

Pfister Potpourri

by Dudley Smith, Silver Lake C.C.

At the twentieth annual Wisconsin Turf Symposium in Milwaukee the speakers presented these thoughts to digest.

Dr. Joe Vargas, Michigan State pathologist:

If you want to encourage bentgrass over *Poa Annua* in the fairways —

1. Use only 2 lb. Nitrogen/per 1000 sq. ft. annually
2. Verticut lightly
3. Use the new growth regulator, CUTLESS
4. Aerify while the *Poa Annua* is **seeding** (May). The bentgrass will fill in the aerifier holes. The *Poa Annua* roots are dormant while the plant is flowering.
5. Only use arsenicals if you like to play with fire.

Kevin Dushane, Michigan superintendent:

Fairway mowing with a triplex mower is VERY expensive. The annual cost with a single triplex was \$9000, with a 7 gang unit \$3000. The triplex offers these bonuses: less watering, less fertilizer (only 2 lb. Nitrogen), less fungicides, the ability to mow in different directions, less syringing, eye appeal, and less grain. However, the fairways will have a thatch buildup and must be verticut **six times a year**.

Billy Buchanan, PGA Tour Agronomist:

1. Golf course superintendents maintain **PUTTING SURFACES**, not landing areas. We do not control the golfers ability to hit the shot, that's what handicaps are for.
2. The game should be played on firm surfaces; not hard, not dead ... but firm. The golf ball should bounce, not plug.
3. Nitrogen levels and clipping weight removed are NOT important. It's the stuff that's left after mowing that is important. The 1/8 inch of stubble is what the tournament golfer is interested in. That's why frequency of cut is so important. Championship courses mow their greens nine times a week!
4. Let's keep golf a forward game, not backward (backspin). The course should play to 7100 yards, not 7200 yards with 100 yards of backspin on the greens.
5. Three steps in grooming good greens: frequent mowing, spiking to let fresh air in, and topdressing lightly with dry material.

Jim Latham, USGA Agronomist:

While the superintendent is thinking agronomically about the needs and quality of his turf for 1986, his member golfer thinks only about this particular fairway as he approaches his next shot.

Yardage markers every ten yards are a pain in the butt. Arborvitae bushes at 150 yards, red maples at 200 yards are silly. Joe Dye, former USGA executive director, was a purist. All bushes, etc. used for yardage indicators were yanked and sodded in one year before the competition date. The sod repairs were not to be visible to the golfers.

Visibility and depth perception are a part of golf. See your optometrist, as well as your golf pro, to sharpen up your game.

Yellow balls sliding down a pole should be reserved for one occasion ... Times Square on New Years Eve.

Ted Woehrle, Michigan superintendent:

Ted led a discussion on the problem of earth worms and their deposits on fairways mowed at 1/2 inch. The mess they create on the rollers when the fairways are wet. Another problem, the
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Randy Wahler, left, accepting the 1985 Ray Gerber Editorial Award from President Dave Behrman at the 33rd Annual Midwest Turf Clinic.

1985 Ray Gerber Editorial Award Winner

Randy has won this year's award for his article, "Landscape Renovation on the Golf Course", which was published in the September 1984 issue of "The Bull Sheet". In winning this award which was first given in 1983, Randy adds his name to which we hope will be a long list of future winners who have all helped "The Bull Sheet" be the fine newsletter that it is.

This award was created to give recognition to Ray Gerber for his many years of service to the Superintendents thru his leadership, knowledge and participation in association activities. Ray Gerber served as Editor of "The Bull Sheet" for many years and brought much attention and respect to our profession.

Randy has been Superintendent at Knollwood Club for the past 5 years. Before that he was at Glen Flora for a period of 6 years. Randy is married to Christine and he has 2 children, Joseph is 10 years old and Grace who is 7 years old. Randy is a graduate of University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science in Ornamental Horticulture and graduated with honors. Randy states that he has to give credit to an elective course he had at U of I on business and technical writing which he feels helped him to win this years award. (The judges felt that way too.)

Asked why he chose the maintenance end of the golf business and he states that he felt it was the more creative side of the business. He feels that the landscaping end of the golf maintenance is the part that adds the final touch needed to have a beautiful course.

(Pfister Potpourri cont'd.)

encroachment of **MOSS** on putting surfaces mowed at 1/8 inch. There was no solution to either dilemma.

Ted Woehrle, lunching with current U.S. Open Champion Andy North at the Pfister, took time to visit kitchen boy T. C. Chen.

Over 200 people attended this excellent Wisconsin program. More Chicago superintendents should take the two hour drive North and enjoy our neighbor's hospitality.