USGA/NCGA Green Section Conference

by Rich Lavine

The annual USGA/NCGA Green Section Regional Conference was held on March 16th at Castlewood CC. Those in attendance heard great presentations by USGA staff members Larry Adamson, Tim Moraghan, and Nancy Sadlon. Their topics included Tournament Administration (get those entries in on time, folks.), US Open Preparation, and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and the role it can play in a sound maintenance program. Dr. Don White from the Univ. of Minnesota separated the facts from fiction of Poa annua maintenance and/ or control, while Dr. Robert Green from UCR gave a very interesting talk on his research of spraying gasohol (you read it right, *gasohol*) on bentgrass turf to promote increased growth. Lectures on Green Speed by Paul Vermeulen, The Shrinking Golf Course by Larry Gilhuly, and Turf Tips by Pat rounded out the program.

As usual, this was a great event; one that should be attended by all. If you couldn't be there this year, don't miss it next year.

FYI

Continued from page 2 application forms and handicap information to each meeting. The handicap cards are hormally out on a table for you to pick up and paste to the back of your card. If you have questions, by all means, ask! You won't learn unless you ask!

영 It's 영 Spring!

Now That's a Maintenance Headache!

Floyd S. Rood tackled the biggest course on record when he played the entire United States, coast to coast, in 1963 and 1964. He teed off in the Pacific surf and finished at the Atlantic shore more than a year later. No one knows what par was, but Rood took 114,737 strokes to cover nearly 3,400 miles.

Tips from the USGA Be Gentle When Waking A Sleeping Giant

by Paul Vermeulen, USGA Agronomist

With the arrival of Spring and the accompanying warm temperatures, bermudagrass fairways across the entire southwestern region will soon awaken. For most golfers, this is a welcome event. Through their eyes, green, actively growing turf not only looks better, it plays better, too. Actually, it only looks better. If you analyze the handicaps of most golfers, the numbers do not change very much between March and April.

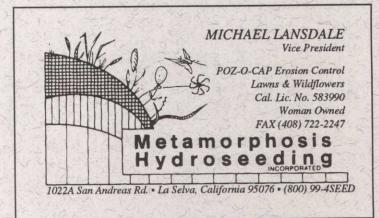
Ah, what the heck, if believing that the condition of the course is better because the grass simply turned green makes golfers happy, why not accept the compliment. Maybe in some small way these compliments help balance the scales of justice. After all, how many negative comments about the condition of the course have most superintendents had to endure from avid golfers. Especially the ridiculous comment such as, "I want the greens 'hard-soft', so I can hold a 3-wood without making a ballmark."

Since not-so-green bermudagrass (that has not been destroyed by uncontrolled cart traffic, of course!) plays as well as green bermudagrass, there really isn't a good reason to turn it green a few days early with excessive applications of soluble nitrogen. Furthermore, such applications should be avoided because of the possibility of aggravating spring root decline.

Spring root decline is the natural loss of roots on warmseason turfgrasses as they are recovering from winter dormancy. This event is cause by the rapid breakdown of carbohydrates stored int he root system for the production of new leaf tissue.

How can nitrogen applications play a role in spring root decline? If you think of a growing bermudagrass plant as *Continued on page 7*





THRU THE GREEN

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WAKING A GIANT

Continued from page 5 a continuous chain of chemical reactions that occur due to environmental stimuli, then it stands to reason that every action also has a reaction.

When nitrogen, in a readily available form, is applied, a mechanism is triggered within bermudagrass plants. This mechanism, or rather transport shuttle, immediately starts absorbing the nitrogen until its concentration drops below a critical level in the soil. Much like a labrador retriever, bermudagrass will try to gorge itself until it can no longer function. Unlike a dog, however, bermudagrass must expend energy, i.e. break down stored carbohydrates, to absorb nitrogen from the soil and incorporate it as complex proteins.

By further reducing carbohydrate reserves with early nitrogen applications, spring root decline can become a catastrophic event, if followed by a late season frost. In other words, if a late season frost damages a significant portion of the new leaf tissue, there may no longer be

CALIFORNIA CLIPS

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State Chapter Bylaws Changed

A review of the state chapter bylaws last year revealed some discrepancies and inconsistencies owing to various changes made over the past several years. To address these inconsistencies, the board approved the hiring of an attorney to review the bylaws for legality and consistency and to make required changes. Mike Duffy, a specialist in Non-profit law from Tustin, CA, who holds both a masters and a Doctorate in law, and is a professor of law, was hired to perform this review.

Some minor changes were necessary. The most significant change included redefinition of membership classifications and dues structure.

Article III, Section 1 now states: The membership of this association shall be limited to those associations which are organized as regional golf course superintendents associations and are within the state of California. This means that the local associations, not each individual chapter member, are members of the state organization. Each chapter appoints two representatives to the Board of Directors who are responsible for representing the desires/wishes/needs of their individual chapter.

This change was made for several reasons:

- 1. to protect the local chapters from any tax liabilities connected to affiliation with the state,
- 2. to guarantee equal representation on the Board of Directors for each local chapter,
- 3. to provide for fair distribution of funding to the state assoc. from among the local chapters

4. to assure that royalty monies we receive from Adams Publishing for use of our name to publish California Fairways are not taxable.

The Bylaws have been rewritten by the attorney. The changes will be presented to the board for approval at the May 14 board meeting and, once refined and approved, a copy will be mailed to each local chapter office. Copies are also available from the state office to anyone who wishes to review them.

enough stored carbohydrates left to make a full recovery.

With the possibility of disaster on the horizon, it would seem best to allow

Mother Nature to take care of her own, and apply only light applications of soluble nitrogen until the possibility of freezing temperatures has

safely passed. As someone much wiser than myself once said, "It's best to be gentle when waking a sleeping giant."

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