Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER

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More Word From Dr. Doug Hawes

In his latest newsletter, "Turfcomms," Dr. Douglas Hawes comments from Texas that the plant growth regulators (PGRs) Cutless and Embark appear to be able to assist in giving bentgrass the upper hand over poa annua. Some superintendents have already used 6 to 8 ounces of Embark per acre, on greens. While he does not recommend it for putting green use, he states that if some can use it safely on greens, then using it on fairways at those rates should be safe enough. Do not respray the same spring, he adds. Cutless shows as much if not more promise than Embark for bentgrass fairways.

Developing a Use for the Stimpmeter, or, Just Something to Think About

by Dick Gieselman

Have we bypassed the perfect turfgrass or are we barking up the wrong tree? Why are the USGA and GCSAA funding research to find the perfect turfgrass? In any other field there is a certain scientific method to solving problems. One of the key ingredients to problem solving is to investigate all possible solutions to a problem. Before we even got used to the advantages of seeded bentgrass varieties and their year-round successful management, the race was on to see what we, as country clubs, could do to (enhance?) playing conditions. There have been questionable reports that one green received tip burn from the speed at which a golf ball traveled across its putting surface. Greens have become so fast and slick that it has been reported that one superintendent has a green so speedy that he is considering entering it in the Spring Nationals at a drag strip in Southern California. The Green Committee would naturally serve as pit crew, but there is a question as to whether the Green Committee chairman or Golf Course Superintendent would be in the driver's seat. The logistics of moving the green to California still have to be worked out, but keep your eyes open, ladies and gentlemen, it may still happen. Just think, in 1992 wouldn't it be great to have the Golf Digest Annual Bentgrass Drags, instead of the GCSAA national conference? Naturally, all of the competition would be sanctioned by the USGA and GCSAA.

It may sound crazy, but I'm sure anything is possible once we find the perfect turfgrass. When a person or group spends or wastes enough money, he can usually find or develop anything he wants. Why once we spend two billion dollars, we might have totally friction-free putting, so that even club members with arthritis might putt the golf ball with relative ease, plus with less frequent use of Preparation H (or is that Ben Gay?).

But wait a minute, what did I say? I believe I mentioned the word or phrase, whichever way you English majors prefer it, I did mention golf balls. Why would I mention golf balls in an article on the stimpmeter? Because ladies and gentlemen, I think we are barking up the wrong tree when we blame beautiful greens for the speed of the golf ball. Bentgrass greens aren't slow or that costly to maintain, but golf balls are slow. Companies have put dimples on and taken dimples off, put hexagonal dimples on, changed the colors, but golf balls are still slow!

The fact is that a lot of research has been done on compression and flight characteristics but to my knowledge very little has been done on the speed at which a golf ball rolls on a putting surface. I have put three golf balls on a stimpmeter and rolled them off, and you know what, they all rolled different distances. So now we have really found what the stimpmeter does, and that is measure roll (speed) of a golf ball and not a golf green. Why not develop golf balls with their stimpmeter readings printed on the side? That way a member who preferred fast greens could buy a ball with a stimpmeter reading of 10 feet 6 inches, and another golfer who preferred a

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Employment Referral

Walter Montross has been designated as the official contact for the national employment referral service of the GCSAA. Anyone interested in obtaining employment information through this service should call Walter at 703-451-6619.

MAACGS secretary and Chevy Chase Club superintendent George Renault, left, looks on as the Washington Metropolitan Golf Association's course rating team discusses his third hole during a March rating session. Others in the photo include CCC member Hap Halliday, Ed Dosek, Don Olmstead, MAAGCS editor Corrigan, Bob Gillham, Art Hagar, and Chevy Chase golf professional Ward Burgess.