

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

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### *The President's Message*

The battle over DDT has drawn world wide attention. After 27 years of testimony for and against it in Wisconsin recently, the two sides were given 30 days to gain additional information before a decision is rendered. DDT is considered a "hard" pesticide — a pesticide that persists for long periods without decomposing into less harmful derivatives. One state has already banned it, and others are contemplating of doing so. Sweden has banned it for 2 years while further studies are made on DDT's effects.

Several thousand pages of testimony have already been heard on DDT, with no agreement in sight by its enemies or supporters. The argument that DDT has been found in mother's milk, I think will create a terrific impact against the pesticide. As I'm sure that any expectant mother does not want to expose her baby to anything harmful. So whether all the facts have been evaluated or not, these people will be for banning it because of the possible harm. And I am sure they will have plenty of supporters — at least the fathers.

I feel that most of these arguments are blown out of proportion — sometimes by both parties. This isn't the first time that pesticides and other chemicals have come under criticism. I am sure we all recall the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. Maybe some of you read it. She would have you believe that any user of pesticide would eventually help kill off all civilization. I do agree that we have to use caution and be sensible about its application and rates. And the manufacturer is the first to warn you and prescribe to you how to use it. Every grass mowing equipment manufacturer cautions you on the safety of operating their equipment. And every year fingers, toes, and hands are cut off or maimed. Do we discontinue to cut our grass with machinery and go back to the scythe, or maybe goats? Certainly not.

I personally haven't used DDT too much. Having been blessed with very few elm trees, the little DDT I have used has been for mosquitoes. And the past few years I have used Malathion for these little stingers. I recall a number of years ago I sprayed chlordane on my fairways for cutworms. The following day several scores of birds were found dead



Golf Chairman Joe Canale, Low Gross runner-up Ken Goodman and the MAGCS Low Gross Champion for 1969, Peter Voykin, Superintendent at Idlewild C. C.



Senior Championship runner-up Marcus List, Superintendent at Old Wayne C. C. and the Senior Champion for 1969 Emil Mashie, Superintendent at Onwentsia C. C.



or dying. I theorized that the birds had eaten the dead worms and in turn also died. The members (especially the women) had many questions and comments. But we felt the grass was more important to the golf course than the birds, and we have continued to spray with the same type of material. And except for this one incident, not a single dead bird has been found. The question in my mind since then has been, what actually did kill these birds.

Although I am not an authority on pesticide and chemicals, I feel that DDT has done a lot of good and does not deserve the "black eye" it now has received. I do feel it has been used indiscreetly in some cases, just like some of us over eat and drink. So it remains to be seen what the eventual outcome will be. In the meantime we do have available to us other pesticides that we can use with excellent results. And it is my feeling that it will not jeopardize our turf maintenance program if it should be banned.

Ed Wollenberg, President

## KEEPING UP TO PAR

More Demanding

Specialists Struggle to Grow Grass Despite  
Tournament Crowds, Spikes, Divots

Mollifying the Club Members

By John A. Prestbo

Staff Reporter of **The Wall Street Journal**

CHICAGO—If your once lush green lawn is now turning brown (and your wife is nagging you to do something about it), take some tips from an expert grass grower:

Your problem might be one of 40 common turf diseases which Oscar L. Miles of south suburban Chicago is always looking closely for. This year he plans to spray his grass with mixtures of fungicides totaling 4,925 pounds of expensive chemicals.

Or maybe your browning lawn needs more water. Each summer Mr. Miles irrigates his grass with about 31 million gallons, pumped through a 10-mile network of pipes and sprinklers.

Of course, he tends a bit more turf than the average weekend gardener. Mr. Miles is superintendent of two 18-hole courses at Olympia Fields Country Club.

He's one of the nation's estimated 5,500 golf course superintendents, whose jobs are part agronomy and part aggravation. Their bosses are dedicated golfers whose own lawns at home could be a tangle of dandelions but who rage if their bobbled putts can be even remotely blamed on a stray blade of grass.

### A Chance Remark

Each year many superintendents have their reputations put on the line when their clubs host major tournaments. Then, a chance comment to a sports reporter by a disgruntled pro ("I would've broke par if the greens weren't in such lousy condition") could give their handiwork a nationwide bad press overnight.

Golf course superintendents "are expected to raise laboratory-quality grass under battlefield conditions", says Ben J. Chlevin, executive director of the superintendents' national association. This year some 11 million American golfers, nearly 50% more than five years ago, will tromp around 9,615 golf courses (many

smaller, publicly owned courses can't afford a full-time superintendent, which explains why there are fewer superintendents than courses). The golfers will chew up the turf with their spiked shoes and dig it up with their clubs.

To cope with the punishment their grass must take, superintendents have become a highly specialized, professional group. Twenty years ago, when golf wasn't the national craze it is now, superintendents were called greenskeepers, were paid meagerly and had no formal training. Some of them came from farms, while others drifted into the work because they had a green thumb.

### A Costly Crop

Today, superintendents are entrusted with growing what's probably the nation's most expensive crop. Many plush country clubs sprawl over land worth \$50,000 or more an acre, and in metropolitan areas such as Chicago their superintendents spend upwards of \$100,000 a year to maintain each 18-hole course.

With this kind of money at stake, golf clubs aren't hiring amateurs anymore. Many of the younger superintendents have bachelor's degrees in agronomy or some related subject, and a few hold master's degrees. Many are graduates of special turf management courses offered by a dozen universities around the country.

The new breed of superintendent works with soil tests and chemical analyses instead of intuition. Some are even feeding soil conditions into computers to help determine how much water and what kind of fertilizer to apply and when. Top superintendents are paid up to \$23,000 a year and some are provided free housing on the course.

Like many of his colleagues, Oscar Miles of Olympia Fields is a golf enthusiast. When he was a teenager he considered making golf his career but then chose superintendency because he saw "more potential for advancement" in grass-growing than on the pro circuit. Now an energetic 30-year old with a sand-colored mustache, Mr. Miles plays his two courses at least twice a week "So I can see how the course is from the golfer's point of view." (He has a seven handicap.)

### Thick Grass

Under his watchful eye, his 36-man summer crew (15 are year-round men) mow the club's eight miles of fairway every other day at five-eighths of an inch. He keeps fairway grass growing thick so that golf balls will perch on top of the blades instead of sinking down. That's important because golfers lose a degree of control of their hits if grass or clover comes between the swinging club face and the ball.

Mr. Miles' greens are trimmed early each morning at three-sixteenths of an inch, a much shorter pile than in many living room carpets. The tees are also clipped daily, at three-eighths of an inch, and the roughs are mowed weekly at three inches.

The worst enemy of Mr. Miles' 380 acres of manicured greenery is people's feet. He can control the damage caused by members playing 45,000 rounds a year, but tournaments are major headaches. Last August 70,000 spectators flocked on Olympia Fields' north course for the annual four-day Western Open, and Mr. Miles knew the milling throng, many with spiked shoes on, would trample his grass to death.

Replanting it all after the tournament would take time and interrupt members' play. But Mr. Miles came



up with a solution. After the first day of the tournament, he had his men spread grass seed along the crowd's traffic patterns. "The spectators spiked the seed into the ground for me, and all I had to do was water it," recalls Mr. Miles. "Three weeks after the tournament you wouldn't know we had anybody here."

Working with nature is the easiest part of their jobs, the superintendents agree. It's getting along with the club members that can be a strain, which is why some superintendents dream up occasional little extras as public relations efforts. On ladies' day at Sunset Country Club in St. Louis, for example, superintendent Robert V. Mitchell sets out potted geraniums at the tees and marks the cups on each green with pink poles holding pink flags trimmed in black lace.

It helps to have a tight rein on tempers, too. One recent Fourth of July the Danville, Ill., Country Club brought in some ponies for member's children to ride. That night somebody tied one pony to the flag on a green. When James W. Brandt, the superintendent, arrived at work the following morning he found the tethered pony had worn a trench in the green by circling the pole all night.

The bad luck award, however, seems to have been permanently retired by Fred Harris, superintendent of the 27-hole Los Coyotes Country Club near Los Angeles. In October 1964, he bought some fertilizer and told his men to put it on a few greens. Unfortunately, when the stuff had been packaged, soil sterilants somehow were mixed in with the nutrients, and every blade of grass on four greens promptly withered and died.

A livid board of directors threatened to fire Mr. Harris, but he proved with soil tests it wasn't his fault. After a long period of litigation involving the fertilizer company and other suppliers, the club was reimbursed for the damage. Meanwhile, it took six months to rebuild the greens.

Then in December of the same year, a mammoth storage tank on a neighboring oil tank farm sprang a leak and sent about 300,000 barrels of crude oil gurgling over five Los Coyotes fairways. The oil company resodded the course, but with soil that had such a high saline content it took Mr. Harris a year to restore the fairways to normal.

The worst most superintendents have to put up with is vandalism, which is increasing despite efforts to increase grounds security. Besides tearing up the sod with drag races or spinning motorcycles, a seemingly favorite bit of vandalism is scratching dirty words deeply into the close-cropped greens. "It always seems to happen just before the ladies' tournament," moans one superintendent.

At one Los Angeles-area course, the superintendent walked out one recent morning to find a green completely stripped of sod. The police quickly nailed the culprit, a nearby homeowner who had decided his yard needed some nice grass. "It was easy to track him down," says a friend of the course superintendent. "All they did was go down the street and look for the best lawn on the block."

Reprint from the front page of **The Wall Street Journal**

### INSTRUCTION IN TURF MANAGEMENT

J. D. Butler will be teaching Turf Management, Horticulture E236 at the Naperville High School on Tuesday evenings, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., beginning

September 16 and ending on January 23. Description of this course is as follows:

The principles and practices used in the management of turfgrasses is the areas of general and special use. Of value to students interested in one or more aspects of turfgrass utilization. The course will include lectures, assigned readings, and laboratory exercises. Enrollment in this class is limited. Pre-enrollments will be accepted in the order received, Masters degree or Advanced Certificate in Education candidates at the University will have preference. This course will carry 3 semester hours credit if taken for college credit, or it may be attended as a visitor after due registration procedure. Further information concerning this course may be obtained by writing to Mr. R. F. Casper, Extension Specialist, Division of University Extension, Box 4348, Chicago, Illinois 60680, or by calling 663-8560.

### NEW RAIN BIRD DISTRIBUTOR FOR NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Ed Shoemaker of the Rain Bird Sprinkler Company of Glendora, California and Peoria, Illinois, recently announced the appointment of Illinois Lawn Equipment, Inc., 14750 La Grange Road, Orland Park, Illinois, as the new distributor for the northern fifteen counties of Illinois, including Chicago.

Robert G. Johnson, of Illinois Lawn Equipment, Inc., stated that his sales department has been attending factory training schools and holding field trips to become better acquainted in the field of automatic underground irrigation systems.

Illinois Lawn Equipment, Inc. has been the Jacobsen turf distributor as well as representative for many other nationally known lines for the past fifteen years and are looking forward to working with Rain Bird, which has been the top line in the field for many years.



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## RECORD'S RECORD

By Lee Record  
USGA Green Section  
Mid-Continent Agronomist

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Paul M. Alexander as mid-continent agronomist of the USGA Green Section. Dr. Alexander joined the USGA staff on July 1st and will be working from the Chicago office. During the past eleven years, Dr. Alexander has been helping southern golf course superintendents from Clemson University.

Winter damaged greens continue to respond slowly. Green topdressed heavy and frequently show greater recovery than those not touched. Thorough aeration, thatching and renovation in general will be the rule this fall to bring greens back to full recovery. One superintendent in Wisconsin reported all he had to do to get a farm bottle cool was to place it in the cup . . . soils hadn't warmed a bit; turf hadn't filled in worth a damn and if things didn't change real soon he was going fishing.

Topdressing was worth its weight in gold this spring. Superintendents who had the foresight of having a two to three year supply of material stored in a dry place had few worries. Now is the time to put in for a topdressing building. Topdressing of greens will continue to grow in the mid-continent region.

Broadleaf weeds soared to new levels this spring. Herbicide applications were washed out more often than one would like to count. Clover, knotweed, etc. can easily be controlled with one of the MCCP formulations or Dicamba 2,4-D is still the best control for broadleaf weeds. Timing of the material in questions is of importance here. Dicamba can be used in late spring, early summer if required, with great success and less injury to permanent turfgrasses and *Poa annua* than other materials.

Fairway renovation should begin about the third week of August. Heavy aeration, six or more times over on each fairway to work up a suitable seedbed is the most desirable way to establish new seedlings. Thatching shows promise but is not as thorough as

aeration. Timing of this cultural practice is important. a couple of weeks head start over *Poa annua* germination may be the success story of this year's over-seeding program.

Disease has not been a serious problem. Dollar spot and Helminthosporium are leading the league in this category.

Recently, a news commentator reports as of July 1st, "we have had 77 rain free days since the first of the year." I'm waiting to see a dinghy on the back of a golf bag . . . or even weekend golfers.

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## GET IN ON THE ACT

By Gerry Finn

Reprinted from New England Newsletter

This being the age of spiraling inflation, there seems to be a feeling roaming the golf courses that maybe you know who is being shortchanged.

Like the hardshipped athlete, lo, the golf course superintendent finds himself at the mercy of his employer. There's only one minute difference (sic). Nowadays athletes can set up a rosy future for themselves in about 10 years playing time. After that, they're set free from the shackles of punishing their muscles for good behavior at the bat or on the greens.

Superintendents, too, are rewarded with hope for the future. However, as our esteemed president — Anthony Caranci — once remarked, "I'm afraid all of us (supers) shall have to wait for our true reward when we go to that big golf course in the sky."

There must be a realistic approach to this justified pursuit of earthly returns. Naturally, a mother cannot raise her son to be a course superintendent and expect him to earn \$35,000 a year for finishing 59th on the money list. Touring golf professionals, whose starry scores are partially attributed to the true roll of a green or sit-up lie on a fairway, should be the first to endorse the financial well-being of the superintendent. It's a matter of accomplishment relatively, meaning the better conditioned course produces the better score.

This may appear to be raising question marks in the heads of the local country club mogul who probably can't see the connection between, say an Arthur Anderson and an Arnold Palmer. But, if you were to take a general poll of the country club set and the publix fraternity, you would fast learn that Joe Doak's weekend score is just as important to him as Arnold Palmer's tally is to the jet-flying ace. There certainly is relativity there. A 50-cent nassau crowds a 50-grand tour battle for importance, if the talk you hear around the 19th hole means anything.

What is the average salary of the superintendent? According to most people in the profession, it is low enough to cause a reinvestigation of young turf students who originally set their post-graduate sights on a career in the golf field. Even some public-supported municipal parks and recreation opportunities are causing budding supers to think twice before they leap into the demanding fires of country club members who are the first to suggest dismissal when their course loses a green or becomes infected with a turf disease.

Should the trend continue, golf eventually will underprice itself out of the superintendents' market. On the other hand, those supers now engaged in their chosen profession might do themselves well to join the swelling ranks of compatriots who are bringing about a general upgrading of salaries in every phase of the sports world.

Maybe this constitutes contribution to the dreaded rise in inflation that now confronts the nation. However, the golf course superintendent can't let this financial moonshot pass him by if others climb aboard the flight. The time is ripe to get in on the act.

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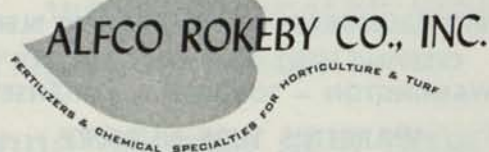
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## MAJOR TREE INSECT PROBLEMS

by Stanley Rachesky  
Entomologist, University of Illinois

Did you ever think of a tree as a woody perennial plant with one main stem or trunk which develops many branches? Of course not! Just how important is a tree to you? People's values not only differ, but change and so does their appreciation of trees or of a particular tree. Everybody has a favorite tree whether it is in the backyard or just a memory.

What is a tree to you - - - ?

Is it a study of time? Big beautiful trees take a long time to grow; or is it a beauty mark on the landscape? Many homeowners regard trees on their property as an investment causing increased property value. How about the shade value a tree provides on a hot day or the enjoyment of swinging from an old rubber tire tied to a big branch; the treehouse you played in as a kid or the heights to which you could climb; or is it the place you received your first nature lesson watching the birds develop; to the golfer, it's a place to keep dry during a cloudburst; and to your wife it's a place to tie the clothesline; to your kids in a summer evening it may provide a home base for a game of tag; and of course, what's Christmas without a tree? So you see, values can be different and varied when you think of a tree.

All trees are subject to insect or disease. The loss of a tree is difficult if not impossible to replace. For the homeowner, tree care is very important. This year northern Illinois has been plagued with **major tree insect problems.**

In the month of May we saw and in some cases are still seeing on the north shore area **the inchworm.** This defoliating little pest has caused many people to seek help — not only for the sake of the tree but to stop them from dropping on their heads while sitting outside in the backyard: Sevin 50% wettable powder is the insecticide of choice.

During the month of June three new problems developed. On the southwest side of Chicagoland locusts have arrived in an off year. In some instances, emerging by the thousands. Why an off year locust? Possibly because of the formation of a subspecies developed from the 13 and 17 year broods. Control on infested trees can be accomplished by using Sevin 50% wettable powder. Spray the branches thoroughly.

On the northwest side of Chicagoland we are seeing in very great abundance on maple trees a popcorn-looking type problem on the tree branches called cottony maple scale. It doesn't confine itself to maple and is found on a variety of other trees and shrubs. Sometimes infestations may be heavy enough to kill twigs, branches, limbs and once in a great while entire trees. Great quantities of honeydew drip from the twigs and branches on parked cars below leaving them a sticky mess. Control in Chicagoland should begin the last week in June and the first couple weeks in July using Malathion. Three applications 4-5 days apart will be needed.

The bronze birch borer is taking its toll of birch trees again this year. It is very widespread causing the tops of the birch tree to die. Eventually the entire tree will succumb. At present, research on this problem is being conducted by the University of Illinois at the Morton Arboretum where almost 100% of the trees are effected. The screening of newer, safer, insecticides is being tried. As of now DDT sprayed on the tree trunks and branches is the only insecticide

recommended. It will do an excellent job of controlling the adults and emerging larvae. Fertilizing your tree and keeping it healthy is very essential in winning the battle against a tree borer problem.

## NO CARRYING CHARGE

Once there was a superintendent who never joined the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. All his life he took the benefits won for him by other members of the Association, but refused to join. Then on his deathbed he told his wife: "Dear, please do something for me. I want 6 men from the Association to be my pallbearers."

"But you never belonged to the Association," his wife said. "Why do you want them to be your pallbearers?"

"Honey," he replied, "they've carried me this far I might as well have them carry me all the way."

C. E. (Scotty) Stewart



the grass people

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