparations for a tournament, one of his workers drove a utility vehicle through a roped-off area in order to save time. The cord got caught on the cart and ripped out a stake that went flying into the man’s face damaging one eye and his dental work.

Horton admitted that accidents do happen, but said he has found that the STOP program, when properly followed, is a success.

“Clearly, it has shown that injuries and incidents are reduced 50 to 60 percent, and when you multiply that into workers compensation, the cost of injuries and lost work time, we are talking about significant savings,” Horton said. “Additionally, safety awareness increases, communication skills improve, as do supervisor and management skills.”

We’d like to show you the weeds PENDULUM® controls. But they never showed up.

The reason they never showed up? Because PENDULUM® herbicide is a highly effective preemergent turf herbicide. Compared to the competition, PENDULUM demonstrates a higher level of control across a broader spectrum of weed species. With PENDULUM, weeds won’t ever see the light of day. For the PENDULUM herbicide distributor nearest you, call: 1-800-545-9525, Ext. 1676.

PENDULUM offers unsurpassed weed control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Crabgrass</th>
<th>Goosegrass</th>
<th>Foxtail</th>
<th>Poa Annuum</th>
<th>Oxalis</th>
<th>Spurge</th>
<th>Henbit</th>
<th>Chickweed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PENDULUM</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barricade*</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension*</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team*</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronstar*</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surflan*</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td>NR NR NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of control: • Medium • Medium-High • High NR Not registered

© Registered Trademark, American Cyanamid Company © 1998 Always read and follow label directions.