

## EDUCATION REVIEW

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



# Miller and Vavrek highlight the March Meeting

*The MAGCS March meeting was held on an unusually warm day at Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton, hosted by Mike Mumper. With the early spring conditions and staffs not up to full swing, I think most guys were out cutting grass that day.*

Dr. Lee Miller, Extension Turfgrass Pathologist from the University of Missouri was the first speaker. His topic for the day was "Efficient Use of Spring Fungicide Applications for Disease Management." This presentation featured how to select fungicides and how and when to apply. His models are based on Growing Degree Days (GDD). Most of us use these GDD models to predict application timing of pre-emergent for crabgrass control, *Poa* seed head control and grub control. Dr. Miller cited that foliar diseases such as dollar spot are more difficult to predict because they are dictated more on moisture, relative humidity and surface temperatures. His recommendations are based on his research data. If your course is prone to these diseases, he believes better control can be achieved with the use of preventative applications of fungicides before disease symptoms occur.

Lee offered the following recommendations based upon soil temperatures. Websites, weather stations or a good old soil thermometer can monitor temps. If you use a soil thermometer, Lee recommends you base your data on a 2" depth taken daily at 11:00 a.m.

**Take All Patch:** Apply preventatively when at 2" soil depth, the temperatures is at 50 degrees.

**Summer Patch:** Apply preventatively when at 2" soil depth, the temperature is 65 degrees.

**Fairy Ring:** Fairy Ring is one of the most complex systems in plant pathology. Dr. Miller has done extensive research on this disease and written numerous articles and has become one of the experts in the industry on fairy ring. He said he was tired of the nicknames he gets called, use your imagination to fill in the blanks.



Dr. Lee Miller

If applying only curatively, a wetting agent is recommended along with the fungicide. You must water in the application with at least .25" immediately or within 10 hours. Keep TGR's off for at least 14 days as the DMI fungicides have growth regulation characteristics.

**Dollar Spot:** Early preventative applications using DMI's can delay onset and reduce severity for the entire season. It will also give you the ability to use lower rates later on.

Some of you may remember Dr. Miller when he worked for the CDGA from 2001 -2006 and helped Dr. Randy Kane "launch" Interactive Turf. He says "he drank his milk and is all grown up now". The prodigal son has a family now and has returned. Lee can be reached at [www.turfpath.missouri.edu](http://www.turfpath.missouri.edu).



Bob Vavrek

Type I: Basidiocarp (mushroom) formations

Type II: Green rings caused by the degradation of lignin.

Type III: Necrotic turf. The pathogen coats the soil particles and organic material causing hydrophobic soil and localized dry spots.

In all types the fungus is in the soil at varying depths. Preventative applications are much more effective than curative. Apply preventatively (2) applications at 28 day intervals and water in immediately with .125" or .25".

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Our new/old USGA Senior Agronomist of the North Central Region, Bob Vavrek has also returned to our shores. His presentation for the day was, "2011 Year in Review". Bob took some time and commented on the unusually warm weather we have been having.



"It is the warmest winter on record in Milwaukee with an average temperature of 34 degrees. It was the first time in 20 years we have not had any snow/ice damage. The warm weather has been a source of extra revenue for struggling clubs. I believe the hardiness zones are moving north. Winters are becoming more variable and summers have been hard to predict. It is uncertain if we will see more insect problems for this coming season. Possibly we may see an extra cutworm cycle."

Bob commented on possible future regulations that may be coming our way similar to what Canadian Golf Course Superintendents are currently experiencing. Regulations on irrigation documentation/justification and pesticide application/justification/documentation may be on the horizon.

Bob's power point slide presentation went over winter 2011 ice damage, summer USGA events in his region, herbicide damage, greens under stress, collar protection devices, green drainage problems and the usual assortment of dead green photos.

"2011 was a difficult year for cool season grasses that were on the edge." Venting greens was very popular as was the hose, for hand watering trouble areas.

Lunch was served and after the delicious Italian food was devoured, I witnessed a vapor trail of what had previously been where trucks were parked as guys headed back to work to work.

(BTW, we recorded the talks and if you'd like to see them call 630-243-7900 or email luke@magcs.org) **-OC**



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