



AT POMPANO BEACH

Heavy play dictates regular preventive maintenance

Dick Slivinski can't allow his turf to get in poor condition.

"With the amount of traffic we get here each day, our turf could be beaten down overnight if it was allowed to get in bad shape," he says.

Slivinski is director of golf course operations for the city of Pompano Beach, Fla. With the help of two foremen, an assistant superintendent, and 21 hired men, he manages two 18-hole courses.

The municipal courses are open to the public, but do accept memberships. Currently there are 1,950 members, 80 percent of whom are retired people who play frequently.

There is heavy play every day of the year on the Pompano Beach

courses. Slivinski estimates the average at 450 to 500 people daily, with the amount of play increasing to the maximum capacity of 650 to 700 during the winter months.

Two-week schedule

That is why Slivinski fights turf insects and disease problems before they happen. He sets up a fertilizer and spray routine and seldom varies from the schedule.

Slivinski sprays his Bermuda greens every two weeks without fail. He sets aside Mondays and Tuesdays for the fungicide and insecticide applications, rotating on a regular basis so that he hits every green on the two courses at a 2-week interval.

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Helminthosporium and dollar spot are Slivinski's major disease threats. He uses Acti-dione Thiram as the effective mainstay in his fungicide program.

He also combines the fungicide with his insecticide in a tank mix for time and labor efficiency. Proxol 80 SP is the insecticide used. It controls grubs in the summer when they are a problem and keeps sod webworms in check year-round, says Slivinski.

"By spraying every two weeks, I don't give webworms a chance to get

established," he adds.

For a brief period, Slivinski tried limiting his spray intervals to once every 3 weeks. "But the grass just outgrew the control," he says.

Frequent fertilization

As is the case with many Florida courses, soil at the Pompano Beach courses has a high percentage of sand — limiting the amount of fertilizer that can be retained.

"This soil is about 95 percent white sugar sand," says Slivinski, "that has little holding capacity. The drainage is too good." So he has to follow a regularly-scheduled fertilizer regimen, too.

Once monthly Slivinski's crew puts down a total of 1½ pounds of nitrogen fertilizer per 1,000 square feet of fairway. During the winter months from November through April, he applies 30-0-0 with trace elements in the form of a liquid. Included in the winter spray is the Actidione and Proxol tank mix. In the summer, he'll combine chelated iron with the fungicide-insecticide sprays.

Sprayer management important

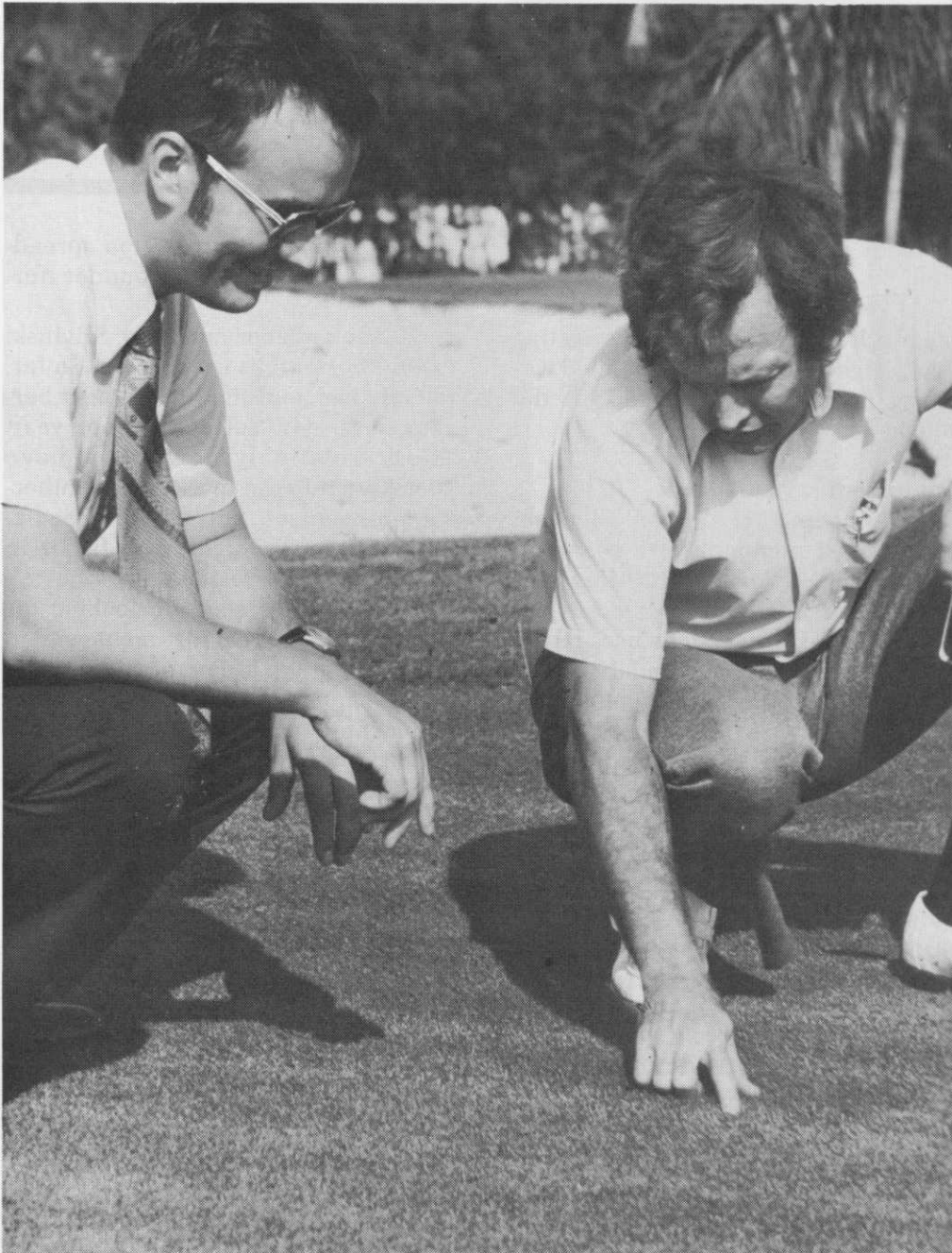
Slivinski does the entire job with one 110-gallon spray rig that he keeps in top condition.

"We change the nozzles and line strainers every three months," he says. "If we neglect sprayer maintenance, pretty soon we're getting inexact chemical coverage and having problems."

During the summer months, Slivinski initiates his major fairway weed control effort. He sprays MSMA and 2,4D for crowfoot and broadleaf control; and in November, Kerb for poa annua. He also uses a nematode injection once a year.

With insects, diseases, weeds, and nematodes under control, Slivinski has improved the root quality of his turf considerably. When he took the job as superintendent in 1973, the root system was only about 1½ inches deep. Now the root system has lengthened to 4 to 5 inches, increasing the moisture retention qualities of his turf.

"I used to have to water ½ inch every night," says the superintendent, "but now I've been able to cut



Dick Slivinski (left), director of golf operations for the city of Pompano Beach, works closely with TUCO representative Bill Maxwell on methods of turf disease and insect control.

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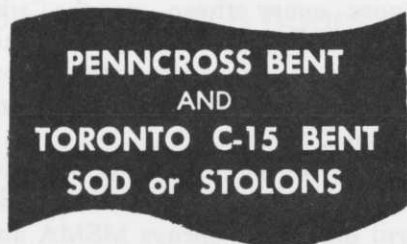


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"Slivinski fights turf insects and disease problems before they happen. He sets up a fertilizer and spray routine and seldom varies from the schedule."

back to an every-other-night irrigation.

"I've been able to channel the money I used to spend on irrigating every night back into an expanded watering program where I can hit the roughs once in a while."

Equipment saves labor

Before moving to Florida, Slivinski was a superintendent for a course in Buffalo, New York. A certified golf course superintendent with more than 12 years of experience, he uses labor-saving equipment that is adaptable to his hybrid Bermuda management program. His crew covers three times the ground by using a 21-foot spiker instead of a 6-foot spiker, and they

spread fertilizer with a 5-ton spreader rather than a 1,000-pounder formerly used.

By saving labor and time, Slivinski is able to keep his costs down. So far, the city has held the line on membership dues, now set at \$135 per year. These relatively low dues have contributed to the increased membership at Pompano. City fathers also believe that it is a significant factor in bringing in new residents.

Slivinski will soon be looking for additional labor-saving management ideas to employ at Pompano. The city is contemplating annexing a suburb, and he anticipates that increased golfer traffic will put additional stress on his well-used turf. □

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