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Trees and Golf Courses (What you thought you knew about trees on your course but were afraid to ask)

by Lawrence R. Hall

Hendricksen, the Care of Trees

Trees add far more beauty to our golf courses. It is said by many that mature trees add to the pleasure of the game and cause a more relaxing atmosphere. The loss of a single well placed tree on a dog-leg can change the handicap of that hole.

There are many attributes we can talk about when discussing trees. They are important and so we must then suggest that proper selection and maintenance of the trees on your golf course is an important consideration.

The first step in this "Trees and Golf Course" discussion should be tree selection. We must learn to diversify. Let us try to expand our tree horizons and select a wider spectrum of tree species. A great lesson we all learned from Dutch Elm Disease was do not plant too much of any single species.

Many of us have over-planted a number of species. Most of us are aware of the wide spread honey locust problems this spring and early summer. The honey locust plant bug and leaf hopper (2 different insects) attacked the new leaves just as they were emerging. The locust were void of leaves till late June in many areas. The plant bug and leaf hopper involved are both host specific. More diversity is needed.

The Japanese beetle is building in population. Lindens and crab-apples are host plants — there are others that this beetle feeds on. As beetle populations build will it become more aggressive? Perhaps?

Once we accept diversification of plant materials as a way to go, we should look at the next step which would be proper planting procedures. Always plant at grade or an inch or two above grade. **MULCH - MULCH - MULCH.**

Is staking needed? Is wrapping of the trunk needed? Both of these considerations are falling out of favor for good reasons. There is a place and a need for both — but on a limited basis.

We should not infringe upon existing mature tree root systems by aggressively planting in established root zones. Young and frisky trees can tolerate much root loss without flinching. Mature trees can be seriously injured by too much root loss — this is especially true of sugar maples, white oaks, red oaks and beech.

The next step to address today is tree maintenance. If we had made good selections and properly planted these selections, we have made a big step towards reducing our maintenance budget.

Proper tree maintenance should start the first year that tree is placed on our sites. Proper pruning is the big key to starting our trees out to being what we want them to be. Proper pruning is the best thing we can do to maintain our trees. Improper pruning is the worst thing we can do. Do your people know how to prune properly?

A low branching habit where we wish to screen out a view or a high branching habit to enhance the game are concerns that should be addressed. Train your trees when they are young and as they reach adolescence, they will

(continued page 15) 13

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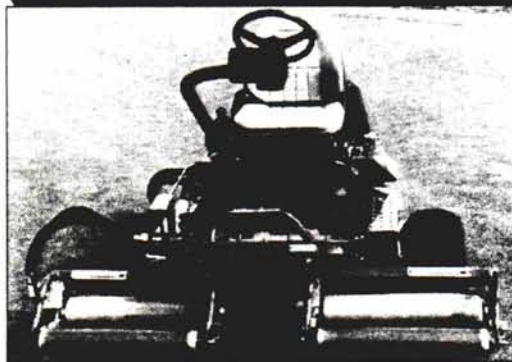
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(Trees & Golf Courses continued)

not be dysfunctional. Proper pruning improves the future branching habit.

Young trees benefit from touch-up pruning which is best done on an annual basis for the first 3 to 5 years. Do this and you will minimize many future structural and aesthetic concerns. This is surely a good way to keep people busy in those long winter months. Dormant season pruning should be emphasized.

There are pruning classes available if your people do not have the knowledge or are uncomfortable with their attempts at pruning. Do not allow unskilled people to prune your trees.

Other tree maintenance concerns we will try to briefly discuss are fertilization, pest management, cable/brace techniques and diseases of trees. We wish to emphasize the importance of proper mulching throughout this program.

Trees are important to your golf course and to our environment. Let's spend our time on what we can do to help the trees and keep the world of golf pleasant and beautiful.



And A Pinch of Baking Soda

Ready for a really handy fungicide? Dr. Kenneth Horst and his colleagues at Cornell University are seeing startling results using sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) to control powdery mildew and other fungal diseases. The compound, mixed with various spreader/sticker agents, not only prevents the growth of several fungal diseases, it cleans up plants already stricken.

Horst's work is primarily with ornamentals, but colleagues have had good results with grains, cucurbits, small fruit, and turf. Horst is unsure why a common compound such as baking soda works against diseases, but he says it controls mildews better than any other product he has seen, including those chemicals specifically marketed for mildew control.

Working with Church and Dwight, makers of Arm and Hammer baking soda, Horst recently met with EPA representatives in Washington. The goal: to get pesticide registration waivers or exemptions so that this product can be used in the agricultural market. The meetings, says Horst, were "very productive", and he expects to have sodium bicarbonate registered for use on ornamentals within 8 to 12 months. Registration for food crops would follow quickly, he believes.

Credit: Pesticides Coordinator Report



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The 32-hp 3235 can be equipped with standard or heavy-duty ESP cutting units. The ESP units are 7 inches in diameter, have 3-inch rollers, and feature 8-bladed reels.

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Upcoming Events — Mark Your Calendar

October 12 — MAGCS meeting at Sportsman G.C.

October 14 — MAGCS Fall Dinner Dance at Aurora C.C.

October 16 — Northern Illinois Golf Day at Midlothian & Beverly C.C.

November 9 MAGCS Clinic & Annual meeting at Medinah C.C.

November 27-29 — NCTE at Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, IL

February 5-11, 1996 — GCSAA 67th Conference & Show, Orlando, FL

Position Available — Second Assistant — Midlane Country Club. Illinois Pesticide Operators License required. Contact Brad Anderson at 708/249-1956.

Assistant Needed: Call Peter Voykin at Twin Orchard C.C. in Long Grove, IL. Call 708/438-8499.

Congratulations to Dave Behrman who will be leaving Riverside Golf Club and assuming the position of Golf Course Superintendent at the Midlothian C.C. in the near future. Milton and Melvin Duehr are retiring after "100 Years of Service." That's not a typo folks, you need to go back to the April 1995 issue and read again Peter Vandercooks' article on this set of twins. There has been a Duehr working on the course and/or a superintendent at Midlothian since 1927!

Peter Leuzinger is a two-timer. It's true. The dictionary defines the term as someone who is unfaithful in love or to deceive. But truthfully, Peter does not fit that description. He is a two-timer in the fact that he is no doubt the only Golf Course Superintendent to have had two golf courses certified by the Audubon Society. Both St. Charles C.C. and Ivanhoe Golf Club are certified. That takes a lot of work and dedication.

For Sale: 1966 Ford 4000 tractor, good condition, \$3,500; 1970 Ford 2000 tractor, good condition, \$4000; 1975 Turf Vac (new engine), \$1,500; 1989 Sweeper Room for Toro 72", like new, \$1,900. Call Joel Purpur at River Forest G.C., 708/782-4259.

Lohmann Golf Designs reports that 9 of the 27 holes at Broken Arrow G.C. have been opened the end of August. Grassing has begun at Whispering Springs G.C. in Fond du Lac, WI. Seeding has begun at Hunters Ridge G.C. in Marion, IA and at the Meadows G.C. in Dubuque, IA.

Ray Gerber Editorial Award Contestants

by Fred Opperman, Editor

The Ray Gerber Editorial Award was not presented in 1994 due to having only three superintendents that wrote articles. This year we had six articles that will qualify.

Article 5 of the guidelines for the award state:

There must be at least six articles in a qualifying year (September through August) to be considered. If less than six articles in any one year, those qualifying will be carried over to the next year(s), till there are six articles to be judged.

Those qualifying for the Ray Gerber Editorial Award in 1993/1994 are:

February 1993 — "Pesticide Round Table Follow-Up"

Dave Blomquist

October 1993 — "Experiences With Wildflowers"

Tony Rzadzki

June 1994 — "Keepers of the Green" — Tony Rzadzki

Qualifying in 1994/1995 are:

December 1994 — "Experimental Green at Cantigny"

Tony Rzadzki

January 1995 — "Goose Tactics Tried and Untrue"

Tony Rzadzki

January 1995 — "The Use of Weather Stations"

Dan Dinelli

March 1995 — "Time for a Change" — Brian Green

March 1995 — "5+5+ILME=MOMS?" — Jerry Mach

May 1995 — "Preventative Maintenance for Mowers and

Other Equipment" — John MacLeod

June 1995 — "Tommy Witt Interview" — Luke Cella

July 1995 — "Team Concept Introduced Into Golf Course Maintenance" — Fernando Fernandez

The above articles will be judged by a panel of five, and the award will be given at the Midwest Clinic on November 9, 1995, at the Medinah Country Club. The judges for this year's award will be: Joel Purpur, President, MAGCS; Dr. Randy Kane, U. of I. and CDGA; Dr. Tom Fermanian, U. of I.; Donald Gerber, Retired Golf Course Superintendent and Past President of MAGCS; and Fred Opperman, Editor.

MAGCS Nominating Committee

22 August, 1995

— Slate of Candidates —

— Officers —

For MAGCS President: Donald A. Cross

For MAGCS Vice President: Ed Braunsky

For MAGCS Sec./Treas.: Kevin Czerkies

For MAGCS Past President: Joel V. Purpur

— Directors —

For MAGCS Director: Kerry Blatteau, Robert Maibusch,

Jim McNair, Tom Robinson, Luke Strojny, Greg Thalman

How about a little help on what's happening out there on the courses this fall. What projects are you doing, what's on the drawing boards, etc. You all like to read about it, so how about adding to it?

Whew! Enough is Enough

**Karl Danneberger, Joe Rimelspach & Jill Taylor
Turfgrass Specialists, the Ohio State University**

One major problem (which there were many) during the summer of 1995 was brown patch. We encountered many superintendents complaining that the brown patch fungicide used, did not work or the length of control was shorter than expected. In an attempt to address some of the reasons for disease control failure, let's review the major factors necessary to enhance brown patch severity.

For brown patch to occur, the pathogen needs to be present which in this case is *Rhizoctonia solani*, a soil born pathogen which is ubiquitous on many golf courses. The second important factor for disease development is favorable environmental conditions which in the case of *R. solani* include night temperatures that exceed 68 F and high humidity (prolonged periods of leaf wetness). Thus, conditions of high temperatures, humidity, and rainy periods will enhance disease development. This year, these conditions were present from early July through the remainder of most of the summer (this article was written during the week of August 21st and no change in weather was yet observed). Normally in past years where we have had conditions favorable for brown patch we see breaks in these conditions which can slow or arrest disease development. This year, environmental conditions have remained favorable continually for weeks.

The third factor, is the condition of the plant. This year we had a cool and extremely wet spring. Excessive top growth resulted in some cases in scalping from mowing which resulted in plant energy being used to regenerate tissue growth at the expense of root growth. In addition, wet soil conditions were not conducive for root growth resulting in root systems that were not as fully developed going into the summer. With the arrival of high temperatures and rain drenching storms in the middle of July, we observed rapid decline of root systems. Sustained high temperatures (we measured soil temperatures in the mid 90's to low 100's and canopy temperatures as high as 108 F on "healthy" turfgrass) and high soil moisture resulted in the plant being defenseless to the colonization of *R. solani* and the spread of the disease. Given that conditions were so favorable for disease development and so detrimental to turfgrass health, chemical control of this pathogen at best was difficult.

Chemical Control

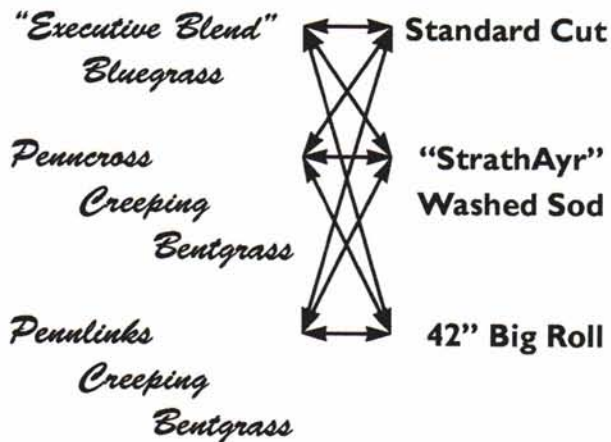
From a research perspective, the summer of 1995 has been a great year to evaluate fungicides for brown patch control. Given the conditions present during 1995, these are some of the observations we have found.

★ In general, systemic fungicides applied preventative (applications before conditions were favorable for disease development) provided much better control than when applied curative.

★ Contact fungicides (chlorothalonil, mancozeb) provided the best curative control but maximum control period was less than 7 days.

(continued page 21)

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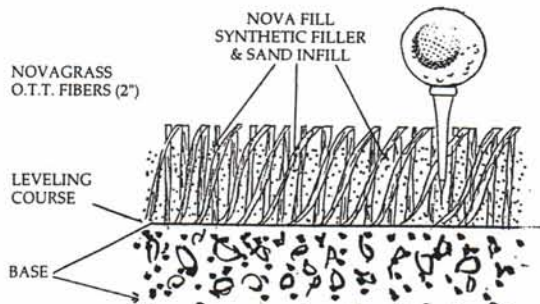


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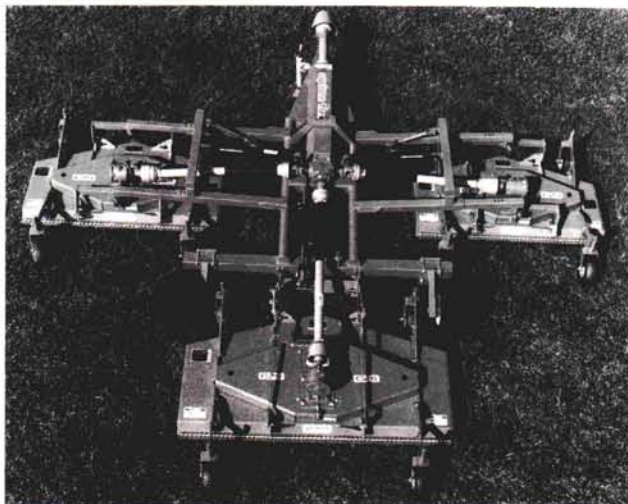
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