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**President's Message**

What a great day we shared with three other associates at Silver Lake Golf Club in May. In spite of the rain, 135 avid golfers enjoyed the beautiful conditions that host superintendent Dudley Smith and his staff provided us. During the rain delay, it was great to visit with the other superintendents as well as break even in a little gin game. Make plans now to attend this joint meeting next year to be played at Eagle Ridge in Galena, Illinois.

By now, everyone should have their annuals planted, trees planted and spring projects completed. Time now to maintain our golf courses to keep them in the best possible playing conditions under the existing circumstances. On the south side this year, it has been extremely dry and sometimes very hot for this early in the year. Maybe we are getting August weather in May.

I was a bit surprised one morning to find authorities from the E.P.A. at my shop. They came to inspect my vehicles that were purchased with emission control systems as well as my fuel storage facilities. These people told me that they were going to start visiting Chicago area golf courses and making inspections to make sure we were abiding by the rules. Needless to say, I was caught with a faulty nozzle, improper labeling of my storage facilities, as well as a few minor violations which I was required to remedy A.S.A.P. I only mention this to warn many of you that might get an unscheduled visit from these people.

**Joe P. Williamson, C.G.C.S.**

## MAGCS Directors Column April Showers

by Jim Evans, Supt.

Turnberry Country Club, Crystal Lake, IL

How could I possibly write this column without first mentioning the weather. I have been waiting for a rainy day to sit back and relax, take my time, and write a dissertation on the cause, prevention and control of thatch. Being that this column is due for printing this week and that this morning is the first rainout since last November, I thought it would be a good opportunity to start writing.

The weather has and always will be a topic of conversation. For the golf course superintendent it's a way of life, we live or die by what mother nature deals us. What's the old adage, if you don't like the weather in Chicago wait ten minutes and it will change. I've always dreamed about moving further north to Minnesota or perhaps Wisconsin where the growing season is shorter and the hockey season is longer. But my wife was born and raised in the south and she has made it known that Chicago is as far north as she is going. After a perfect vacation in Florida this March, I thought to myself this is paradise, 60° at night and 80° in the day and always sunshine. My wife loved the climate and she kept saying maybe we should move down here. Sun, swimming and fun all the time, but I kept reminding myself this is just a vacation. I can't imagine maintaining a golf course 12 months a year when I have a difficult time with Chicago's short but intense growing season. Besides, I don't like six months of continuous 90°+ weather and it doesn't rain in Florida anymore either. Arizona is nice in the winter and during the summer with the low humidity, 118° in the shade feels like only 98° in the Chicago sun. San Diego has the world's perfect climate, that is what everyone tells me. If it was that perfect, everyone would move there, and then the population would be larger than Mexico City. So I am not going to pack my bags yet, at least not for California. We did start packing though, and we will move in July, at least four blocks further from where we now live in Crystal Lake. Yes folks, Crystal Lake does have the perfect climate, at least ten days in the year are perfect, and that is enough to make us settle here.

When I worked at clubs on the hot, humid south side of Chicago, everyone talked about the cool north side and how nice it was up there. So I moved up here to Turnberry and landed on bluegrass fairways and automatic irrigation. Carl Landgrebe used to call it a true "rocking chair" golf course, the kind where ya' just sit back, kick your feet up, and take it easy. Dick Trevarthan calls it "God's country." I can't complain, these past six years have been the most challenging and rewarding of my life, but I will say that the weather this spring has been the proverbial "pits". All those years when every spring we would complain how wet and cold the weather was, and how the weather changes from winter to summer in one week. So this is the first year in 25 we have had springlike weather in spring. The weather has been beautiful, but it is too dry for spring. My wife and kids think I'm cracking up. They say, "Dad, you are never happy with the weather. It is either too hot, too cold, too sunny, too cloudy, too wet, too dry, too windy, or too humid but

never perfect." Well, I told them I want to be able to program the weather. Man has been to the moon and back, and golfers honestly believe that greenskeepers have control over the weather, so why not do it. OK, I never want rain on Monday because it is our only day to work without interference from golfers, plus it is the grounds crews only day for golf. So when and how much rain would you like? Monday night between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m., 0.75" rain, and again Thursday night 8 p.m. to 5 a.m., 1.10" rain. All this rain must be intermittent and no gully washers please. Temperatures during June, July and August should be 50° at night and 75° daytime highs with low relative humidity. September and October can cool off with an increase in precipitation. Programming would sure make our lives a whole lot easier.

Of all the weather, this spring has been the ultimate in frustration. Maybe because we are not used to watering every night in April and May. I am certainly not accustomed to seeing bluegrass fairways under a heat and drought stress this early, maybe July or August but not now. Even after we got the irrigation system fired up three weeks earlier than usual our coverage was horrible for the wind was relentless. My assistant started calling the course "Windberry" instead of Turnberry. Day and night the wind blows here whether you like it or not. So we sent everyone out to hand water localized dry spots. We could only spray one tank of broadleaf herbicide each day from 6:30 to 8:30 in the morning, after 8:30 you can forget it. Laying sod or seeding was a lesson in futility. And then there was the dust storm of the decade. The day started out calm and sunny. In the morning, we had full intentions of going out and broadcast seeding the two club entrances we had just spent the week grading. By 10 a.m. my assistant suggested to postpone the seeding, as the winds blew 60 m.p.h. gusting to 75. The seed would have landed on Crystal Lake Country Club three miles to the east. Dust and dirt blew everywhere including our eyes, nose and throat. On the par 3 14th hole, you could stand on the tee, if you didn't blow away, and barely see the flag 170 yards away, that is how dark it was. Still there were 40 golfers that played that day. In all my years, I have never seen anything like it except maybe a blinding snowstorm.

I could go on and on, discussing and cussing the weather, which I am sure all of us do to some extent. But no matter what happens with the weather, there has not been one day when I didn't look forward to going to work. I can honestly say that I love the job of being golf course superintendent with all the ups and downs that go with it. All it takes it one good rain after a drought and the mental pressure is released. All it takes is one sunny spring day after two weeks of clouds, or one golfing member to comment on how nice the course is and then I am reborn. I fill up with enthusiasm and I am rejuvenated again, ready to face another day of challenge, ready to improve this already great profession. The next time I write an article, I will be sitting here at my desk, watching the snow pile up, and dreaming of those warm summer days. Then I will have the time for an indepth discussion on thatch and my theories on it's elimination. Until then, keep your head held high, and thank God we are here, willing and able to work to keep the grass green.

## What is the Superintendent's Role in Private Club Management

by Bruce A. Sering, Supt.  
Glen View Club, Glen View, IL

Bob Williams, the distinguished retired superintendent from Bob-O-Link, discussed this subject a decade ago and many of his ideas are incorporated in this paper. Since we have so many young superintendents in our profession, I believe it is appropriate to examine the superintendent's function in golf club operations once again.

First of all the primary source of income for most private clubs is the golf course. Either directly or indirectly, golf satisfaction and income are in direct relation to course architecture and course condition. We can substantiate that statement by observing that golf clubs are pretty lonely places on a rainy day. When there is no golf, there is little action at the club. Check your income figures for January, February, and March.

The successful superintendents are those who can fulfill the club's objectives with the least amount of effort or concern by the club officials. This superintendent is usually the "take charge" type of person with executive ability who can steer course operations and development toward the goals of the long range plans for the course. He knows the game of golf. He develops a selling program to implement his ideas and suggestions. One of the superintendent's major efforts must be the constant interpretation of the standard of maintenance his golfers desire and are willing to pay for. Assuming the superintendents technical abilities, his ability to program meaningful, accurate budgets and sell them to the club is perhaps the crux of his success. In order to be responsive to a membership, the superintendent must be in close contact with them. He must attend committee meetings and board meetings. He must converse with the members in the grill room and out on the course. He cannot be isolated in any way from the membership. A superintendent has a need to know the membership to whom he is responsible.

Superintendents must accept the responsibility for the long term continuity of golf course operations. The frequent changing of club officials, changes in committees and the changeover in membership tends to upset the continuity of club management. Thus, all management people must influence a steady progressive program for total club operation.

Most private clubs operate under the committee system. Members are elected to a Board of Directors and serve as chairman of various committees to oversee the services the membership desires. The main committees, House, Golf and Greens, employ respectively the Club Manager, the Course Superintendent and the Golf Professional to run the club. These three managers comprise a triumvirate whose job it is to see that the club runs as directed. While the three each have overlapping areas of responsibility, they report to their committee head and thus to the Board of Directors.

Recently, attention has again been focused upon the concept of club operations through a general manager. In the pure sense, this means the employment of one individual who oversees the entire club operation. He employs the golf pro, clubhouse manager, and course superintendent, all three reporting to him. This general manager becomes the link between the committees and the three department heads removing the three managers from direct contact with the Board of Directors. The general

(cont'd. page 6)



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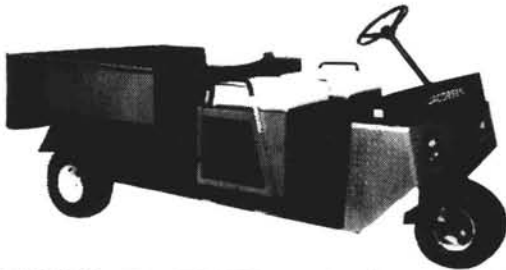
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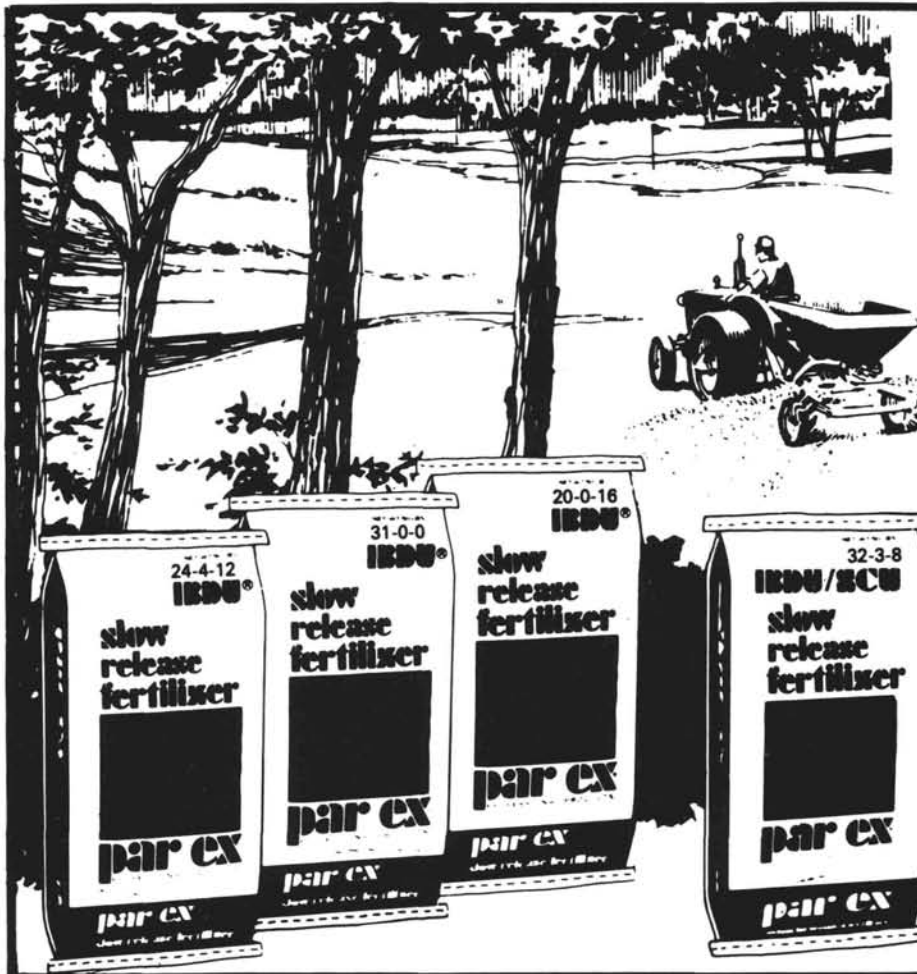
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manager alone communicates with the Board. Unless we as superintendents recognize the problems of the general manager concept, and do something about it, we all could become foreman of golf course maintenance.

I believe it is important to point out that golf professionals, club managers and golf course superintendents should all be equally concerned for the welfare of their club, the welfare of each other and the welfare of their respective professions. For them to work equally for the common good of the club seems appropriate and beneficial to everyone. Generally speaking, pros and superintendents support the triumvirate organization, while clubhouse managers favor the general manager concept.

The term General Manager, has become abrasive to superintendents and we oppose general managers for a number of reasons. Most importantly, general managership tends to threaten the identity, the stability, the welfare and the professionalism of golf course superintendents. It makes the superintendent subservient to the general manager. It decreases the superintendent's potential salary level by demoting his management level. Most harmful of all, it isolates the superintendent from official contact with the Board of Directors. It is frequently the end of the superintendent's appearance at committee and board meetings. It is essential that we have the opportunity for liaison with the membership, the Greens Committee members and the Board of Directors. It is to these people that we sell our plans, our programs, our budgets and ourselves.

I feel that country club board's are quick to accept the presumed virtues of general managership. Many of them work in the corporate world and are accustomed to the idea. A Board believes that a general manager would reduce the demand for personal time and effort. Actually, much time is wasted and misinformation is dispersed when the technical experts, the golf professional and superintendent, are not in attendance. If the proper committee has met with the appropriate expert, the information can be accurately conveyed and acted upon.

Club Board's have not come to the realization that running a club is quite different from running a corporation. A club is an extension of the member's home and the members main concern is with the pleasant rewards of social and recreational activity. Efficiency and economy become equal with pleasure, service, comfort and the member's ability to afford various levels of luxury at their club.

My 29 years experience around country clubs has shown me the weaknesses of the general manager arrangement. General managers usually hire weak people as their department heads because they are easy to control and stay in line. I've observed that high calibre golf pros and superintendents rebel against a club that attempts this arrangement. I have noticed country clubs where management difficulties resulted in the firing of the club manager prior to the golf season. The club went through the entire season without a club manager. The club ran very well with a competent staff working together.

To conclude, I would like to stress that it is important for us to be cognizant of the problems generated when a general manager is installed. We superintendents, along with the golf professionals, must continue to sell and support the triumvirate plan for club management. If golf professionals and superintendents acquiesce or silently accept the general manager concept, friction and resentment will build and the professionalism of our job will be diminished.

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Rubigan <sup>3</sup>	.5 oz.	11.0
Daconil 2787 4F <sup>4</sup>	6 fl. oz.	4.6
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Fungo 50 <sup>1</sup>	1 oz.	21 days	28.3	19.0
Daconil 2787 4F	6 fl. oz.	14 days	38.3	28.3
Actidione TGF + Actidione RZ <sup>6</sup>	.34 + .55 oz.	14 days	48.3	65.0
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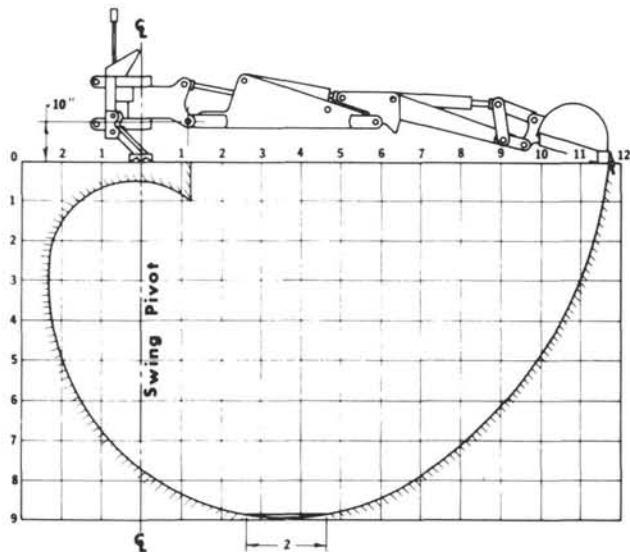
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## Patch Diseases of Turfgrasses: An Update

by Houston B. Couch,

The classic 'patch' symptom pattern in turfgrass is one in which the overall appearance of the area is characterized by the blighting of the majority of the leaves of the plants in a section of otherwise green turf. At present, there are 16 known patch diseases of turfgrasses. Various members of this disease group occur throughout the year on both warm-season and cool-season turfgrasses. (See Table 1 for a complete list of the patch diseases and the grasses they affect - page 15.)

The patch diseases are among the most difficult to diagnose. This is due to the fact that some of the more dramatic symptoms associated with certain of these diseases can also be brought on by stresses from the environment or improper management practices. Also, the primary field diagnostic features for many of the patch diseases closely resemble each other. For example, one of the symptom patterns common to several of these diseases is the so-called "frog-eye" effect. This is a more or less circular area of blighted grass with a center of green, apparently healthy plants. At present, nine patch diseases are known to be capable of producing this type of symptom: (i) spring dead spot of Bermudagrass, (ii) Fusarium patch, (iii) Rhizoctonia yellow patch, (iv) necrotic ring spot, (v) take all patch, (vi) Pythium blight, (vii) Fusarium blight, and (viii) Rhizoctonia blight, and (ix) Sclerotium blight.

In addition to creating some confusion in diagnosis, the failure to understand the fact that this "frog-eye" symptom pattern occurs with many patch diseases other than Fusarium blight has also led to confusion in the use of terminology. For example, in the late 1970's, reports from Cornell University began to refer to any patch disease that produced blighted grass with center tufts of green plants as part of its symptom pattern as "Fusarium blight syndrome."

The type of problem this has created in communications where patch diseases are concerned is illustrated in a published report on the results of the 1983 Cornell field disease control trials (APS Fungicide and Nematicide Tests, Vol. 39, page 182). This data shows two entirely different types of fungicides, the Phycomycete (Pythium) specific fungicide Subdue and the non-Phycomycete active fungicides Bayleton and Tersan 1991 all controlling the same disease, "Fusarium blight syndrome," in the same plots.

Since the ambiguity of this particular terminology has made it impossible to understand exactly which disease is being referred to, "Fusarium blight syndrome" is no longer considered to be a valid designation for any of the patch diseases of turfgrasses.

Research during the past 5 years has added much to our understanding of both the cause and control of several of the patch diseases. The nature of the fungus that causes winter crown rot in Canada has been worked out. Three newly recognized patch diseases (Limnomyces pink patch, necrotic ring spot, and Phizoctonia yellow patch), are now included in the spring and fall group. While, with the summer patch diseases, a new entry, Sclerotium blight, has been added to the list, diagnostic techniques have been refined for Pythium blight, Rhizoctonia blight and Fusarium blight, and more effective fungicides have been developed for the control of Pythium blight and Fusarium blight.

In this report, we will not attempt to cover all of the patch

diseases. Instead, we will review the highlights of some of the more recent research findings on the nature of the newly recognized spring and summer diseases and outline some of the latest developments in the "state of the art" which diagnosis and control of certain of the other patch diseases are concerned.

## Spring and Fall Patch Diseases

### Necrotic Ring Spot

Necrotic ring spot is a newly recognized disease of turfgrass in North America. It has been reported from the Pacific Northwest and northeastern, midwestern, and north central sections of the United States. This disease can be very destructive on Kentucky bluegrass and bentgrass. It also affects ryegrass, red fescue, tall fescue and chewings fescue.

In the early stages of development, necrotic ring spot is seen as irregular patches of grass that have a general appearance of drought injury. The plants are often stunted or discolored; turning various shades of red, yellow or tan. As the disease progresses, these areas take on a dull tan to brown appearance.

The individual areas of dead grass are usually more or less circular in outline, and may range from a few inches to several feet in diameter. Eventually, many of the affected areas will take on a distinctive "frog-eye" appearance. Also, as the thatch decomposes in these areas, there develops a distinct "sunken pocket" appearance to the turf.

Necrotic ring spot is incited by the fungus *Leptosphaeria korrae*. Development of the disease is favored by cool wet weather in the spring and fall. During April and May, heavy outbreaks of the disease are known to occur after prolonged periods of rainfall.

Field research reports from Washington State and Wisconsin indicate that Chipco 26019 and Banner provide good control of necrotic ring spot, while Bayleton has been found to be ineffective in controlling the disease.

### Rhizoctonia Yellow Patch:

Rhizoctonia yellow patch is caused by *Rhizoctonia cerealis*. This disease has been reported from Canada, northeastern United States, the eastern seaboard states, Kentucky, and the north central states. It can be very destructive to Kentucky bluegrass, but causes only slight to moderate damage to creeping bentgrass, tall fescue, Bermudagrass and zoysia.

During its early stages of development, Rhizoctonia yellow patch appears as light green to distinctively yellow-green patches 2-3 inches in diameter. In Kentucky bluegrass, the color of these areas fade to a light tan to brown. The size of the individual patches may eventually extend up to 3 feet in diameter. In the case of bentgrass, tall fescue, Bermudagrass or zoysia, the color of the patches may remain yellow-green for several weeks, but fail to turn brown. Eventually, the plants in these areas may recover fully from the disease.

The "frog-eye" symptom pattern of distinct rings of yellow-green to brown areas of grass with sections of healthy-appearing plants in the centers is very common for Rhizoctonia yellow patch. Also, these patches often have a pronounced sunken appearance due to the rapid decomposition of the thatch.

When conditions are particularly favorable for development of the disease, the plants near the margins of the affected areas will frequently have a characteristic reddish to reddish-purple appearance. This discoloration begins at the leaf tip and then moves progressively toward the sheath. (cont'd. page 11)



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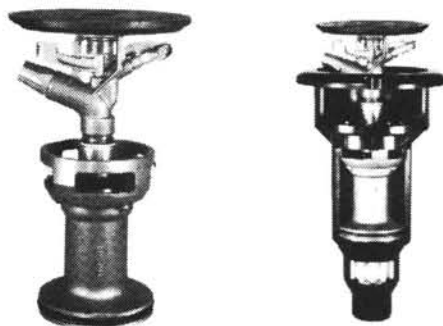
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