

Director's Column



Dennis C. Wilson Biography

- Work Experience:** Sunset Ridge Country Club
1964 till present
Assistant Superintendent — 1971-1977
Superintendent — 1978-present
- Education:** Eight-week Turf Course at University of Ill. — 1967
A.S. Degree from Rutgers University
- Married:** Wife — Pat
- Children:** Amy - 13; Michael - 11; Megan - 6
- Hobbies:** Enjoys golf, bowling, working with Cub Scouts and school functions

Pearlwort — Old Weed New Problem

by Dennis C. Wilson, Supt.
Sunset Ridge C.C.

In the sixties, while cutting greens, I noticed three dark green patches of grass, each about as big as a half dollar. They were always green no matter when the conditions. So I decided it was a new type of Bent and I would be famous — cars, boats and girls. I would have it all. About a week or so later, Dom Grotti, former Supt. of Sunset Ridge Country Club, asked me if I had noticed the pearlwort on three greens. Pearlwort, I asked, you mean my super grass is a weed? Yes, Dom said, now get a cup changer and plug out that weed.

That wasn't the end of the pearlwort. It seems we get a little infestation on one or two greens a year.

Turf Management by H. Burton Musser reads, "Pearlwort (*sagina procumbens*) is a viny perennial that spreads by creeping stems which root at the joints. It tolerates close clipping and forms solid patches on greens that closely resembles a fine-textured grass." Turfgrass Science and Culture by James B. Beard states, "Pearlwort or birdseye is a creeping broadleaf type perennial that vegetates by stolons." The best method of control is use of a strong, vigorous grass. Selective treatments of herbicides such as Dicamba, Endothall or Mecoprop will give marginal control.

I have tried going around with a plastic spray bottle and spot treating each problem, to treating whole greens in spring and fall with Dicamba with some success. I don't want to push the greens by raising the height of cut or using more Nitrogen in order to check its spread.

Talk about turnabout, my supergrass has turned into a super headache.

Turf-Seed, Inc. Field Days

by Fred Opperman, CGCS
Glen Oak C.C., Glen Ellyn, IL

On June 17, 18, and 19, 1987, I had the pleasure of visiting the seed testing plots of Turf-Seed, Inc. in Hubbard, Oregon. The first day, our group was given a tour of golf courses in the Portland area. Our tour guide was Dick Malpass, ex-president of the GCSAA and a retired superintendent of the area. The courses we saw were almost 100 percent **Poa annua**. The giant Cyprus and Douglas Fir trees were spectacular when they lined the fairways and were the backgrounds for the greens. Some of these trees were pushing 100 feet with a diameter of 5 to 6 feet. The most serious problem the courses have is controlling pink snowmold for about 6 months of the year. Golf is played all 12 months of the year. They average only 14 inches of snow, and it usually melts after a few days. Lots of misty weather and rain.

The second day, we toured some growers' fields in the morning and saw how Penncross and Penneagle are grown for seed production. We got into the fields with the growers and learned of their trials, tribulations, failures, and successes. The procedure for growing a certified bent like Penncross is very strict and controlled. It is closely watched over by the state of Oregon, Turf-Seed, Inc., and the patent holder, Penn State. The following are the steps taken to put certified blue tag seed on your course:

- ★ Improved turfgrass varieties are developed by either a private breeder, company, or university.
- ★ Breeder seed from varieties selected for performance and seed yield is grown in 1/10- to 1/4-acre insulated breeder blocks.
- ★ Foundation seed is multiplied in 5-acre plots for distribution to selected growers.
- ★ Seed growers check field history in accordance with certification procedures so that no conflicting species or varieties are planted on the same ground.
- ★ Foundation seed is charcoal planted, part of the extra care that contract growers take to assure a quality product. (This means that the seed is disc seeded on, say, 3-foot centers, and a slurry of charcoal is sprayed over the top of this row in a 1-inch band. Then the field is sprayed with Karmex to kill any and all weeds and grasses between the seeded rows. The charcoal absorbs the herbicide, and the selected seeded species can then grow with no competition).
- ★ A certification specialist from Oregon State University inspects the seedlings.
- ★ Fieldmen from the breeders assess and solve problems as they arise.
- ★ Another certification specialist inspects the field prior to harvest.
- ★ The grower harvests his crop, making sure accurate records are kept and the equipment is free of contaminants.
- ★ The seed is cleaned and bagged in one of more than 200 commercial and 30 private cleaners and then given a lot number that traces the seed back to its production field.
- ★ A seed certification sampler draws a random sample to be analyzed at the Oregon State seed lab.
- ★ The seed sample is analyzed for weed seed, off-types, other species, and inert matter.

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