Developing a Control Program for English Daisy

by Bob Costa

Those of you located near the coastal regions of Northern California are no doubt aware of the problems associated with the control of English Daisy. It's perennial life cycle, waxy leaf cuticle, woody root system, and adaptability to coastal areas has placed this broadleaf weed at the forefront of many a superintendent's greatest maintenance challenges.

In many instances, populations of English Daisy persist at levels well beyond established thresholds for golf courses and fine turf areas. Chemical applications provide the most effective control, however, when applied improperly the degree of control can vary greatly.

To assure responsible turfgrass maintenance, all pesticide applications must be made with the objective to obtain maximum reduction of the target pest, in the most cost-effective and environmentally sensitive manner. In order to accomplish this goal, careful attention must be paid to chemical selection, timing of application, and application techniques.

Prior to scheduling a chemical application, identify the specific areas where populations of English Daisy exist. Based upon the density of weed infestation and accessibility to spray equipment, determine whether broadcast or spot applications are required. Precise location of English Daisy infestations will assist you later when you evaluate the effectiveness of your spray program.

Proper chemical selection and rate of application are just the first steps in an effective spray program. Of equal importance is to ensure these chemicals are applied at the proper time, and with the most effective application techniques.

Before scheduling your next chemical application for English Daisy, be aware of the following factors which will improve your overall control, and assist you in meeting the objectives of your spray program. Remember, it doesn't cost any more to do it right.

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Tips from the USGA
They're Always *Too* Something

by Paul Vermeulen
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What is always too hard or too soft, too wet or too dry, too dark or too light, and/or too coarse or too fine? If you do not know the answer, then you probably have never played a round of golf. If you have, then you have never landed in a bunker. That, by the way, is the answer -- a bunker. A depression, usually filled with sand, that is defined as a hazard in the Rules of Golf. A place where you are never happy because you know you are going to get punished. And that is what the argument is all about. What is fair punishment?

Should the ball plug if it lands in the face? Some people say it should, others say that plugged lies are unfair. Should you have an opportunity to putt, or must you get the ball airborne? Some people say a bunker would not be a hazard if you have the opportunity to putt, others say being in the sand is hazard enough. Should the surface of the sand have a smooth finish, or should it have deep furrows? Some people say the sand should be perfectly smooth so you have an opportunity to make unobstructed contact with the ball and spin it on the green. Others disagree, saying the bunker should not be a place of opportunity.

Who is the Supreme Judge when it comes to deciding what is fair and equitable punishment? The answer is the Green Committee Chairperson. In the Rules of Golf it says that the Committee, usually meaning Green Committee, decides the condition of the course, e.g., the condition of the bunkers. Stop! Before you run for office and become a tyrant, remember that there are at least some basic guidelines that should be considered. Just because you become Green Chairperson doesn't mean you should use,

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The stress got the better of him and Leon headed back to the farm: well, kind of. Maybe back to nature is a better analogy. He went to work at Saratoga Country Club in 1987 as the mechanic under Brian Bagley. Leon fell in love with the golf industry, so when Brian accepted the position at The Villages three years later, Leon applied for the superintendent position. Now, he hadn't been just sitting around tinkering with trucks for that three years. He had acquired his spray certificate and taken some turf management classes. The management at the course figured he was pretty well qualified. And the rest is history.

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or rather abuse, your power to seek revenge on fellow golfers.

The basic purpose of having bunker maintenance guidelines is that they (1) help avoid controversial ruling decisions, and/or (2) help simplify routine bunker maintenance. For example, one guideline is that the sand particle size distribution should be between 0.25 and 1.0 millimeters. This guideline excludes fine silt and clay particles that would impede drainage. Can you imagine the controversy if someone went to win a major Championship after they were granted relief in a bunker because of standing water? Ouch! This guideline also excludes small stones and/or pebbles in the sand that, if blasted onto the putting surface, would cause damage to delicate mowing equipment.

Another important guideline is that the sand should have a blocky or semi-blocky particle shape, as opposed to a smooth, almost round shape. This guideline encourages the selection of stable sands. From a Rules of Golf perspective, stable sands withstand buried lies, thus preventing the need for golfers to literally dig for a lost ball in a hazard. Stable sands also simplify routine maintenance because they remain in place on the architecturally popular steep bunker faces. This prevents the need to shovel sand back on the faces of bunkers after golfers have walked on them.

Practicality, that is what guidelines are for -- practicality. So far we have learned that desirable bunker sand should (1) drain well, (2) be free of large debris, (3) resist buried lies, and (4) remain in place on bunker faces. Is there more to learn? Not really, the rest is a matter of personal opinion. By nature, bunker sands are too hard, too soft, too wet, too dry, too dark, too light, too coarse, and too fine. It depends on how well, or how poorly, you played your last round. That, folks, is golf; if you do not agree, run for Green Chairperson and make your own rules. Remember, however, the home of a tyrant can be a lonely one!