



Marvin H. Ferguson



T. M. Baumgardner



Tom Leonard



Harry Wright

Southern Turfmen Touch All Bases

"Southern Maintenance" was the theme of the Wednesday afternoon meeting. Marvin H. Ferguson, national research coordinator for the USGA green section, was chairman and introduced these speakers: Louis N. Wise, dean of the school of agriculture, Mississippi State U.; T. M. Baumgardner, Sea Island (Ga.) GC; James M. Latham, agronomist, Milwaukee Sewerage Commission; Tom Leonard, supt. River Oaks CC in Houston; Richard E. Schmidt, asst. agronomy professor, Virginia Poly Institute; Harry Wright, supt., Peachtree GC in Atlanta; Stratton H. Kerr, entomologist, U. of Florida; Homer D. Wells, plant pathologist, Georgia Coastal Plain Station; John A. Long, research specialist, O. M. Scott & Son; and Glenn W. Burton, geneticist, also of the Georgia Coastal Plain Station.

Not Enough Support

In reviewing progress made in turf management in the last decade in Southern states, Louis Wise said that training programs now are being offered at 12

schools, with Texas A & M setting the pace in view of the scope of its varied agronomical curriculum and research undertakings. The awakening of the South, Wise said, has of course resulted in more young men majoring in turf management and related courses, and has produced an increasing number of students who have earned Masters and Ph.D. degrees in the agronomy field.

Wise then charged that turf interests aren't doing their share in obtaining money for, or supporting university research projects. At some schools, he said, fine turf projects are being partly undertaken with funds diverted from appropriations for such things as crop and pasture research. He referred to it as a "kind of boot-leg operation that can't go on much longer" and urged turfmen to try to get more money out of their state legislatures for their special projects, and to make greater contributions to them themselves.

A to Z of Overseeding

T. M. Baumgardner, Jim Latham, Tom Leonard, Dick Schmidt and Harry Wright composed a panel that discussed the ramifications of winter overseeding. Here are the highlights of their remarks:

Baumgardner: Our 25 test plots show that rye and poa trivialis are best for early overseeding, with a mixture of Seaside, Penncross and Pennlawn producing more desirable results later in the winter season. In three years of testing we've escaped trouble from disease. That doesn't mean we have any secrets—it's just that the weather has been good to us. Georgia Bermudas apparently can't be overseeded with bents alone while Florida varieties can. It probably is because Florida Bermuda doesn't become quite as dormant.

On Again, Off Again

Latham: Many overseeding questions remain to be answered at this early stage. One is why a grass such as Pennlawn did fine one winter in the Atlanta area but flunked the test thereafter. Kentucky blue currently is the overseeding hope of the Southern supt., but it, too, may bloom this year and be a dud next year.

Leonard: Texas still is betting its money on rye. Numerous overseed combinations have been tried in recent years, but invariably we come back to placing most dependence in rye. It may be because there is a lot of hybrid Bermuda in the state. It's a struggle to maintain decent greens through the winter in the South-

west, but at least they bounce back with vigor in the spring.

Transition Period Important

Schmidt: In Virginia, supts. have to worry about how overseeded grasses thrive early in the winter, and then they have to go through a second ordeal of wondering when and how they are going to bow out late in the spring. Since the spring transition period offers the most problems, we have concentrated on observing what happens when Bermuda starts to come back. We have found that rye dies out a little too quickly during the transition period. Pennlawn probably is a little too slow in bowing out, although it holds up beautifully during the spring. Seaside, in spite of its late start, may be the best of the overseed varieties, mainly because it performs so well in the transition period.

Wright: If Bermuda is properly maintained in its season, it undoubtedly will react well when overseeding time comes. Aerifying and verticutting should be carried out about three or four weeks in advance of the actual overseeding. Watering is important in the first three or four days after the auxiliary seed is distributed. In the spring, Bermuda's comeback is greatly abetted by spiking and by keeping the moisture content of the soil at the proper level.

Control of insects, weeds and disease that are peculiar to Southern turf was discussed by a panel made up of Stratton Kerr, Homer D. Wells and John A. Long, all of whom are research specialists.

Two Types of Pests

Kerr, an entomologist who received his Ph.D. degree from Cornell University, described pests as being of two types — those that attack turf and those that infest the soil and feed on plant roots. The leading villains in the first mentioned category are the chinch bug, lawn caterpillar and the tropical sod webworm. All feed on grass blades or stems, Kerr said, weakening the plant and inviting disease invasion. The chinch bug is the South's most persistent pest, having a particular fondness for St. Augustine grass. An unfortunate rule of thumb, the Florida U. entomologist stated, is that pests prevail where turf is unusually lush. The best control agents here are toxophene and DDT.

The underground menaces consist of the white grub and mole cricket, both of



John A. Long

Glenn Burton

which feast on roots. Armadillos and skunks, in turn, feed on these pests, Kerr said, and so there is double jeopardy involved. Chlordane solutions are most effective in suppressing white grubs and mole crickets.

Common Disease

Homer D. Wells, U.S.D.A. pathologist who is connected with the Tifton agricultural division, cited cottony blight as being the most common disease of Bermudagrass. A good deal of care has to be exercised in trying to eradicate it because several of the fungicides used in controlling the disease injure turf if applied too heavily. Until recently, Phygon XL was considered to be the best control agent, but Bermuda is too readily allergic to its toxic qualities. Now, Dexon, not yet on the market, is the new wonder fungicide where the blight is involved, Wells said.

Cottony blight is a first cousin to the Yankee pythium and its mycelium spores take hold and spread rapidly when humidity of both air and soil are high. Wells suggested that improved drainage could help to prevent the onset of the blight since it is basically a product of an extremely wet or saturated soil condition.

Battle for Food

The South, said John A. Long, O. M. Scott geneticist, isn't plagued with any particular weed or noxious grass that makes inroads such as is experienced in the North with crabgrass, but there are at least four or five important varieties that constantly threaten to get out of hand. "Where weeds or undesirable grasses are present," Long explained, "there is a constant if not spectacular battle with the Bermuda for light, food and water. Tests have shown that Bermuda development has been retarded by as much as 20 or 25 per cent where ordinary weed control or prevention methods

Bill Bengeyfield, Norman Goetz, Ted Roberts and Charles G. Wilson (seated, l to r) are engrossed in what Warren Bidwell has to say.



haven't been used."

Long added that grass type weeds such as dallis- and goosegrass remove more nitrogen, phosphate and potash than broadleaf weeds and their roots are capable of absorbing twice as much water as Bermuda strains. In the last five years, however, arsenical herbicides have been developed that give excellent post-emergence control. What now is needed, Long concluded, are chemicals that knock out the undesirable grasses before they can emerge.

Effects of Shade

Speaking of the effects of shade on grass, Glenn Burton, the Tifton geneticist, explained that while trees slow down photosynthesis and retard turf growth, they also have their good points. For one thing, he said, they reduce damage due to drought, an important consideration in the South. In addition, they give protection against frost and tests have shown that chinch bugs aren't as prevalent in shady areas as in exposed locations.

Describing tests made at Tifton from 1958 to 1961 on the effects of light and shade, Burton stated that density and color of shaded turf are greatly improved if the cut is made at 2½ inches rather than 1½ inches. It also has been shown that grasses that do better growing in the sun also grow better in shade. St. Augustine and zoysia, he said, score high in shade tolerance, finer Bermudas have a fair to good rating, but common Bermuda doesn't fare too well in this respect.

What may hurt grass most in shaded areas, especially on golf courses, Burton concluded, is that more traffic is invited and consequent injury due to trampling occurs.

Neff Nearly Breaks The CGSA Bank

L. R. (Bob) Shields, the new GCSA director and supt. of Woodmont CC in Rockville, Md., was the m.c. of the Thursday morning session which had as its theme, Progress Through Knowledge. His speakers included William Bengeyfield, Western dir. for the USGA green section; Norman Goetz, turf specialist, Oregon State College; Edward (Ted) Roberts, supt. of the DuPont CC, Wilmington, Del.; Charles G. Wilson, sales mgr. of the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission; and Warren Bidwell, supt., Olympia Fields (Ill.) CC. At the conclusion of the program, several supts. took part in a quiz program conducted by Andrew A. Bertoni, supt. of Meadowbrook CC, Northville, Mich.

Instruct the Employee

Bill Bengeyfield discussed aspects of labor management, saying that the supt. would have a better understanding of employee relations if he occasionally put himself in the place of a subordinate and tried to understand the latter's feelings, emotions and attitudes. Bill went on to explain that "telling" a person to perform a certain task is a long way from "instructing" him how to do it, especially when the person never has attempted to do the job before. If the latter is the case, the supt. may be running the risk of seeing the man get injured, damage valuable machinery, or ruin costly turf by sending him out to handle a task he knows nothing about.

Continuing in this vein, the USGA