

# Turf Roundup of 1952

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## (Second Installment)

It is not surprising that a great many greenkeepers and golf course superintendents are puzzled when it comes to making the right choice as to which fungicide to use on their greens at that particular time. There is a wide choice of fungicides, each one of which is being sponsored by the manufacturers and others and certain claims which they have made for that fungicide. It becomes increasingly difficult for the man with insufficient training to make the proper choice. In some cases the right choice was not made and the turf suffered.

Much the same situation exists among insecticides. However, this is not quite so serious as it is among the fungicides. Chlordane becomes almost a universal insecticide for turf. It has been cited before as controlling most of the turf insects except when it is used in connection with some of the newer fungicides which absolutely seem to inhibit the Chlordane and renders it ineffective. This happened in some instances during this past summer, where a certain fungicide was used on the greens the sod webworms were working and three heavy applications of Chlordane failed to affect the sod webworms. The superintendent had to resort to arsenate of lead to control the attack. When this sort of thing happens it even becomes more important for the club management to insist, and to make it possible, for the superintendent to attend conferences so that he can be up-to-date on the latest methods and materials.

Somewhat the same situation exists among the fertilizers. There are many different types of fertilizers on the market, and the lack of awareness of the right use for each of these fertilizers and fertilizer materials is rather astonishing. We find in many cases that the greenkeeper or the superintendent has difficulty in calculating a balanced fertilizer, using common materials on the market. This subject could receive greater attention at schools and conferences and in college courses.

## "Foolproofness" Needed

What is needed more and more in the Turf Management field is more "foolproofness". That is particularly true because salaries and compensation for management in turf are not sufficient to attract men who have sufficient training to be com-

petent in all details. "Foolproofness" is needed in nearly everything — grasses, fertilizers, fungicides, insecticides, and particularly in management such as watering. The Green Section virtually has dedicated itself to this policy.

Its early acceptance and work with the new types of fertilizers that do not burn the turf represents the validity of this statement. The insistence of the Green Section that its member clubs try zoysia in nurseries, especially where they have crabgrass, is another indication that it considers zoysia as one more approach to "foolproofness." It does not say that any one thing is the answer but that certain factors represent a logical approach.

## The Green Section

The Green Section ended the season with a small staff which was incapable of meeting the demands for assistance. Marvin Ferguson's leave of absence expired and he decided to give the Texas Turf Program a lift. Charlie Wilson opened the West Coast Regional Green Section Office at Davis, Calif. We tried to stem the tide and also to keep ahead of the maintenance on nearly five acres of experimental turf. Many calls for assistance had to be refused. Phone calls in the office were incessant as a result of publicity on grasses, soil conditioners, clover, weed killers and fertilizers. The word "miracle" was applied too loosely to too many things, resulting in the deluge of calls and letters.

During May we had 26 days of rain at Beltsville. Following that we had drought and heat. Unadapted grasses "folded their tents" and let crabgrass and goosegrass have the field. Chinchbugs, sod webworms, cutworms, and beetle grubs took their toll. The only plots that remained in near-perfect condition under all heights of cut were the warm season grasses, alone and in combination with cool-season grasses. Our faith in The Combination was re-affirmed each day of the year. Now on October 10, the zoysia-Merion combinations are as close to perfection for lawn and fairway use as one could wish. The loss of color after heavy frosts will be scarcely noticeable. Playing conditions are excellent at all times.

We are certain that our success will

## 1953 TURF CONFERENCES

- Jan. 6-7 — Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents and University of Maryland, Lord Baltimore Hotel, Baltimore
- Jan. 9 — Central Florida Lawn and Turf Institute Meeting, Mount Dora, Fla.
- Jan. 19-23 — One-week Short Course in Turf Management, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.
- Feb. 8-13 — 24th Annual Turf Conference and Show of Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, The Ambassador, Atlantic City, N. J.
- Feb. 16-19 — Turf Conference, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa.
- Feb. 24-26 — Cornell Turf Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. J.
- Mar. 2-3 — Turf Conference, Midwest Regional Turf Foundation and Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.
- Mar. 9-11 — 19th Annual Superintendents and Turf Assn. Short Course, Iowa State College, Ames.
- Mar. 11-13 — Minnesota Short Course, Curtis Hotel, Minneapolis, Minn.
- Mar. 13-14 — Michigan Golf Turf Conference, Michigan State College, East Lansing.
- Apr. 22-23 — Southeastern Turf Conference, Abraham Baldwin Agri. College and Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station, Tifton, Ga.
- Oct. 21-23 — Central Plains Turf Foundation Conference, Kansas State College, Manhattan, Ks.

not be shared by others for some time to come. Some feel that it is too much to expect for two grasses to live together in harmony. That, of course, will develop more research to determine the "yes" or "no" of that question. We only say that, since we have been so successful in producing nearly "fool-proof turf" at Beltsville, we should like to see others try it in a small way in nurseries and in research plots to learn if it is practicable and feasible elsewhere, and to determine its practical limitations. The Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents has begun to act upon the results at Beltsville and we are seeing more and more plantings of the better warm-season grasses on golf courses in the area.

We were disappointed to be obliged to cancel the National Turf Field Day but it was unavoidable. With such strong Field Days at cooperating experiment stations the loss is softened. We hope that some day soon we can resume full-scale operations again.

The Green Section's place in developing "Operation Zoysia" at the Fairfax Country Club in cooperation with the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents is indicative of one of the types of services which the Green Section is offering to all golf course superintendents' associations in the country.

The Green Section will announce in a more detailed write-up in the Golf Course Reporter how golf course superintendents' associations can cooperate with the Green Section in developing their own "Opera-

tion Zoysia" in the winter and spring of 1953. The Green Section has seed of an improved zoysia and also the information on how to handle this seed to obtain the best results. Enough seed will be made available to each cooperating golf course superintendents association to plant one acre of zoysia on a fairway which will be selected by the association itself.

At the Fairfax Country Club in April 1952 it required approximately 83 man hours to plant one acre of zoysia, using the Aerifier equipped with inch spoons and hand-planting individual Z-73 zoysia seedlings, as described in the USGA Journal for June. One of the projects discussed between the Green Section and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents for 1953 is the machine planting of an entire fairway using zoysia seedlings. This may be the next step in the cooperative effort established so successfully here in the Mid-Atlantic area. Already the Green Section has arranged for a transplanting machine, and plans are being made to grow the needed seedlings in the greenhouse at Beltsville.

Another step in cooperative effort is being made in the Midwest. Dr. William Daniel will be supplied with enough Z-73 seed to plant sufficient seedlings in the greenhouse at Purdue to supply 100 seedlings to each USGA member club and to each member club of the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation. These hundred seedlings will be sufficient to plant a plot 10 ft. x 10 ft., or 100 sq. ft., into either a clean seedbed or into an existing fairway

so that the many clubs can evaluate, under their own conditions, the place, if any, of zoysia in their program. As long as the seed supplies of Z-73 hold out, the Green Section will make the same offer to other regional turf associations or to agricultural experiment stations that will be willing to raise seedlings to distribute a hundred each to the USGA member clubs and others in their state or region.

In 1952, by virtue of a lack of personnel, the Green Section was unable to continue the leadership in the National Coordinated Turf Program in crabgrass control and disease control. Dr. William Daniel was selected to coordinate the National Crabgrass Control trials and Dr. John Vaughn of Michigan was nominated to conduct the fungicide program.

In an effort to reduce the turf program at Beltsville to a size where one man can handle it, much of the work is being concentrated into one small area where the combination of zoysia and Merion bluegrass will be studied from the standpoint of management and fertilization, to determine what type of management is necessary to maintain a balance between these two excellent and well-adapted grasses. Some attention will be given to establishing a putting green that requires little or no irrigation. It remains to be seen whether or not a project of this kind is feasible, but in our case it becomes a necessity. Already some of the Government Services in and around Washington are asking how that can be done. It appears as if many 9-hole courses over the country are in need of some type of putting green grasses that can survive and give reasonable good putting surfaces with less attention. The seemingly increasing need for fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, and detailed management renders high-class putting greens out of the picture for many low-budget clubs.

According to the present plans of the USGA, additional Regional Green Section Offices will be established at the opportune time. Trained personnel will be needed for these offices, and funds must be secured in order to maintain them. The plan of these regional offices is to work with existing groups and organizations and to expand further local, state and regional developments. It is not the intention of the Regional Green Section Offices to replace or to displace any existing services but rather to try to harmonize the various elements that enter into the development of Turf Management programs over a wide area.

#### Powered Caddie Cart

In San Antonio, on September 30, professional golfers Babe Zaharias and Betty Dodd played the 19-hole Brackenridge Course in exactly 45 minutes. Instead of taking 3 hours to play with conventional

"shank-a-mare," they rode on an electric carrier—a powered caddie cart—which got them around in three-fourths-of-an-hour. The scores were 75 and 74, respectively. Superintendents and green committees everywhere might just as well accept the fact that power caddie carts are on the way.

Instead of fighting this development in golf and trying to legislate against the use of powered caddie carts on the grounds that they will ruin the turf, it would be wiser to establish research to learn how to grow turf in spite of them. Powered caddie carts are going to enhance golf, particularly among those who would not play golf because of the time involved or because of physical handicaps. I, for one, shall appreciate the time when I will be able to play more golf and will be able to tour the course on a power caddie cart because no longer am I capable of walking the 18 holes in company with those who are younger and more active.

#### Crabgrass Control

Chemical control of crabgrass more and more is being regarded as only one of the tools in the development of turf that is able to keep crabgrass out without chemicals. Perhaps the greatest strides in this direction have been taken at the Beltsville Turf Gardens, where combination zoysia-Merion bluegrass turf has been in existence for the longest period of time. It was here that the idea was developed for the combination turf, primarily because it appeared to offer a solution for many who are not able to use chemical controls satisfactorily.

In several cases hundreds and even thousands of 2-inch plugs were taken from the combination turf and replanted in other areas such as experimental plots and on golf course tees and fairways. The holes left by the plugging operation were filled with field soil that was loaded with crabgrass and goosegrass seeds. It happened exactly as one would expect. Crabgrass and goosegrass in June and July germinated and grew luxuriantly. However, within a short time that luxuriant growth was severely checked by the growing zoysia and Merion bluegrass. The competition of the good turf grasses was so great that it forced the weed grasses upright and mowing clipped off the tops. In less than one growing season, the crabgrass and goosegrass that were intentionally seeded into this turf have been knocked out of the picture by the strong growth of the turf grasses.

This indeed is progress! It represents the long-range approach to crabgrass control. Chemicals always will be a help but they will be only one of the tools in the long-range turf management program.

(To be concluded in February issue)