

## WETTING AGENTS

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the rest of the green is moist, have ceased to be a problem almost from the inception of the program. Those that were severe were punched with a hollow-tine fork and treated with a few ounces of the wetting agent in water from a common watering can. Results were almost immediately noticeable.

Collars of the greens that were almost impossible to keep all season responded almost as well as the greens, as did a few areas on greens that had tree root problems. Wilt, while still a problem during times of severe stress, is not the threat it was, and is manageable without the attention and excessive overtime once necessary.

Incidentally, my primary fungicide was PMA and Thiram and, with the addition of the wetting agent, I noticed that this seemed to "harden" the turf. This was a mystery to me till I heard Harry Meusel, course superintendent, Yale University, talk at Cornell about the effect of this mixture on the stomata of the bents and *poa annua*. This, no doubt, had some bearing on my lower incidence of wilt.

Improved drainage was noticeable on low and poorly constructed greens. On my present course (I have been on two private 18's, one from 1947 to 1960, and on my present course since 1961) our number 14 green is almost on the level of a slow mucky brook, and in a very springy wet area. Water standing in the cup was common all the first season I was here. Except for slipups in watering or heavy downpour, I have not seen water in this cup for the past five years.

An interesting and most welcome side effect of the wetting agent and fungicide spray is that my disease control is almost 100 per cent effective. I have not seen brown patch on my greens in several years, despite some of the worst summers in history. Dollar spot is the only disease I have to contend with, I presume because of the low N program. But it is never a severe problem.

Another side effect that is a favorite with my men is that cup changing is a pleasure compared to the struggle to get the cup-cutter down seven inches (I cut one inch off my cups) in the days before I started using wetting agents. Fewer plugs die now and leave ugly cup scars. Growth is definitely more uniform, and color is better—even during the semi-dormant period in July and August.

To close, let me quote from my job application for my present job. I was asked to comment on the course operation as I knew it. "No wetting agent has been used at Powelton to my knowledge. I have proved to my own satisfaction that wetting agents can mean the difference between average greens and excellent greens". ●

*About the Author: Bill Smart is a third generation golf course superintendent, his great-grandfather was greenkeeper at the Barry Course in Scotland, his father superintendent of the Dutchess Golf & CC from 1930 to 1947. In 1947, after the death of his father, Bill took over the Dutchess and operated it till 1961 when he left to take the Powelton Club of Newburgh, his present course. He is a member of the National, the New York State Turf Association and is a director of the Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Editor of its newsletter.*

### Sanders Buys Building

Doug Sanders, touring golf professional who ranks fourth among top money winners, recently purchased the Trans-American Life Building in downtown Fort Worth, Tex. for more than \$1 million. The 36-year old building is 17 stories tall.

Sanders said he represented only himself in the transaction. He has several other business enterprises, including the Sanders Development Co. of California and an apartment in Dallas. He also represents Shamrock CC, Tulsa, Okla.