

## THE KEYNOTER

A Publication of  
The Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, Inc.

### — AERATION — FACTORS TO CONSIDER

**Benefits:** Penetrates and removes material from thatch and compacted layers, thus encouraging

- increased water intake, less runoff
- deeper water penetration
- deeper placement of lime and fertilizer
- increased microbial activity due to improved soil aeration
- deeper rooting and more vigorous turf
- greater resiliency

**Timing:** Aerate when desirable grasses are actively growing. Fall and spring are preferred times for cool-season turfgrasses.

Because aeration brings buried seed to the surface and also breaks herbicide barriers at the soil surface, spring aeration should precede application of preemergence chemicals for crabgrass control and fall aeration should precede application of pre-emergence chemicals for *Poa annua* control, which may push the operation into early August.

Ease of penetration and core removal is favored by moist soil conditions, however compaction and structure deterioration may occur if soils are in a saturated or near saturated condition. Dead grass around the aeration holes isn't always due to drying of the soil. Grass around the edge of holes made in the summer tends to be a favorite of cutworms, who hide in the holes during the day and eat at night.

**Core removal:** Removal is not practicable on large turf areas. When aeration is being used as a curative measure on greens, remove the cores. They represent the soil that has been creating your problems. If not removed they should be supplemented with a well-modified topdressing mix—or perhaps with only a coarse amendment (sand or calcined clay) when the green is topdressed following aeration. Cores from greens with adequate soil physical properties can be broken up with a vertical mover and matted in alone or with additional topdressing.

**When overseeding:** Repeated passes over an area are required to bring enough soil to the surface for a good seedbed. Need for more passes increases as the spacing between tines increases.

D. V. Waddington

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## Grass Seed Survey Results

A recent survey of lawngrass seed conducted nationally found Fylking offerings to be among those having highest quality. The testing was conducted by an independent laboratory manned by registered seed technologists.

Fylking Kentucky bluegrass seed exhibits many features that add up to quality. Perhaps most important is genetic identity. All seed stems from the pure Fylking bloodline, and if any off-type grass volunteers in the seed fields, it is immediately rogued out. Thus there is guarantee of the qualities for which Fylking is famed,—disease resistance, low-growth, rich color and exquisite texture.

But seed quality goes beyond just heredity. Weeds and cropgrasses are carefully controlled in the Fylking seed production fields. Thus almost no foreign seed is carried along with the bluegrass in harvesting. Chance seeds are quickly screened out in later cleaning, which sorts out the fully mature, robust Fylking seeds destined for lawn and sod use. Compared to most seed Fylking is fantastically pure, high-germinating, and it's almost impossible to find even a few weed or crop seeds amongst the more-than-a-million Fylking seeds in each pound.

So, Fylking has unassailable heredity, meticulous production hygiene going for it! What else? Believe it or not there is something else—a measure of vigor that cannot be detected until the seed sprouts and grows. This is for many reasons. The variety itself is a vigorous one, although not aggressive and likely to become a pest.

In the sun-drenched growing areas of eastern Washington and northern Idaho, just the exact fertilization and irrigation needed to produce robust seed is given the parent grass. Every field is carefully watched, and seedheads are cut at exactly the right stage. These are "cured" (after-ripened or mellowed) in the therapeutic sun of this ideal growing climate. And last but not least, seed cleaning is undertaken on modern machines which blow and screen away chaff and immature seeds which might dilute the nearly one hundred percent effectiveness which the national survey show to prevail with Fylking.

For further information contact  
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### EDITORIAL

#### Becoming Involved

Reprint from O. M. Scott ProTurf

Almost everyone at the club knows the "Pro". He's a "heckuva" nice guy and it's a matter of personal pride to be on a first-name basis with him. But, it is doubtful if even half the membership can name the superintendent and only a few can call him by his first name. It is generally a rare and unusual course where the superintendent is a well-known person.

Whether by accident, or design, the superintendent is often lost somewhere in the shadows. He has little opportunity to come in contact with the golfers and his place of work is usually in an obscure area far away from the clubhouse. In this situation everyone loses. The club loses because it misses an occasion to share the knowledge of a unique professional. The superintendent loses because he can't become better acquainted with the people who play his course.

The most divisive factor between club officials, the membership and the superintendent is golf itself. When, how and why should the superintendent be allowed to participate? On many courses it's a very delicate subject and officials react in various ways. Quite often they would prefer to see "that fellow" stay away from the course except for mowing and watering. Sometimes the official attitude is to ignore the subject of golf and the superintendent and "maybe it will go away". In a few instances the superintendent is allowed to play, but at discreet times. Perhaps Monday morning, or some time when members are least likely to be around. Fortunately, most golf courses have very few restrictions.

In truth, every facet of golf course operation benefits when the superintendent becomes more involved. He should be encouraged to play golf on a busy weekday, with the most avid golfing members. If he doesn't play, he might be encouraged to walk the course or perhaps drive a cart. He should view the course from the angle of each and every golf shot. He should hear questions that every golfer has: "Why do you do this?", or "Why don't you do that?". He has a golden opportunity to explain why certain things must be done and might receive a suggestion for improvement that has never been considered. Without question there can be a far better exchange of information and it can continue from the eighteenth green right into the clubhouse. It doesn't have to be filtered down through the organization, or tucked away only to be forgotten.

Today's superintendent is no longer a grass cutter or a farmer, and it's a sad golf course who pictures him as such. He is a man with a vast number of skills. His knowledge of turf can be superior, but working with and managing people is a definite need. He must also be an expert in diplomacy, purchasing, machinery, business relations, and a master at handling the unexpected. He must anticipate all things that will be good for his course and be prepared to make adjustments for everything that is bad.

Very few professions require solid knowledge in so many difficult areas of learning and the list isn't growing smaller. But, the true value of his professionalism can never be fully realized until the significance of his position receives the proper recognition. And this recognition should come from each and every person who plays the game.

Jim Converse, Editor

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