

Try the Silent Approach

by Mike Bavier

Have you ever thought you had died and gone to heaven? Well, that is how I felt the other day while driving up to Madison, Wisconsin. The morning was clear and cool with only just a little traffic on the tollroad. The radio announcer was telling me the snow was falling in downtown Chicago. There was none in sight on the tollway, another lake effect snow storm, I guess. My mission was to drive up to Madison to drop off something for a friend, and turn right around to return for lunch with friends.

Rather than just listening to the radio blast away, I turned it off. This gave the brain (what little there is) a chance to think about a number of things. Try the silent approach sometime. What do I mean the silent approach? A number of people recommend a quiet time each day. If you have not tried this idea for awhile — do give it some consideration. You will be surprised how many thoughts come into your mind.

My mind that day first focused on the beautiful day — plus all the things we take for granted. Did you ever think how nice most of the roads we drive on are maintained? As you drive thru southern states the roads get even better. They do not have the freezing like we have up north, so they seem to stand up much better. We are lucky we do not have to show a passport driving from one state to another. That is a bit of a problem traveling in Europe which I have done some of in the last year.

Dreaming can be fun. You can set some goals, you might just focus on completing a project, or starting a new one. You might just "smile and be happy" like they say in the song.

Why all this deep thought? It is just something to do when you are traveling our wonderful country. Having traveled overseas a number of times you realize we are pretty fortunate to live in a free and open country.

My thoughts were also with the past Gulf Crisis. Think how well our government handled the situation. We many times think how stupid our generals must be when in charge of our forces. How wrong we were this time. As a former Marine, it did my heart a lot of good to see the people out in favor of the troops. Those anti-protesters got their chance too, they do have their rights — which is what makes the United States the great country it is.

So, what might have been sort of a wasted drive turned out to be a super day. There were plenty of other thoughts, but too numerous to mention.

My thoughts now turn to some good weather for the golfers. We have some of the best courses in the world right here in Chicago. Raise your heads a little higher, most of the credit goes to you. All of you have helped this happen. Nice going.

**Be sure to answer
the survey on page 17
and return the post card.**

Black Turfgrass Ataenius — Some Observations

by Roscoe Randell

Black turfgrass ataenius grubs reappeared on the scene in 1973 as a pest of golf course fairways. This grub was different in its life history, habits, and host plants than the typical white grub, whether the annual or the 3-year grub species. There was good life history information available 15 years ago, including timing of adult activity to tree and shrub phenology. Greenskeepers hear horror stories of 100, 200, even 400+ grubs per square foot on some fairways of other courses.

Briefly, the life history can be described as follows: The ¼ inch adult black beetles overwinter in wooded swamp areas adjacent to the golf course. The shiny beetles begin to migrate to golf courses in April when crocus are in bloom. Egg-laying peaks when "bridal wreath" spirea and Washington hawthorns are in bloom. At Urbana, this is usually about May 15 and a week later each 100 miles north or May 22-24 in South Cook County and much later in Lake and North Cook Counties with the cool lake effect. It is common to observe black ataenius beetles in the greens mower baskets at this time. Egg hatch and small grubs begin to feed on the roots of annual bluegrass and sometimes bentgrass. Wilted turf caused by grub feeding will appear about three to four weeks after egg-laying.

Monitoring for ataenius grubs requires someone checking low areas in the fairways, especially where damage occurred in previous years. Check for wilted areas, loose sod, or presence of grubs. A cup cutter is a good tool to sample for ataenius grubs in non-wilted sod. The grubs, if present, will be feeding at the soil surface. Cut only through the first inch of soil with the cutter. The threshold for ataenius grubs to cause damage is 50 per square foot. A cup cutter samples one-tenth of a square foot at each cut. Sample many sites in fairways with a history of grub infestations. Pie-shaped cuts with a pocket knife will also expose grubs, if present.

Effective grub control products labeled for use of golf courses include trichlorfos (Proxol or Dylox), Turcam, and Triumph. There are other labeled products for grub control but are not suggested. For the best results after detecting a grub infestation follow the following steps. (1). Determine the size of the infestation — how many fairways are involved. (2). Water the infested area. (3). Apply the product according to labeled rate and directions. (4). Immediately water the treatment into the soil surface. (5). Evaluate product performance every 4 to 6 days. Most materials will cause grubs to cease feeding in 3 or 4 days. Do not expect eradication of the grub population; 90 percent control is outstanding. Also, in case you have forgotten, there is the possibility of a second generation in August. It is unusual for this generation to be a problem, but it can happen. Adult beetles migrate back to the swampy area in late September to overwinter as adults.

During the past 17 seasons since 1973 there have been some interesting occurrences with black turfgrass ataenius grubs. Numbers of infested golf courses increased in the 1970's and declined after the mid 1980's. The drought years of 1987 and 88 reduced favorable overwintering sites and this reduced

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(Black Ataenius cont'd.)

overall populations. This effect can reverse during the early 1990's. Some growing seasons were warmer than others. 1987 was usually warm, therefore, the heat units accumulated caused the season to be 14 to 18 days ahead of normal. Ataenius eggs were laid in early May and then damage appeared in early June in the Chicago area.

In summary then, ataenius grubs can be a pest insect on some golf course fairways. It can be effectively monitored or scouted by one of the superintendents. If there is a sufficient number of grubs to cause damage, treatments can be applied for control. The days of treating the entire course with a preventative insecticide are over. We should be more professional than to use this outdated practice. And finally, I wish someone would have come up with a better common name for this grub pest!

Turfgrass Science Education at Purdue University

by Clark Throssell

The undergraduate education programs in Turfgrass Science at Purdue University are academically strong and growing. Currently 35 students are majoring in Turfgrass Science at Purdue. The vast majority of the students are interested in a career in the golf course industry. By combining technical information learned while earning a degree, with practical work experience gained through summer employment, the students who graduate from the Purdue University Turfgrass Science program are able to contribute to the success of golf courses and firms.

Following are brief profiles of the six students graduating in May 1991 with a degree in Turfgrass Science from Purdue. These profiles are intended to acquaint you with the quality of our students at Purdue. If you have an interest in talking with any of these students please contact me or that student. If you have an internship opportunity or an opening for a permanent position, or know of a potential turf student please contact me at the address below.

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David McComb is a senior in Turf Science at Purdue University. He is currently finishing up his degree spring semester and will graduate early summer 1991. For the past five summers David has worked as a summer intern at golf courses in Fort Wayne; three summers at the Elks Country Club and currently at Sycamore Hills Golf Club. After the spring semester he will work full time as a Second Assistant for David Bolyard at Sycamore Hills. He also plans to work at Crooked Stick Golf Club during the week of the PGA Tournament to gain tournament experience.

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