

Real-Life Solutions

GOOSEGRASS CONTROL

It's not all paradise for superintendents who tend turf in Hawaii. They have their share of weed problems.

Aloha Goosegrass

**Hawaiian
superintendents
find cure for
problem weed**

BY NANCY HOLBERT

Problem

Two Hawaiian superintendents experienced extensive problems with goosegrass. One of the superintendents said he had never seen a goosegrass infestation so bad.

Solution

Both superintendents tried — and found success in — a new sulfonylurea herbicide from Bayer Environmental Science.

The trade winds that blow across Hawaii and the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean may play well in tourism brochures but can create headaches for weed-control programs. Just ask Victor Nemeth, superintendent at Kauai (Hawaii) Lagoons Golf Club. Nemeth ran into a problem with Sencor-resistant goosegrass on an 18-acre driving range.

"Goosegrass has always been a problem," he says. "MSMA on its own won't take it out, so we'd tank mix it with Sencor to get the control we needed. Then we ran into resistance."

Environmental conditions aggravated the problem.

"We had trade winds of 15 mph to 20 mph and irrigation coverage was poor at best," Nemeth explains. "The 328 bermudagrass we had on the range started to die off, and common bermudagrass contaminated the turf. To compound the problem, a hurricane dampened tourism, forcing staffing restrictions and a move from chemical to mechanical weed control. There definitely was opportunity for the goosegrass to move in."

The goosegrass took advantage aggressively.

"I'd never seen goosegrass like this anywhere else," Nemeth says. "About

80 percent of the driving range was infested, to the point that it was almost smothering itself."

Thankfully, Nemeth found an answer to his problem in a postemergent application of Revolver herbicide. Introduced in 2003, Revolver selectively removes unwanted cool-season grasses from warm-season grasses, as well as sensitive warm-season grasses such as goosegrass.



Victor Nemeth said he had never seen a goosegrass infestation so bad.

Poa trivialis, perennial ryegrass, bentgrass, bluegrass, tall fescue and henbit. It also suppresses centipedegrass.

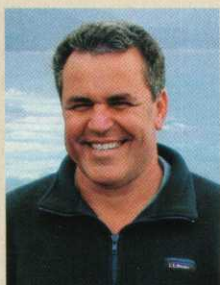
Nemeth made two applications of Revolver at .6 ounce per 1,000 square feet rate seven to 10 days apart. The first application was mixed with MSMA; the second was Revolver by itself.

The sulfonylurea product contains the active ingredient foramsulfuron and is registered for use on tolerant warm-season turfgrasses, including numerous cultivars of bermudagrass and zoysiagrass. Besides controlling goosegrass, Revolver also controls *Poa annua*,

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BAYER ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

"The control we received was impressive," Nemeth says. "We first tried it on the driving range where we hadn't sprayed the goosegrass in two years. We started seeing the effects of the application in two weeks. There was a dark browning of the leaf, then the growth slowed, and we received complete effectiveness in about six weeks. We also got good control of *Poa* with spot treatments on the fairways."

Damian Baptiste, assistant superintendent at Kauai's Princeville Resorts, reports similar experiences with Revolver. With 20 years of experience as the pesticide



Damian Baptiste said Revolver also help control *Poa annua* on his course's bermudagrass greens.

manager at the Robert Trent Jones course, he's also had problems controlling *Poa* and goosegrass in his 328 bermudagrass greens.

"The course gets a lot of rain, and soil temperatures go below 65 degrees," Baptiste says.

"The bermudagrass doesn't grow, opening a hole for the *Poa* and goosegrass. The pressures were heavy, especially on greens and tee surfaces. Some of our bermuda putting surfaces were 40 percent covered with *Poa* during the winter months."

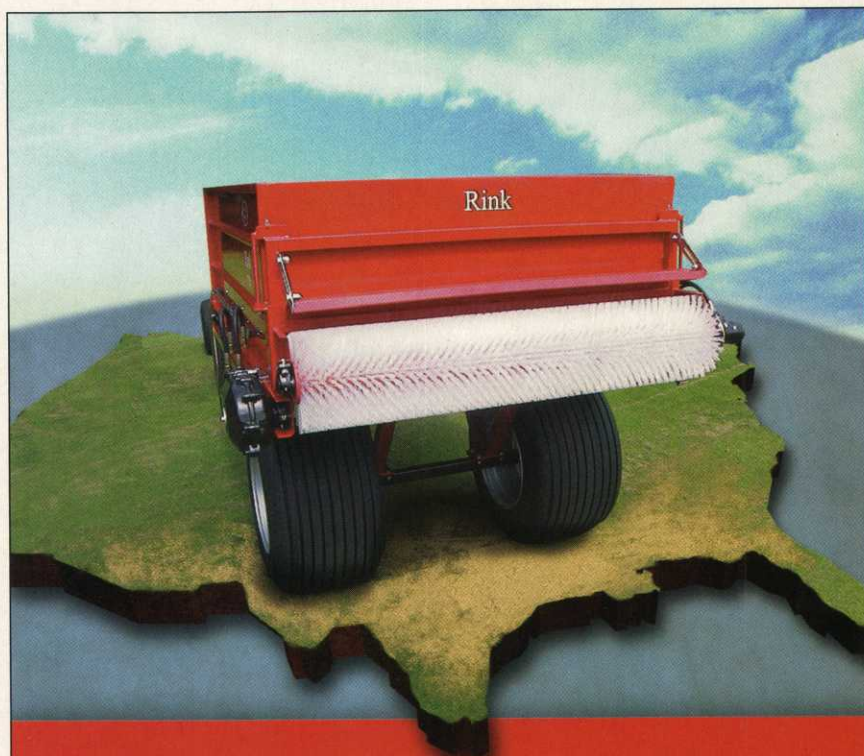
Baptiste applied Revolver to two greens as well as fairways and rough. Greens received .4 ounce per 1,000 square feet in three applications.

"We'd tried a number of different controls in the past but nothing took care of both problems," Baptiste says. "Our low temperatures and cold soils demand control that picks up both of our main problems with one product. It's something we've needed." ■

Nancy Holbert is a freelance writer from Yardley, Pa.



Disease pressure at Princeville Resorts is high because of heavy rainfall.



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