

THE BULL SHEET, official publication of THE MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS.

TED WOehrLE, *Editor*,
8700 So. Western Avenue
Chicago 20, Illinois

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During the Chicago World Flower Show it was my pleasure to serve in the booth of the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation. For the benefit of those who were unable to attend or participate, may I say that this was a very rewarding experience. The reasons for our presence were twofold: to answer questions that visitors may have had concerning their lawns; and to explain the purpose and functions of the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation. I think that our efforts relative to the first phase were successful. We should have done better on the second phase.

Displayed in the booth were approximately ten flats of turfgrass in which various types of weeds were growing. On the wall at the rear of the booth recommendations were given for the control of these weeds. I was amazed at the amount of interest that this display created. Visitors inspecting the flats would exclaim: "Hey, there's the weed that I have growing in my lawn," or "Now I know what to spray on my weeds."

Many people asked questions about other problems that they had. I shall relate a classic example. A middle aged lady and gentleman approached the booth. The lady was carrying a small paper bag from which she produced a plug of a foreign grass that was growing in here merion bluegrass lawn. She wanted to know what she should do to eliminate the invasion of the undesirable grass, which was identified to be *poa trivialis*. These people were noticeably disturbed and perturbed that their efforts to produce an excellent merion bluegrass lawn were not successful. Upon questioning the following facts evolved. The lawn was sodded with merion bluegrass three years ago. It was fertilized regularly and adequately. It was growing in open sunlight. The turf was mowed at a one inch height of cut. And the lawn was watered, very conscientiously - *every night*. Oh! Needless to say, our recommendation was obvious and simple.

The most significant impression that I gained was that the average homeowner that we talked with is very confused. It would be interesting to determine the cause of this confusion. Is it because they have been poorly advised by inexperienced clerks in garden stores and hardware stores? Do product advertisements and

garden articles in magazines and newspapers confuse them? Or is it because they are unfamiliar with basic plant physiology?

Donald Gerber, President



PAUL VOYKIN

MEET THE BOARD

After receiving his basic training on golf courses in various parts of Canada, Paul came to this country during 1956 to work under Gordon Brinkworth who was then the Superintendent of Olympia Fields Country Club. After running one of the 18 hole courses there for two seasons, he took over the position of Superintendent at Calumet Country Club.

His first big job at Calumet was finishing the construction work on the newly designed course, after the Toll Road went through a portion of it.

Last year Paul changed jobs, and is now Superintendent at the Brairwood Country Club in Deerfield. He is married to a lovely Canadian girl, Donna, and they have three beautiful daughters. Paul is presently serving as Chairman of the Golf Committee.

FROM THE GOLF COMMITTEE

This year, Frank Dinneli, Dominic Grotti, Charles Rack and myself are going to endeavor to have the best golf ever for our Midwest members, or at least try to bring it back to the calibre of years ago. To start upon the road of reviving interest and enthusiasm, we are going to have putting contests which were so popular many years back. This contest will be held primarily for the old timers, and those who do not play at all, but would like to participate in some activity. The putting contest will be conducted by Mr. Frank Dinneli sometime between four and six o'clock. All gentlemen interested get your putters sharpened, and let's get some action started.

It has been agreed by past golf Chairmen that the price of golf prizes has gone up, like everything else, and therefore, the value of the \$1.00 entry fee is not what it was ten years ago. In order to give better prizes to our winners, we are going to present fewer

prizes this year, and raise the entry fee to \$2.00 per member and guest. The entry fee for competitive putting will be \$1.00.

It has also been decided by the Golf Committee that in order to qualify for the Midwest golf team in California next year, a minimum of three rounds must be played. By doing this, at the end of the season we will know who our most competitive and better golfers are, and their best three rounds will be selected. This method of choosing our representatives for the annual Superintendents Tournament will be fair to everyone, and will do away with the player who shows up once a year, and shoots a hot round at our Fall Tournament in October.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul N. Voykin, Chairman

EDITORIAL

ICE SHEET DAMAGE

We are presently attempting to survive the damage of a most severe winter. Damage to turf is perhaps more extensive than at first realized. Reports are still coming in about damage on the various courses. It appears that this past winter will go down in history as one of the worst winters in Chicago. In some areas of the Chicago district there was snow and ice on the greens for over 100 days. Where an ice sheet was formed on the greens either from freezing rain or melting snow, which was the case on the South side of Chicago in early December, the damage seems to be more extensive than on the North side where they had more snow and no ice.

There are courses on the South side where entire greens are lost as compared to some on the North side where the damage seems to be localized in the lower areas of the greens where ice was formed during the melting of the snow.

We have seen several cases where clubs were adjacent to each other and one course was severely damaged and the other made it through the winter remarkably well. The first thing the Superintendent will do is try to analyze differences in maintenance procedures. He will compare fertilizer materials used and their method of application as well as time of application. He will compare mowing techniques, watering practices, soil structure and strains of grass, trying to find an answer for what happened. This is good. As you know we all learn from errors. However, this time I feel that no one can blame the conditions on poor maintenance.

Several courses reporting the use of Corn Gluten were hit badly, others using the same product at the same time of year and at the same rate were not affected in the least. We have observed adjoining courses where maintenance practices were identical, again one course survived beautifully and one did not.

Two factors remain whereby we feel that there might be an answer. Where the soils are of the Sandy Loam nature they seemed to come through the winter far better than those that were constructed of the heavier soils. The new USGA greens seemed to fair very well.

The Toronto bents and the Penncross bents survived far better than some of the older types of bent. Seaside had its usual Snow Mold but little damage from the ice.

Let's examine the problem a little closer.

If you will remember late last fall we had an over abundance of rain that caused our soils to become super saturated and water logged. This was accompanied with freezing of the soil in early December. The soil had very little air space due to the large amounts of water. Along came a sheet of ice and sealed the air off completely from the plants. The leaves and stolons of the bents were actually incased in ice. Plants continue to respire even in temperatures of -1 to -4 degrees Centigrade. This means that there is Carbon Dioxide gas produced and it could not escape because of the ice sheet. Extensive damage was caused at this time. Another step that follows this CO² production is the absence of Oxygen. It could not penetrate the ice nor was there any available in the soil, (except the sandier soils.) An anaerobic condition was produced and the plants manufactured alcohols instead of sugars and starches. The thatch actually fermented along with the dead plant tissue. This is what caused the terrific odor immediately after the ice sheet melted. Many of the plants at first looked healthy, this was because the Chlorophyl had not decomposed. As soon as air hit the plants they turned dark and in some cases even turned black.

If this sounds bad just remember what happened the first few days after the ice melted. We had days when the humidity was below twenty percent and the temperatures in the low forties with winds up to thirty miles per hour. This all added to the damage already produced by the ice. The few living plants died of wind damage.

We must distinguish between Ice Damage and Ice Sheet Damage at this time. Ice Damage refers to actual ice crystals being formed inside plant tissue. This destroys the plant tissue and it dies.

Ice Sheet Damage refers to a sheet of ice covering or incasing a plant so there is no air movement in or out.

In brief, then, we feel that the following maintenance practices had little or no effect on the condition of the turf after the ice melted;

1. Fertilization
2. Watering practices
3. Snow Mold treatment
4. Mowing practices
5. The use of arsenicals; as was suspected during the winter of 1959 when we had our last ice sheet damage.

Only two factors seem to be responsible for the damage:

1. Compaction of heavy soils. The sandy greens had lateral air movement under the ice as well as more air storage available due to particle size.
2. Strain of grass. Some definitely are more tolerant than others.

What can be done once it is determined that the grass is dead or almost dead?

We can overseed with Seaside or Penncross seed. Some prefer to mix these with Redtop for quicker germination. I doubt very much whether Redtop will germinate faster than Seaside or Penncross, after all it is also a bent. Redtop is not a permanent grass and will probably die during the heat of July and August.

After overseeding, an attempt should be made to topdress the seed for a good seedbed. This can be done by aerification and breaking up the plugs for your supply of topsoil, or you may use the Aero Thatch machine to accomplish the same thing. Actual topdress-