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President's Message



Ray Schmitz

June was the fourth month in a row the average temperature has been below normal. Other than being too dry it has been a fairly easy year in which to grow decent turf for the golfers. However, there has been much damage from the last three storms that passed through the Chicago area mainly due to high winds causing tree damage. If you have not been affected, feel fortunate — Don Cross said that Skokie C.C. lost forty trees in one storm. What ever happened to the fronts that used to bring in a gentle summer rain shower?

The June MAGCS monthly meeting was a huge success and the weather was perfect for the 144 golfers who tested the Flossmoor Country Club layout. A fine steak dinner was served to 156 people who attended the monthly meeting. Dr. Clark Throssell did a great job with the educational portion of the meeting and talked about Purdue University and its role in educating future superintendents. I especially took interest when the talk was focused on what is expected from superintendents when they employ a recent graduate from one of these fine programs. Sponsors for the day were — Illinois Lawn and Equipment, O.M. Scott Co., and Huber Ranch Sod and Equipment. Without the generous sponsors at our monthly meetings costs for the day would be prohibitive for many MAGCS members.

Recently in the mail I received the registration packet for the GCSAA convention which will be held in Anaheim January 23-30, 1993. There are two things to remember when going over this registration, first, the trade show opens on Thursday and the banquet is on Saturday night. Secondly, the Superbowl will be played on Sunday, Jan. 31st in nearby Pasadena. Housing reservations should be made early because rooms may become scarce due the Superbowl.

I want to mention a special thank you to the Murphy family of Lemont Paving for allowing the MAGCS to set up a hospitality tent on their property during the Western Open Golf Tournament. I received many nice comments regarding the hospitality of both Lemont Paving and the MAGCS during the Western Open Tournament.

Next MAGCS monthly meeting August 10th at Mt. Prospect C.C., Fred Behnke will be our host. Hope to see you there.

Director's Column



by Joel Purpur

What should I write about? Everyone is always talking about the weather because it has such an influence on our job, but what a year! A cold spring with several late frosts, (we had five "last frosts" in our log book), back to back months of record drought followed by wind storms when it did rain. Keep the rain it was not worth it. Even with all the messed up weather, the courses I've seen in the Chicago area look pretty good considering. I think sometimes golfers take these conditions for granted.

The other day after hearing enough complaints about slow greens we took out the stimpmeter. No wonder! Hell, they only averaged 9 and a half feet! The USGA keeps talking about raising cutting heights, slowing down green speeds, and educating our members that this is the right thing to do. Do you think they'll buy it? They like faster greens and they get what they want. We've seen it many times that if a reasonable effort is not made to give them the desired results, they'll simply get someone that will.

Hey will someone please invent a mechanical rake that will pick up and mulch branches too big to blow or mulch!? They'd make millions, or at least thousands because I'd buy one. Maybe I'd buy two because these wind storms only seem to occur at 3:00 p.m. the day before an 8:00 a.m. shotgun.

So far this year we've also had several fellow MAGCS members pass away. Closest to me was Steve Crow, the 32 year old superintendent of Briar Ridge Country Club. When I think of Steve I think of a guy full of life who liked to laugh and have a good time (Steve was the inventor of the Gauley River Nose Slinky). I know Renny Jacobson, his best friend will especially feel his loss. I always enjoyed Steve's company and still can't believe he is gone.

What is new with the MAGCS? The commercial members continue to be represented at our board meetings to give views, opinions and ideas from the other side of the fence. This has been productive and will benefit our members as well. The commercial members give a lot of financial support to the MAGCS which benefits all of us so please keep that in mind when making your purchases by supporting sponsors of meetings and advertisers in the "Bull Sheet".

Looking ahead we've pretty well firmed up next years meeting sites and are looking for sites for 1994. If you would like to host a meeting or would like to volunteer **someone else**, let us know and you can work on your club officials later.

With the home stretch of summer right in front of us, you know it'll only be a short time until we can tell some goofy stories about the Gauley River rafting trip in September. With 24 people going one can bet that something noteworthy is bound to happen. Kind of gets the imagination going. Next is snow skiing. If anyone's game let me know because planning is underway. It won't be long and we can put our jobs on cruise control and let the good times roll!

U.S. Open Notebook



by Bob Maibusch, CGCS

Awesome! Incredible! Spectacular! Fantastic! There aren't enough adjectives to describe the golf course at Pebble Beach.

As a Father's Day present to myself I decided to spend the weekend at the U.S. Open. Having seen numerous pictures of Pebble Beach, and watching the annual pro-am on television in February I was excited in anticipation of finally seeing the golf course. I arrived in Monterey on Friday afternoon and didn't have enough time to visit the Open that day, so I headed over to Spanish Bay for the GCSAA reception, which was very nice. I had the chance to walk the golf course at Spanish Bay prior to the reception and I really enjoyed it. It is a links course built on the sand dunes bordering the Pacific Ocean. I was interested in seeing it after having read about its design and construction, including the fact that it was seeded to all fescue grasses, including the greens. The fescue greens appeared a little bit shaggier than we would be accustomed to, and they had a fair amount of poa annua in there, which I am sure is a constant problem controlling, considering the amount of traffic that goes through there and the slow recovery time of the fescues, especially when cut short. Overall, it was a beautiful golf course in very good condition.

On Saturday I arrived at Pebble Beach early, and had no problem getting a daily pass with my GCSAA card. I decided to walk the golf course backwards so that I could enjoy the sights without the crowds. It was awe inspiring to say the least. The golf course was in fantastic condition (excluding the USGA "enhanced" greens), with beautiful, close-cut ryegrass tees and fairways, and thick roughs. For anyone who loves golf and interesting golf courses, walking the holes that play along the ocean borders on being almost a religious experience. Television doesn't do justice to the terrain and the effects of the ocean breezes on this beautiful piece of property. I also realized how lucky we are that this golf course was built in the early 1900's. With environmental regulation and the necessity for buffer zones, etc., I don't think that in this day and age a golf course like this could ever be constructed on this site.

The remainder of Saturday and Sunday were spent enjoying the golf course, and watching some great and not-so-great golf. The wind on Sunday wreaked havoc with a lot of player's games and made for an interesting finish.

Of the four U.S. Opens that I have attended this was without a doubt the most well run in every respect. The only exception was that the USGA once again felt it was their obligation to kill the greens. It was a shame to see all the obvious hard work and dedication of the golf course superintendent and his staff

(cont'd. page 4)

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(U.S. Open cont'd.)

be tarnished because the USGA was determined to have the greens run 10.5 on the Stimpmeter, and be as hard as concrete. How they can insist, with a straight face, that this is for "the good of the game" is beyond me. I walked around the golf course after play concluded on Sunday, and the wind, sun, low cutting height, and lack of water on the predominantly poa annua greens had taken its toll. It will be months before these greens are back to normal. It baffles me that the USGA, a group that does so many positive things (turf research funding, rules regulation, etc.) for golf and could have a significant, positive effect on attitudes about course conditions, continues to exercise this kind of detrimental behavior at their U.S. Open sites. While I am sure that they viewed the tournament as a huge success because only two players finished under par, it is a pity that they continue to act in a way that puts the golf course at risk while reinforcing golfers attitudes that greens aren't any good unless they roll at least 10.

Oh, and while I'm on my soapbox, thank God we have Jack Nicklaus around to take credit for the great condition of the golf course. I'm sure he probably spent the last year doing nothing but watering localized dry spots and straightening traffic control ropes. Isn't it comforting to know that we can rely on turf management experts like Jack Nicklaus, Jim McKay, and Brent Musburger to let 100 million viewers around the world know why the golf course is in its present condition.

As I was leaving the area Sunday I took the time to walk around Spyglass Hill. This golf course is another gem with the first five holes overlooking the coastline, and the remainder, that I saw, playing through the woods. It was also in great shape, with an abundance of wildlife.

As dusk approached I jumped back in my rent-a-car, raced back to San Jose, caught the red-eye back to Chicago arriving at 5:00 a.m., and was back in my office by 6:00 a.m. All in all, a great weekend. I even got back here in time to help setup for the CDGA Pro-Junior tournament which our club hosted that Monday, not exactly the U.S. Open, but enjoyable none the less.

Now, my next goal is to get down to Augusta National in April next year for the Masters. Anyone else interested?

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A Little Knowledge is Dangerous

by Dave Behrman
Riverside Golf Club

In this time of increased environmental awareness we continue to echo the cry for environmental stewardship as a means of policing our own industry before activist groups force legislation that will restrict our ability to maintain greenspace.

With this in mind there establishes a need to define what environmental stewardship entails. The first thought in mind is the proper handling and application of fertilizers and pesticides.

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What is proper application?

1. Properly identify a target pest in the case of fungicides and insecticides, or proper assessment of soil and plant needs in fertilizer application.
2. Applying material only to specific affected areas as opposed to the shotgun effect of treating large areas unnecessarily.
3. Calibration of equipment to insure materials are applied at the recommended label rates.
4. Making applications under proper field conditions, i.e. soil moisture, wind speed, temperature.
5. Monitoring of application sites concerning non-target chemical contact whether that be plant or animal.
6. Keep accurate records of all pesticide and fungicide applications.

The lists above are a short overview of what is entailed in being effective in our concern for the environment. So, now you ask, "How does this lend itself to the title 'A Little Knowledge is Dangerous?'" It occurs to me that in our everyday activities as turf managers we encounter countless members of the public that solicit free advise from us concerning all aspects of plant care. In this instance our transfer of knowledge can be beneficial or a danger to ourselves and the environment. Through our recommendations these individuals will embark on activities that require the same concerns that I outlined earlier. However, these individuals most likely are unaware of the impact their actions may have on the environment. So as environmental stewards in the 90's we must handle the transfer of information with more care.

As a golf course superintendent it is a great public relations tool to provide assistance to individuals concerning lawn care.

(cont'd. page 9)



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(Knowledge cont'd.)

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1. Base your recommendations only on the information you deem reliable. Often this requires a site visit.
2. Put your recommendations along with any safety concerns in writing. Don't rely on someone else's memory.
- 3: If an application of some type is involved recommend that they hire a professional.
4. If the individual is a do-it-yourselfer, take the time to explain to them the concerns listed earlier.
5. Never put the tools of your trade (specialized chemicals) in the hands of an amateur.

Now you may think this is taking things to extremes but in reality we have already reached the extreme. Chemicals use is an area that is greatly misunderstood by the general public. People's perception of how professionals handle chemicals in the work place and beyond will ultimately determine the future in how or if the chemicals are used.

Credit: Illinois Turfgrass Update May/June '92

Students: Give Them a Chance



by Tony Rzadzki
Cantigny Golf Club

For the past five seasons at the Cantigny Golf Club, I have had the opportunity to work with five turf students. At first I thought what a millstone. It's hard enough to manage a Hispanic crew besides throwing in one or two (book smart) Americans.

I was absolutely wrong. Over the years these students have given me more reward than anxiety. They are here to work and they are here to learn. Each one that has been here was going to school and needed on the job training to fulfill their college requirements, so they had to perform, and perform well.

What is nice about working with them, and why I do it, is that they keep you sharp. They have an unquenchable inquisitiveness. They are aggressive because they know that their time is short and they need to learn as much as possible. What is really interesting is that you can learn from them as they learn from you. They all have different personalities, as we all do, and it challenges your management strategies and helps you to develop within yourself.

What I have done over the years is to try to fuel their fire. I expose them to all the facets of golf course operation. I teach them to safely operate every machine we have. I currently have a student that is a foreman for one of our nine hole courses. I am letting him manage his course to let him know what is expected now, and what will personally be expected of him in the future when he has his own course to maintain. They can't learn it if they don't do it.

I am proud to say that two former students of mine are currently assistant superintendents. I am sure that soon they will be vying for superintendent jobs.

To me sharing knowledge is a small act that we can all perform. The benefits to others is enormous.

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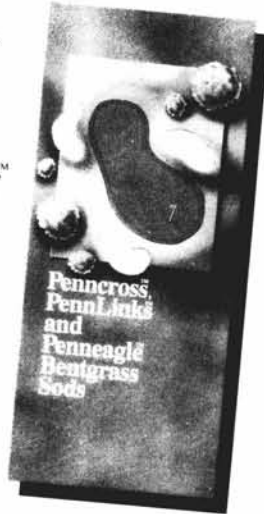
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In Your Garden Blossom-End Rot on Tomatoes

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

For weeks you have carefully tended your tomato plants and are about to be rewarded with those delicious red beauties. But what is happening to them? The bottoms are all brown and shrunken. Blossom-end rot has struck again.

Cindy Garber, Summer Horticulturist with the University of Illinois Cook County Extension Service in Rolling Meadows says calls are beginning to come in from gardeners who are having this unhappy experience.

Blossom-end rot of tomatoes is a non-infectious disease. That means it is not caused by fungi or bacteria. It first appears as a water-soaked area on the bottom of the tomato. The area enlarges or the fruit grows, then dries and shrinks, and turns black or brown in color. The affected area can involve half of the fruit.

The main cause of the disease appears to be stresses that result in a lack of calcium in the cell walls of the fruit. In some parts of the country the problem can be alleviated by the addition of lime, but here on our alkaline soils it doesn't usually work.

Also your other garden crops may not need the extra calcium. Fertilizer high in nitrogen seems to increase the problem, as does an infrequent or an insufficient supply of water. The problem can occur during prolonged dry periods while the plant is making vigorous growth; or after unusually abundant rains followed by dry periods.

Certain varieties are more prone to the blossom-end rot. Also the problem is more severe on staked plants and on pruned plants.

Caging instead of staking reduces the problem and can increase fruit production.

Other simple ways to help combat this problem are:

1. Grow tomatoes in a well-drained area.
2. Avoid excess use of fertilizer; apply fertilizer according to a soil test.
3. Avoid close, deep cultivation once tomatoes are planted.
4. Maintain uniform soil moisture with irrigation and the use of mulch around plants.
5. Grow resistant varieties.

Blossom-end rot is most severe on the first fruits, and later pickings are often unaffected.

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— Edgar A. Guest