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**Answers**  
**to turf**  
**questions**

by Fred V. Grau

**Duich honored**

At the Beltsville Turfgrass Field Day in August Dr. Joseph M. Duich of Penn State was presented with an honorary membership in the Merion Bluegrass Assn. Margaret Herbst made the presentation assisted by this writer who sketched a brief background of Dr. Duich's contributions to turf and particularly to Merion Kentucky bluegrass.

The first honorary members were: Joseph Valentine, Professor H. B. Musser and Fred V. Grau. The passing of Valentine and Musser created a vacancy which now has been filled by a man who is particularly deserving of the honor.

Dr. Duich's work with Merion helped to develop new and improved bluegrasses, which along with Merion, are basic to the entire turfgrass industry wherever bluegrasses are grown. The development of Merion led to the development of the infant sod industry. The rooting character-

*continued on page 38*



for a good grip—a better game



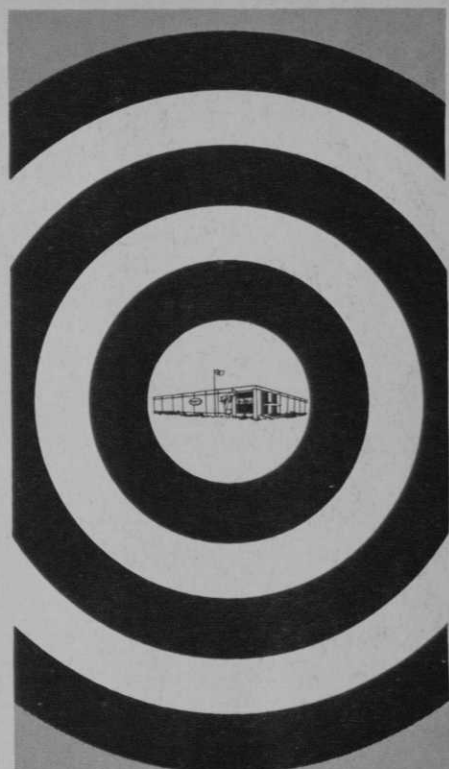
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□ Between these jobs you can use the Superintendent for many other chores involving soil mixing. Like building a turf grass nursery, preparing a compost pile, emergency turf repairs and even landscaping at the 19th hole.

□ Our new booklet, "Golf Course Superintendent's Guide to the use of Royer Equipment" outlines these uses and several others. It also includes some tips on using the Royer Powerscreen. There's no obligation; a copy is yours for the asking.



# ROYER

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## GRAU

*continued from page 35*

istics of Merion, with its ability to tolerate close mowing and elite appearance, gave the sod growers a tremendous sales pitch, of which they quickly took advantage. Today we talk in terms of blends but rarely is there a blend without Merion. It imparts a quality found in no other bluegrass.

Thus, the award presented to Dr. Duich is an expression of gratitude for the important part he has played in building a firm foundation not only for Merion Kentucky bluegrass, but also for the entire bluegrass industry.

*Q.—For a number of years we have heard about systemics in relation to Dutch Elm disease, to grass diseases and to insecticides. The popular version was "when the bug bites the plant, the plant bites back." Has there been progress with systemics?*

*(Ohio)*

*A.—Yes, there have been definite breakthroughs in systemic control of diseases and insects. One has to do with stripe smut on grasses. Another controls dollarspot and brownpatch. I am sorry I cannot catalog the various developments—some are still being developed to the point where they can have an approval label. Watch for releases from experiment stations and from firms which manufacture and sell the products. They are well worth waiting for.*

*Q.—We have an 18-hole golf course near Cadiz in southern Spain. There is very little water during summer; no rain falls from early spring through the fall. We must either irrigate (when water is available) or develop turf that will survive throughout the summer with*



little water. Soil tests show that we lack nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. A program is under way to correct these deficiencies.

What is the potential of Merion, Fylking and common bluegrass? We now have a variety of grasses including winter rye. Our greatest desire is to develop a good bed of turf that will take our dry summers with minimum water. What can you suggest?

(Spain)

A.—The situation that you describe is familiar. Once, long ago, we had to produce playable turf without irrigation. At that time we did not have improved grasses, fertilizers that adjust to conditions and machines to help rainfall soak into the turf. Today, with better grasses, better fertilizers, improved tools and sophisticated chemicals, we should be able to do a much better job of giving the golfer a

decent turf with little or no irrigation.

Considering everything, you will do well to consider establishing turf with a blend of the best bluegrasses available. Plan the time of seeding when natural rainfall provides the best opportunity for establishment. Incorporate adequate nutrients, including slow release nitrogen, into the seed bed in sufficient quantity to carry the turf over the dry season into the next rainy period.

Merion and Fylking Kentucky bluegrasses should be the basis for your blend. Use Pennstar bluegrass also if it becomes available when you get ready to plant. Prato is one that deserves to be included—also South Dakota Common (Certified). For a perennial ryegrass companion for quick starting you should consider Pelo or Manhattan.

At this point and at this dis-

tance I hesitate to outline a complete program. Additional information on soils, soil tests, climate, weeds and other vegetation would be helpful.

Q.—Have the new turf-type ryegrasses lived up to their promises? Can we look forward to newer and better ones?

(Maryland)

A.—In my estimation the new ryegrasses have, in many cases, exceeded expectations. Growers have not been able to produce enough to meet the amazing demand. In a few cases they have been disappointing but due principally to misuse or mismanagement. Look for the announcement shortly of the release of a new synthetic turf ryegrass from a northeastern university. I've seen the plots and the quality is there. This

continued on page 42

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## GRAU

*continued from page 39*

phase of turfgrass development is, frankly, exciting.

*Q.—We have been spraying our greens with fungicide for the control of Pythium. Recently we sprayed fertilizer, an iron compound (chelated), a disodium methyl arsonate preparation for post-emergence crabgrass control, a wetting agent and hydrated lime, all blended in the tank. The grass turned black and we wonder how long it will last and if it will hurt the grass.*

*(Maryland)*

A.—My best judgment is that the black color is the result of interaction between the iron and the lime, augmented by the wetting agent which increases penetration and enhances effectiveness. I doubt that you will have any serious consequences but, in the future, my advice

is to use only one or two of these chemicals at a time so that, should anything happen, you can fix the blame. You have too many "unknowns" going for you—better simplify a bit.

*Q.—We are working toward solid zoysia fairways. Poa annua is a "natural" during winter and early spring. When hot weather comes and the Poa starts to wilt we irrigate to "hold the Poa" and preserve appearances. Is it possible that we are hurting our zoysia? It doesn't seem to be spreading as it should.*

*(New Jersey)*

A.—It is almost certain that irrigation to hold the *Poa* is harming your zoysia. It would be far better to prepare your members with a bulletin, then let the *Poa* wilt so that the zoysia can develop and spread without being "drowned." About this time the zoysia will

benefit from an application of a slow-release fertilizer. Zoysia will need water only when it starts to turn bluish-purple from wilt. In five minutes the leaves will be fresh and green.

*Q.—You have been an advocate of using hydrated lime during the summer to help ailing turf, but usually you say, "Spray one-half pound to 1,000 square feet." Why don't you say, "Dust..."? When turf is soggy, why apply more water?*

*(Pennsylvania)*

A.—Your point is well taken. I've been stymied by my inability to find a suitable duster, power or manual that can do the job. If you know of one, preferably one that utilizes tractor engine exhaust as an impelling force, please let us know. I will be only too glad to say "Dust" instead of "Spray" when there is excess moisture present. □

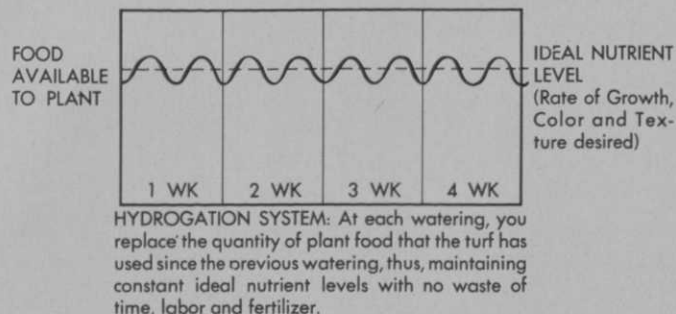
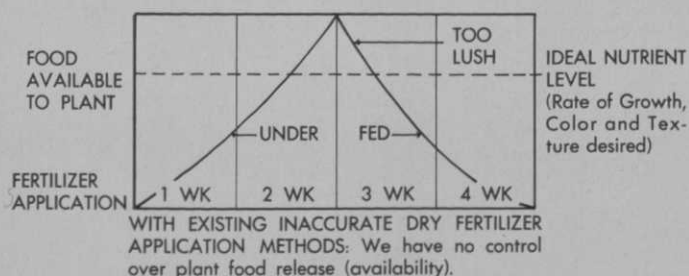
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