

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER

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Superintendents Watch Daconil Suit Outcome

Golf course superintendents in the Mid-Atlantic and other regions will be watching carefully the outcome of a multimillion dollar suit that has been brought against the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington, Virginia, and Diamond Shamrock Chemical Corporation, Inc., of Dallas, Texas, by the widow of a young U.S. Navy officer whose death last year apparently resulted from a massive allergic reaction that has been attributed by a pathologist and a lawyer to contact with the widely used fungicide Daconil. No one at Army Navy or at the chemical company is commenting on the suit, but the U.S. Government's Environmental Protection Agency has for some years approved the use of the chemical for agricultural, industrial, and backyard use. Despite its very widespread use in all parts of the country, no known deaths have ever been previously attributed to Daconil, whose generic name is chlorothalonil.

SCHEDULE OF 1983 MEETINGS

July 12 — Mount Pleasant
August 9 — Annual Picnic
September 13 — Bonnie View Country Club
October 11 — Ocean City Yacht & Country Club
November 8 — Leisure World
December 13 — Belle Haven Country Club

Need Summer Color? Try Dwarf Roses

by Paul Barefoot

After the azaleas, dogwoods, and mountain laurel are finished blooming, the availability of summer color other than annuals is very limited — usually to Crepe Myrtle and Abelia. Over the past several years I have been planting dwarf roses, massed in beds, to provide color spots from June through October. In many cases they have served as replacements for azalea beds in full sun situations due to the azaleas' propensity for lace bugs in full sun.

The dwarf roses in the floribunda family are available in various shades of red, orange, and yellow. The names of the varieties always end in "Talk" — as Plain Talk, Town Talk, Happy Talk, Pillow Talk, and several others I can't remember.

These dwarf roses are very resistant to the common fungus and insect ailments of regular roses. Occasional spraying of many of the same materials used on the greens — 1991, dursban, etc., will usually prevent any serious ailments from developing. They require feeding about once a month during the growing season with a low-analysis fertilizer — 7-7-7 or equivalent.

Most weeds can be controlled in these beds by applying Ronstar and mulching. Roundup applied with a wick applicator does a good job on the bermuda grass, and if you don't have time to pull the nutsedge, it will respond to Basogran.

These roses thrive in a fairly heavy soil with plenty of Compro or sludge-type material mixed in, and in most cases addition of lime or calcium is not necessary due to the nature of the sludge. Deficiencies of the minor elements can be corrected by use of commercial rose food.

Beware of Embark on Your Poa Annua

by Mike Heacock, CGCS, Lakeside Golf Club

As they say, experience is the best teacher. I'm going to share some of my recent experience with you, in the hope that you can avoid the problems we're going through at Lakeside right now.

If you look at the label of 3M's "Embark" growth retardant, you'll see that it's labelled for Kentucky bluegrass and *Poa annua* (annual bluegrass) at between one and two pints per acre in 15 to 150 gallons of water per acre. At that rate it is supposed to act as a growth retardant on those species.

While it may work that way on Kentucky blue, at 1½ pints per acre in 100 gallons of water per acre on *Poa annua* it acted for us as a very effective herbicide. Right now I've got 20 acres of dead *Poa annua* which used to comprise the grass in my front nine fairways. Needless to say, we're seeding bermuda as fast as we can, but the members are a little bit less than thrilled at the sudden change in the lie on those fairways, to say nothing of the sudden deterioration in their appearance.

I called Mike Horniak of 3M, who has been repping "Embark" in this area, and he explained that their research shows that the reaction we got is the correct one, and that that will be noted on the "new label." Unfortunately, I didn't have a new label available to me, and you don't either at this time. It's not out yet. But when it comes out, it will warn you not to use "Embark" on *Poa annua* at rates greater than one-half pint per acre if the *Poa* is the desirable turf. So now we know.

It might also interest you to know that in the agricultural crops, mefluidide ("Embark") is marketed as "Vistar" and labelled as a grass herbicide in soybeans. As with all of our so-called "selective" herbicides, the range of selectivity is extremely narrow, and if you use just a little too much, or conditions are not right, you'll find the "selectivity" will amount to not much more than sparing the trees — all the grasses will be smoked.

I'm not blameless in this — I should have used it on a small area first to check response, though I have used it before and not gotten or not noticed this response. That was in rough, however, and as we are aware, shorter grass behaves differently. I just wish 3M had been a bit more aggressive in getting the word out about the extremely herbicidal properties of "Embark" on *Poa*.

(Reprinted from "Divot News" of the Southern California Chapter, GCSA.)