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President's Message

by Dave Meyer

Winter has finally arrived. There are several indicators of that: the temperature and the Turf Clinics and shows. The NCTE was again very successful with a very nice trade show.

I was very pleased with the MAGCS portion of the clinic. There was standing room only attendance showing me that our experiences and knowledge is very important to many people. The attendance also shows me that our Midwest Clinic had no effect on the NCTE attendance.

The Illinois Turf Grass board did a fine job of selecting their Turfgrass Man of the year. That person is Al Turgeon. He should be credited with the resurgence of the Turf Grass program in Illinois. Al revived the Turf Plots and influenced the ITF involvement in the University of Illinois program again.

Our thoughts can now be directed toward a new year. The January 9th meeting will be at Arrowhead and on to the GCSAA Convention in February. Our Association will again have a hospitality suite at the convention headquarters sponsored by our Associate members on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights.

The board met twice with each committee presenting a plan and a budget. The Finance Committee is putting the budget together and another meeting in January will finalize the plan. You will be hearing more as we proceed.

In closing, on behalf of my family, I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.



Dr. Randy T. Kane, Turfgrass Advisor (312) 954-2753
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Director's Column



"For Tomorrow, Next Week, Next Month, Next Year, & Beyond"

by Al Fierst, Oak Park C.C.

It's been discussed numerous times over the past years; the subject continually arising regarding the direction of the "Midwest" both for now and what's ahead. Everyone agreed that the direction was vague at best and could use a conceptual format by which to direct the MAGCS. During his presidency, Mike Nass appointed a committee to explore and develop a conceptual format of objectives, and criteria for the Association. His directive was clear and to the point, a long range plan was necessary to give the MAGCS a sense of direction and purpose through ensuing administrations. This long range set of criteria would serve as a backbone, albeit a flexible one, for the MAGCS to gauge itself and it's progress as the long term objectives are addressed.

The long range plan was conceptualized through a series of brainstorming sessions in 1988. Topics were discussed between committee members and evaluated for incorporation into the long range proposal. Subjects varied widely, ranging from complex issues of finance to easier but equally important issues of MAGCS image and professional alliances. The committee members were adamant in their feeling that the long range proposals were essential to the continued growth of the "Midwest" and the image of the golf course Superintendent.

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) shall continue in 1989. The intent is to formalize and develop the concepts offered to the membership and begin to see these implemented. Before we can fully realize some of these projections and goals however, the individual membership of the Midwest should let the LRPC know what ideas might be of importance to the future of our Association and how those thoughts might be incorporated into the association's future. The intention is to provide a viable guideline of planning points for a better, more efficient, more responsive MAGCS. So let us know how you feel and ask to be informed about the status of the LRPC. Give and share your thoughts and concerns about what the future holds. Help us provide the long term directives that will make the MAGCS the Association you choose it to be.

Lightweight Fairway Mower Comparison

by David Blumquist, Naperville C.C.

We are right in the middle of yet another innovation in golf course management. Golf Course Superintendents have always mowed fairways with lightweight mowers, but it wasn't until the early 80s that lightweight mowing of every fairway on a regular basis became commonplace.

Equipment manufacturers wanted to make sure we were serious, so they waited to research and develop a practical cutting unit. This is why, early on, private or more "well to do" clubs were the only participants. Early lightweight fairway mowers were primarily Toro GM-3s or 84s, Jacobsen Greensking, Ransomes 180, among others. These were not made for fairway use at that time, thus it was an expensive proposition.

Within the last three years the introduction of several machines have made lightweight mowing practical for public courses that strive for private club conditions. Finally, equipment suppliers have caught on. Suddenly we are faced with another problem, which one is correct for each specific application? Previously, cost was a minor consideration because there wasn't much out there. As something became available we bought it. This will likely change as within a year, all major manufacturers should have a lightweight 5 gang available.

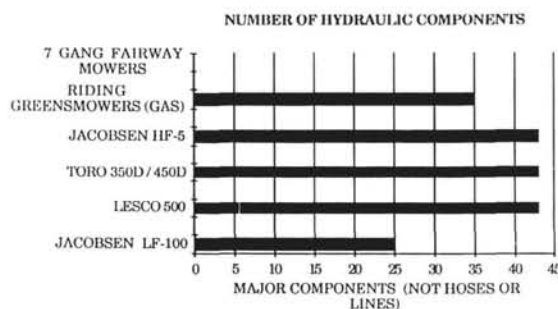
The current mowers in the Chicago area can be divided into 3 categories: Triplexes, light 5 gangs, heavy 5 gangs.

Triplexes — the following are the most popular: Toro GM3, GM3000, Toro 216 Reelmaster, Jacobsen Greensking, LESCO 300.

It is estimated that there are over 100 Triplexes in use on fairways today, with a 2 to 1 ratio of Toro vs. all others. Today's newer models are much better suited for fairway use. The frames are constructed sturdier and they are much more comfortable to operate. The Diesel engine has been incorporated to extend mower life.

Lightweight 5 gangs — the only lightweight 5 gang that has been in use is the LESCO 500. LESCO estimates there are 66 units in the Chicago area. When the first 500 came out, there were several questions: would service be adequate, and are they durable? Here at Naperville Country Club we've had no problems with service or parts delivery, in fact LESCO has proven to be as fast or faster than other local suppliers. A Chicago area distribution center should help cut mailing costs on parts. After two seasons we see no extraordinary wear on our two units, in fact we've recently purchased a third unit. Their new diesel model boasts extended longevity.

At last years GCSAA Conference in Houston, Jacobsen introduced the LF-100. Besides utilizing a proven engine and drive assembly, they've added a new hydraulic system with fewer components (see graph #1). As of December 5, 1988, Illinois Lawn claims 63 commitments for this relatively untested unit.



(continued on page 4)

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If the price doesn't escalate, and it survives the first couple seasons better than its predecessor, the HF-5, this new mower could see extensive use.

Toro is in the process of developing a lightweight 5 gang. Look for a prototype in Anaheim.

Heavy 5 gangs — the most popular of these are the Toro 350 and 450 Reelmaster and Jacobsen's HF-5. These units seem to perform better on Bluegrass fairways. Toros are very popular in the southern United States. Jacobsen's version is beginning to be replaced by other mowers. Some courses still use them, however the newer models are slowly but surely making the once popular HF-5 obsolete.

The future of lightweight fairway mowing appears promising. Competition by manufacturers will help keep price down and quality up. The Superintendent will have a choice of which unit performs best on his fairways. One problem inherent with lightweight mowing is the intense maintenance required on the reel units. It would appear as though this is something that isn't going to change soon, although it is a topic of research by some manufacturers. One must understand that even the best reel design is destined to be pushed beyond its capabilities. Mowing time alone is not the only increase when changing from larger gangs to lightweight mowers. The mechanical operation is also pushed beyond its limits, thus many Superintendents have added a second mechanic.

Chart #2 addresses 5 issues: Width of cut, mowing speed, weight, reel type, and frequency of clip. The first category is self explanatory.

Mowing speed of a particular unit can be deceiving because that speed may not be possible on all layouts due to terrain inconsistencies, or operator skill. Machine weight is a factor that is not as clear cut as it would seem. Many things should be considered, for example: tire area on turf; distribution of weight; down pressure on reels that relieves down pressure on tires. No one seems to have concise research in this area.

Frequency of clip or the distance the cutting unit travels between two successive shear points. This should equal the desired cutting height with a 20% variance. The key here is to understand that if the frequency falls below the mowing height, it becomes necessary to mow more often because that mower won't be able to gather grass as fast as it cuts it.

Literature cited:

Gary Shampeny, The Toro Co., "Lightweight Fairway Mowing: Quality of Cut"

Charts provided by Illinois Lawn Inc.

	WIDTH	MOW SPEED	WEIGHT	MOWERS	FREQ/CLIP
JACOBSEN LF-100	100"	5 MPH	1950	5 - 22" 7BL	.45 @ 5mph
LESCO 500	100"	3.5 MPH	1575	5 - 22" 9BL	.25 @ 3.5mph
TORO 350D / 450D	138"	5 MPH	3590	5 - 30" 7BL	.75 @ 5mph
JACOBSEN HF-5	133"	4.5 MPH	2475	5 - 30" 10BL	.5 @ 4.5mph
RIDING GREENSMOWERS (GAS)	60"	3.8 MPH	1150	3 - 22" 9BL	.25 @ 3.8mph
7 GANG FAIRWAY MOWERS	175"	4.5 MPH	6000	7 - 30" 10BL	.6 @ 4.5mph

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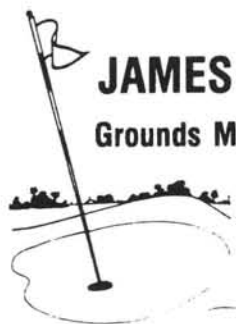
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Reblooming Your Christmas Poinsettia

by James A. Fizzell, Sr. Ext. Adviser
Horticulture

The Christmas poinsettia, probably the most difficult plant to reflower, is the one most often attempted. It is a real challenge even to the best gardener. But, if you pay attention to the details it is certainly rewarding when you see the cheery red showing up just in time for the holidays.

Here's how — when you get tired of looking at your point, put it away in a cool dark place. Check it once in a while and wet the soil so the roots and stems don't shrivel.

A couple of weeks after Easter (about the time your lily gives up) haul the plant out, cut it back to about six inches tall, repot it in the next larger size pot, and set it in a warm sunny place to start growing. When danger of frost is past, set it outside where it will get filtered sunlight. A lathe house is great, or plunge the pot in a well drained, protected place in your flower bed. Lift the pot every week or so to prevent rooting through, and turn it so you get even growth. Use some diluted liquid fertilizer if the plant goes off color.

Pinch as needed to shape the plant until about the end of August.

Keep a close watch for insects. Scale, mealybugs, and particularly whitefly, love points. Use pyrethroid plant spray if you see any uninvited guests.

Before the heating season starts, bring your plant indoors and set it in a bright, cool place. South windows and temperatures of 60 to 70 degrees are perfect.

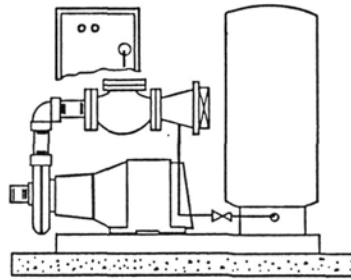
Keep the plant growing. You will see some leaf drop as the plant acclimates to its new home. Be careful not to overwater, and reduce the amount of fertilizer to compensate for reduced growth.

Now comes the difficult part. Poinsettias bloom in response to the **uninterrupted** dark dark period each day. They must have at least 13 hours of continuous dark every 24 hours.

A cool, spare room in which you never turn on lights (and where street or porchlights don't shine) is an ideal place for this short day treatment. Some people put the plant in a closet every night. Or, you will have to figure out some other way to shield the plant from ANY artificial light every night. As little as 1 to 2 foot candles of light in the middle of the night delays or prevents blooms. It divides the dark into two short periods. Try blank plastic, a garbage pail with a lid, etc.

Start the shade treatment about October 15. Be sure the temperature during the dark period is about 60-62 degrees and

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that you put the plant out to grow each day in its favorite spot. (Some people have been known to leave the plant in the dark for months). It is important to keep the plant growing during this time. And don't forget to shade the plant **every** night. One slip-up and you have lost the battle.

By Thanksgiving, you should notice the leaves at the tips of the stems beginning to turn red and by mid-December the plant should be in full flower.

Seems like a lot of work, when you could just run down to the florist for a plant in full bloom. Yet nobody gardens because it's easy ... it's fun. And there is a lot of satisfaction in being able to say, "I did it", when everyone said it couldn't be done.

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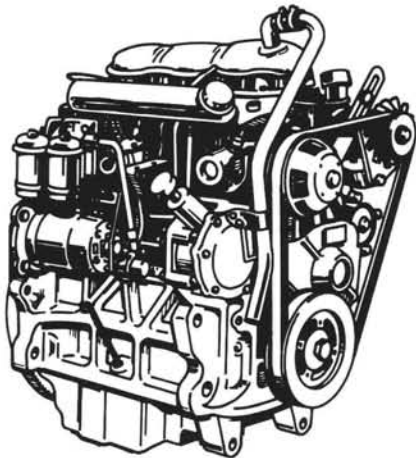
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In Defense of Kentucky Bluegrass Fairways

by Dudley Smith, Silver Lake C.C.

We are gathered here today to pay homage to old Kentucky. I never expected to speak with expertise about the bluegrass fairways at Silver Lake. As a matter of fact, there is more criticism of our fairways than any facet of our operation; unless it be the pin locations.

This challenge was accepted for two reasons:

1. I hate *Poa annua*. I was schooled that *poa annua* is a weed both in putting surfaces and as a fairway turf. I never intend to culture this pest as a perennial fairway carpet.

2. All of us grew up hitting the golfball off sparse weedy bluegrass fairways, today's hybrid bluegrass-ryegrass fairways are a luxury to behold. Watching country clubs cater to the whims of a few low-handicap golfers, and convert their fairways to bentgrass-*poa* turf, burns me up! Golfers who shoot over 85 and that includes most women golfers, cannot navigate bent fairways. Millions of us sweep the ball from the turf, rather than punching out a divot. The cost and maintenance of bentgrass is not our topic today.

The finest bluegrass fairways that I have played in our area are (alphabetically) Aurora CCC, Briar Ridge CC, Danville CC, Deer Creek CC, Prestwick CC, and Turnberry CC. I consulted the superintendents to learn their management secrets.

Carl Hopphan's philosophy surprised me. "You must change your priorities and lift the fairway standards to the same level as your putting greens. We check our greens daily for disease, local dry spots, putting speed; the day is here to evaluate our fairways with the same esteem. Call it Tender Loving Care, it's a habit we must assume." (Incidentally, never ask Carl Hopphan a question unless you have 30 minutes to listen to his reply.)

Superintendents from these courses fertilized their fairways heavily. As a rule 4 lb. nitrogen per thousand sq. ft. annually. Four applications a year including a late or dormant feeding was the norm. The materials preferred were slow release IBDU, sulfur coated urea, and some straight urea for the late feeding. Sulfate of potash rates exceeded the nitrogen levels. 6-8 lb. potassium per thousand annually was not uncommon.

For bluegrass to be acceptable on fairways it must support the golfball. Turf density is the key. Fairways should go into dormancy thick and healthy. Skimping, saving the fertilizer dollar for next year's spring application means thin turf, dandelions and clover, and susceptibility to leafspot.

A. Fertilization

Soil tests taken in 1987 indicated that the pH of the fairways at Silver Lake was 6.5-7.0. The fairways were deficient in calcium and sulfur. We apply high calcium limestone from Pontiac, Illinois at the rate of 2 Ton per acre every three years.

In 1987 we fertilized fairways twice in the summer. 22-0-22 in June and 24-4-12 in August, both feedings at 200 lb. per acre or 1 lb. nitrogen per thousand. The October feeding was 8-4-24 at 300 lb. per acre. The annual total was 2.8 lb. nitrogen and 4.0 lb. potash per thousand.

In 1988 fairways were fertilized three times in the summer, May, July, and late August with 15-0-30 at 180 lb. per acre, or 0.6 lb. nitrogen per thousand each application.

In November the dormant feeding was 21-2-20 sulfur coated IBDU at 250 lb. per acre or 1.2 lb. nitrogen.

This week we are spreading sulfate of potash at 180 lb. per acre or 2 lb. actual K per thousand.

The 1988 picture is 3.0 lb. nitrogen and 6.8 lb. potash per thousand.

The fairway fertilizer cost in 1988 was \$30,000.



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B. Weed Control

When we finally had a drenching rain in September, the fairways were sprayed with Trimec at 1 qt. per acre for broadleaf weeds. I added an extra half pint of Banvel in the cart traffic area to clean up existing knotweed. September is the best time for our herbicide program. We have more experienced help available, and who knows, it may be too wet for the sprayrig in May.

C. Disease Control

The fungicide program for fairways is limited to leafspot control in April, with a repeat application two weeks later. In 1987 we used Acti Dione TGF at 1 oz. per thousand, 3 canisters per acre. In 1988 the control was Manzate 5 oz. per thousand with iron chelate added at 4 oz. per thousand. 10 gallons Manzate plus 8 gallons Ferrate in 400 gallons water covered 7 acres.

We have never sprayed our Kentucky bluegrass fairways for Pythium. The collars and approach area infested with poa annua do get spot sprayed with Subdue. Green banks and approaches were sprayed three times in July and August for Anthracnose. A combination contact and systemic, Daconil 2787 and Tersan 1991, was used. Areas that perished due to stress in late August were marked and resodded to bluegrass at our first opportunity.

D. Grub Control

In September 1986 we had terrible damage from raccoons and skunks burrowing for annual white grubs. In August 1987 we applied a Lesco pelleted fertilizer with Oftanol. I remember finishing the last four holes in the rain, so the material did get washed into the thatch layer. The only raccoon damage was in the rough where no product had been applied.

Dr. Roscoe Randall said the performance from Oftanol in 1987 was sporadic, so our timing was very lucky.

In 1988 we selected pelleted Turcam at 80 lb. per acre.

We delayed the application until September when rain was forecast. Damage this year was noticed on five fairways.

E. Irrigation

The fairway irrigation at Silver Lake is single row manual quick couplers. The par 3 holes are automated. Our fairway watering policy has been "only as needed" only when wilt and wheelmarks are apparent. In 1987 fairways were watered only 5 times.

In 1988 it was a different matter. In June, July, and August the fairways were watered once a week with 1½ hr. sets. It was possible to do some watering during the day as long as I limited it to one sprinkler per hole on par 4s and par 5s. Golfers will not pay money to walk through a car wash. This year with the roughs suffering and the trees drawing the moisture from the fairways, we had portable sprinklers running under the trees constantly.

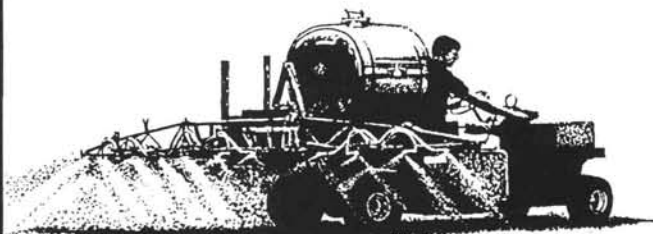
I believe in long infrequent sets on the fairways. We are not sprinkling for cosmetic appearance, or to keep the shallow rooted poa annua flourishing, but to keep the bluegrass steadily growing and free of stress.

F. Overseeding

Each August we try to supplement our fairways with new varieties. Starting back with Merion, then Scotts Windsor, most recently Columbia and Adelphi. The seeding is done in conjunction with fairway aerification. First the Dedoes aerify each fairway twice, and then the Rogers seeder slices in the new bluegrass. Truthfully the only new growth I have observed is when we have sowed perennial ryegrass. Remember Ben Warren's dwarf bluegrass sensation A-20? It was the answer to shorter fairways. If only Lee Trevino hadn't hit those "flyers" on national television. The A-20 was plugged into the virgin

(continued on page 11)

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