

Emmy Moore Minister Named First Woman Honorary Member By The NCPGA

The Northern California Section of the Professional Golfers' Association (NCPGA) is pleased to announce that Ms. Emmy Moore Minister has been named as an Honorary Member of the Association. She is the first woman to receive this distinction in the eighty-three year history of the Northern California PGA. An awards ceremony honoring Emmy Moore Minister will take place at the NCPGA Semi-Annual Meeting on Sunday, July 13, 2003 at the El Dorado Hotel Casino in Reno, NV.

Moore Minister, president of the Moore Minister Consulting Group, a Northern California based communications firm, has contributed greatly to the NCPGA, the GCSANC and to the game of golf in general.

"In the past ten years, I don't know of a person who has had a more positive impact on the members and apprentices of the Northern California PGA than Emmy," states NCPGA Executive Director



Scott Humphrey. "Her enthusiasm, genuine concern for others and corresponding influence for the good of the game have gone beyond our association. It is an honor to add her name to the distinguished list of Honorary Members of the NCPGA."

Congratulations Emmy!

Meeting Up with the MEDIA

By Emmy Moore Minister



Often within our profession we have the opportunity to work with local media representatives. For some of us this is an assignment that comes natural...for others, not so natural. Here are a few suggestions you might find helpful as you communicate with your local newspaper writer, Internet editor, radio or television reporter.

First and foremost, make sure your company is open to you speaking directly with media representatives. Some businesses prefer to have a designated spokesperson. Hopefully your company entrusts you with this assignment.

If you get a phone call or an E-mail from the media, please return it promptly. They, like yourself, are often working on deadlines and they will appreciate the fact you are timely.

Being prepared is essential when communicating with the media. If you are asked a question and you do not know the answer, or let's just say you are not 100% sure, let your media rep. know you will get back to him/her soon with the pertinent information, or you can direct them immediately to the person within your organization that can respond to their inquiry.

Take the time to develop a relationship with local writers or radio and television broadcasters. If your facility or business has made an improvement that's newsworthy, why not share the news through a media release followed up with a personal invitation for a site visit. Having "before" and "after" photos of your project can also prove to be helpful.

You are an environmentalist, just by the nature of your profession. Let your media representative see what you do to improve the environment. If your course has earned an environmental award tell the media...it's good news, and it's worth sharing!

When it comes to having candid discussions with media representatives, is there such a thing as being "off the record?" Well maybe, that is, if you have a very close working relationship with your media representative. But as we all know, trust based relationships take time to foster, sometimes several years. Start developing a relationship now with your local media rep, and some day you may be able to safely say, "this is off the record." Until then, remember, it's all on the record!




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Best Management Practices

For Soluble Sulfur Problems On Putting Greens

By David L. Wienecke, Agronomist,
USGA Green Section, Southwest Region

Some golf courses in the southwest have become concerned about sand-based putting greens having possible reactions with soluble sulfur to cause black layer problems. The interest in this potential problem is most acute in arid climates with the associated low precipitation levels being more at risk for salt-related problems, such as black layer, since the natural flushing of excess salts is diminished in lower (i.e. 3-15 inches per year) precipitation climates. As a result, some superintendents have actually decided to stop using their irrigation water sulfur burner treatment systems. This article will explain the physical and chemical topics involved in arid climate putting green management focusing on the management procedures necessary for maintaining effective rootzone gas exchange and water percolation to avoid black layer problems.

Due to space limitations, this article will not cover all the complexities of salt-affected turf management but will focus instead on our current understanding regarding black layer formation and management. The information presented is based on field observations, references cited at the end of the article, and conversations with university researchers.

Black layer overview

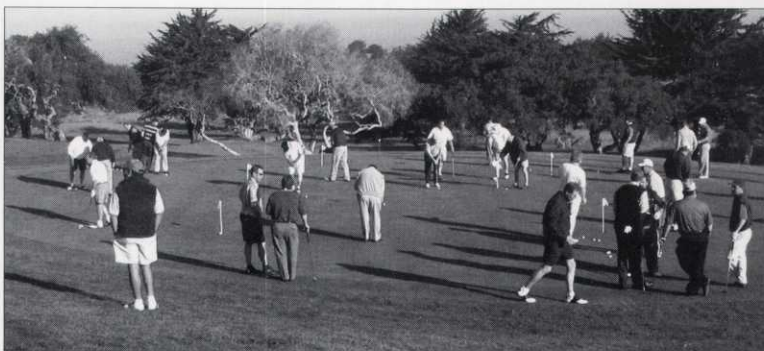
Black layer symptoms result when rootzone soil conditions develop impeded percolation, waterlogged zones of poor drainage, and anaerobic conditions. Black layer symptoms can occur in as few as five to six days after these wet anaerobic conditions occur. Symptoms develop due to cyanobacteria (blue green algae) growth, which produces gel-like substances that coat soil particles and plug soil macropores thereby reducing oxygen levels and water drainage.

The microbial-induced biochemical reactions include conversion of soluble sulfur (i.e. sulfate ion, SO_4^{2-}) to elemental sulfur (S^0) followed by hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), iron sulfide (FeS), and manganese sulfide (MnS) production. The rotten egg smell comes from the H_2S and the black layers seen are due to the microbial produced biofilms of FeS

and MnS . As is evident from these chemical reactions, sulfur is important as a secondary factor contributing to black layer formation.

Factors contributing to waterlogged and anaerobic soil development include:

- **Clay or organic matter colloid migration**
- **Salt deposition layering** ($NaCl$, $CaSO_4$, Na , HCO_3^{2-})
- **Natural layer development** (e.g. thatch)
- **Irrigation induced layering** (e.g. frequent light irrigation)
- **Cultivation pan** (e.g. repeated core aeration at the same depth)



Black layer management practices

Since wet anaerobic conditions are essential to black layer formation, cultural practices that alleviate these conditions are the critical first step in black layer management and prevention. Frequent core aeration especially at multiple coring depths in conjunction with sand topdressing is essential for maintaining rootzone oxygen levels and percolation.

A common problem also seen on putting greens is a zone of water, colloid, and/or salt accumulation usually found at a 3 to 4 inches depth caused by repeated light irrigation (i.e. daily). Cultivation, in conjunction with infrequent irrigation (i.e. 3 days per week supplemented by hand watering of hot spots), will reduce this problem significantly. Wetting agent application to improve infiltration and percolation is also recommended. In arid climates, leaching every three to four weeks during periods of active growth is another successful way to avoid water and

salt-related (i.e. sulfate, sodium, salts, gypsum) layering. Other benefits seen from leaching include improved putting surface firmness and colloid movement below the rootzone. Improved rooting achieved by increased rootzone oxygen content also results in a healthier turf grass plant that has improved stress tolerance.

Sulfur management practices

Sulfur is an important secondary turf nutrient. Since sulfur is highly mobile in the soil by leaching it is surprising that sulfur deficiency symptoms are not commonly seen. This fact is apparently due to the turf being so efficient in sulfate uptake and because sulfur is routinely added. Examples of sulfur addition include grass clippings and water treatment such as acid injectors, sulfur burners, and as a component in many fertilizer applications.

If levels of sulfur are a concern when based on soil and water test results, excess sulfur can be easily removed by lime application. As an example, one pound of 100 score calcium carbonate ($CaCO_3$) lime will react with and remove one pound of sulfate ion (SO_4^{2-}) by producing gypsum ($CaSO_4$). PH concerns due to lime application is tempered by the fact that the buffering characteristics of this chemistry will maintain soil pH in the 7 or 8 range unless sodium levels are in the permeability hazard zone. The ideal way to apply this lime is lightly every four weeks to maintain active free calcium and reduce layering of the material.

Calcium sand reactivity

The potential for calcareous sand deterioration is currently being researched by Dr. Eric Miltner at Washington State University. While the potential for these reactions exist, it must be pointed out that in silica sand-based greens, the results of decreased percolation and porosity are typically seen two to three years following construction.

Continued on Page 14

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Continued from Page 13

Best Management Practices...

Since porosity and percolation deterioration commonly occurs in silica-based sand greens, the concern about calcareous sand degradation may be less important than previously thought. Research has clearly shown the reduction in percolation and porosity over time in both silica and calcareous based greens is due to the layering described above and from a decrease in soil macropores due to organic colloid migration. The organic colloids are a natural by-product of turf grass growth. Maintaining root zone aeration and percolation with frequent cultivation is the key to maintaining adequate macropores for healthy greens regardless of sand type.

Additional considerations

If water and/or soil sulfur levels exceed turf needs, removing the excess sulfate is easily done by frequent cultivation in conjunction with lime application and leaching. (Soil and water testing can assess adequate or excess sulfur levels for turf needs.) Additional considerations for best management practices where putting green black layer concerns exist include the following:

- Reduce sulfur inputs by avoiding sulfur containing fertilizers until black layer symptoms disappear.
- Fertilize lightly and frequently (e.g. 0.1 – 0.25 lb N/1000 square feet/application).
- Use a comprehensive analysis of soil and water chemistry from a reliable laboratory. Salt-affected turf management in arid regions can be complex. To illustrate the complexity involved in salt-affected turf management the following is a partial list of factors for consideration in development of a comprehensive turf management plan: **a)** Analysis of total dissolved salts (TDS, ECw), **b)** sodium permeability hazard (Adjusted SAR, ESP, Na), **c)** pH (i.e. acidity and alkalinity measurement scale), **d)** cation exchange capacity (CEC), **e)** residual sodium carbonate (RSC), **f)** cation levels and relative cation proportion, **g)** micronutrient and metal levels.
- Following laboratory analysis of water chemistry and soil fertility a comprehensive management plan for turf fertility and salt management should be developed. If irrigation water acidification is required to manage excess bicarbonate and sodium, there is no reason to stop the treatment due to black layer concerns provided frequent cultivation is maintained for aeration, drainage, and removal of excess sulfate.
- Leaching in conjunction with acidifying fertilizer application (e.g. ammonium sulfate, ammonium nitrate) and deep tine core aeration is another management tool for removing lime, gypsum, or sodium layers found in the arid region root zones. In high calcium and high sulfate conditions, cultivation and leaching are key in successful management to maintain percolation and aeration.

Conclusion

A comprehensive management plan including cultivation, deep infrequent irrigation, and spoon-feeding fertility applications combined with best management practices for all salt related problems will produce consistent healthy putting greens. Balancing sulfur inputs with removal procedures and cultivation can easily resolve any black layer concerns. If irrigation water acidification is needed to manage sodium and/or bicarbonate problems, there is no reason to stop the practice due to black layer concerns since any percolation or aeration reduction is easily managed.