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Keepers of the Green

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I take a very holistic approach to managing turf - grow grass from the soil up and eliminate the stresses instead of treating symptoms. Throughout most of my career, Floratine products have been a cornerstone in the management programs I use.

Growing bentgrass in the Dallas/Ft. Worth summer is no short order. But we have been able to maintain a healthy turf with deep roots via the help of products like Floradox™, ProteSyn™, and Perk Up™, just to name a few.

In a profession where you are only as good as the golfer's last recollection, it is nice to have products and people from Floratine in your corner.



*Joel W. McKnight, CGCS
Hackberry Creek Country Club
Irving, Texas*


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CIRCLE NO. 107



**The best time to stop so
it's still in the ea**



Something hideous is when
early stages of ugly.

Want season-long control of disgusting, turf-damaging grubs? The proven performance of MACH 2* specialty insecticide provides superior, broad-spectrum control. Its wide window of application allows you to treat grubs through the second instar – and there's no need for immediate irrigation. Unbeatable control. Gorgeous turf. Things are looking better all the time.

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Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

NGCOA, NGF team up for study

The National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and the National Golf Foundation (NGF) have joined forces to conduct a national study of golf facility rounds played. The study is underway and results will be available in April.

"The NGCOA/NGF study of rounds played will be the official measurement of this important business indicator for the golf industry," said Ruffin Beckwith, senior vice president of golf development for the World Golf Foundation.

The effort has received the support of numerous leading golf course management companies, including Dallas-based ClubCorp. Jim Hinckley, president and chief operating officer of ClubCorp, played a major role in bringing the study together. "The industry has needed a more comprehensive assessment of the golf facility business for some time, and now with this effort we will have it," said Hinckley, who co-chaired an NGCOA task force addressing the need.

Mike Hughes, executive director of the NGCOA, said his organization's interest in the study stemmed from requests from his members for a better measurement of rounds played, a critical indicator of the health of the golf facility business. "Teaming up with the NGF made perfect sense given our broad membership base and their research capabilities," he said.

Toro upbeat about first quarter

Bloomington, Minn.-based The Toro Co. said in January it expects to be profitable during the first quarter of fiscal 2002, excluding one time charges, and exceed current analyst expectations. The company previously said it expected a loss of 20 cents per share.

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Golf's Bigwigs Evaluate the Industry

By Larry Aylward, Editor

The room was packed with golf course owners and other curious conference attendees. Their eyes were focused on the four finely dressed gentlemen seated at a table in the room's front.

It was probably one of the most widely attended meetings during the National Golf Course Owners Annual Conference & Trade Show, held in January in Phoenix.

Leaders from Marriott Golf, LinksCorp LLC, Troon Golf and American Golf Corp. were on hand to give their takes on the industry's economic status.

The bigwigs spoke about their companies and a difficult 2001 before talk turned to 2002. Bob Blake, president and CEO of Bannockburn, Ill.-based LinksCorp, didn't sugarcoat his feelings about the future. Citing recent statistics, Blake noted that of the country's 26 million golfers, about 26 percent are avid golfers who play 25 or more rounds a year. Those avid golfers, however, play about 78 percent of all rounds. "That's scary," Blake added.

Overall, Blake noted that 15 percent of the 26 million players are the "key drivers" of the game. "That's frightening," he said.

Obviously, the industry must gain more rounds from occasional golfers in addition to attracting new players. But Blake said courses must also take care of that 15 percent base with the utmost service because those golfers can make or break you.

Dana Carmany, chairman and CEO of Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Troon Golf, agreed, noting that it's easier to keep current customers happy than to

attract new golfers. Carmany said resort areas will continue to have a challenging year, but he remains upbeat about the industry as a whole. "There have been bad times before, and there will be good times ahead," he said.

Kevin Stockford represented Orlando-based Marriott Golf. Stockford, director of golf for Wildfire GC at Desert Ridge in Scottsdale, Ariz., said the fear of flying caused by the terrorist attacks is over, but the economic downturn the attacks helped cause is not. "People will get on the flights, but they don't have the money to do so," he said.

If there's one thing golf course owners shouldn't do when times get tough is offer a blue-light special, Blake warned. He said LinksCorp has determined that lowering green fees seldom

"There's an upturn coming, and we will be the beneficiaries of it."

DANA CARMANY
TROON GOLF CEO

increases rounds and volume of golfers to generate the appropriate revenue. "This is one of the biggest challenges facing the industry," he added.

Stuart Hayden, executive vice president of American Golf's Western Operations, replaced AGC co-CEO David Pillsbury on the panel. AGC has been in the news for its financial troubles. Reports late last year said AGC was having trouble paying its rent to its sister company, National Golf Properties (NGP). Hayden said AGC took a hit last year, especially in resort areas like Las Vegas, where rounds were down 25 percent.

"We were forced to take some dramatic action," Hayden said. "We laid off about 300 people at the end of December and the beginning of January."

Soon after the NGCOA show on Feb. 13, NGP announced it was merging with AGC. Upon completion of the proposed merger, the combined company will be the largest publicly traded golf management company.

Peer Pressure? What Peer Pressure?

SOUTHAMPTON GC SUPERINTENDENT HAS SIX SUPERINTENDENTS AS MEMBERS

By **Todd Stumpf**

A 3-foot downhill slider on the 72nd hole of the U.S. Open? Can't get more pressure-packed than that. Unless you're Elton Etheridge. Then it's a tap-in. In fact, just pick it up. It's good.

They say the toughest performance is one delivered in front of one's peers. Etheridge, 62, has been superintendent at Southampton GC in Southampton, N.Y., on Long Island for 28 years. For several years, his course has been home to six superintendents who have memberships at Southampton.

"It's an odd situation," Etheridge concedes. "They don't play here all that much, but it's still odd."

Regardless of who might be playing, Etheridge does his best to keep his 7,000-yard Seth Raynor-designed golf course in top shape. He brushes aside the notion of pressure, refusing to think about what his closest critics might be saying.

"I would think about it all the time," says Bob "Hook" Williams, superintendent at the Maidstone Club in East Hampton, N.Y., and a member at Southampton. "But it doesn't seem to bother Elton at all. That's probably because he does such a fantastic job."

Another member, Karl Olson, superintendent at the National Golf Links of America, also in Southampton, echoes that sentiment. He spun a tale of the club's championship,

Continued on page 16

Quotable

"It's the first time in my life that anybody has been victorious toward the IRS."



— *Mike Hughes, executive director of the National Golf Course Owners Association, on the new IRS rule that allows owners to claim the cost of modern golf green construction as depreciating assets.*

"The patricians of the USGA aren't making decisions for the good of the game."

— *Unbiased Acushnet CEO, Wally Uilhein, on USGA's recent attempts to begin to curb club size and ball flight. (Sports Illustrated Golf Plus)*

"It runs between an 8 and a 9 on the Stimpmeter. I know it sounds crazy, but he's shown a lot of natural golf ability, and I want to encourage it."

— *Robbie Curtis, of Beverly Hills, Calif., after replacing the wall-to-wall carpeting in the bedroom of his 9-year-old son, Dillon, with an artificial turf putting green. (Golfweek)*

"The effort we witnessed in the aftershock of the World Trade Center collapse reminded us of how dependent we are on the protection and responsiveness of these unsung heroes in our communities. The 9-11 Initiative is our small way of showing our appreciation for their readiness and their ongoing contribution to our safety and well-being."

— *KemperSports Management CEO Steve Lesnik on the company's 9-11 Initiative that calls for firemen, policemen and military to receive a 50-percent discount on greens fees at all KemperSports owned and leased courses in 13 states.*

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 14

This development is due to improved expectations from Toro's residential segment related to the new line of walk power mowers for The Home Depot and dealers, increased snow shipments and expense timing.

Lesco refinancing

Cleveland-based Lesco is refinancing its principal debt agreements in a new senior secured credit facility. The new \$122 million facility includes an amortizing term loan of about \$7 million and a revolving credit line of up to \$115 million with a three-year maturity. Availability under the new revolving credit facility is determined by a borrowing formula based upon the company's eligible receivables and inventory.

Bayer stock makes its debut

On Jan. 24, Bayer AG listed its shares on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol, "BAY." In honor of the occasion, Bayer CEO Manfred Schneider rang the bell that traditionally signals the start of the trading day on Wall Street. Shortly afterwards, he placed the first order for Bayer shares from the trading floor.

Continued from page 15 when 2 inches of rain fell just before the event teed off. By the time players took to the course, Olson said you couldn't tell it rained.

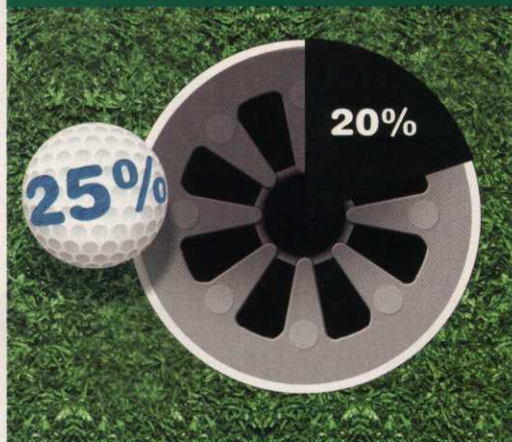
Etheridge's job isn't easy to begin with, peers or no peers. Southampton features a rolling links-style course, reminiscent of old-style Scottish courses. Long rough, coupled with undulating greens, provide a stiff test for any superintendent's skills. "It's amazing," Williams says. "His turf is great all the time."

But Etheridge deflected praise back to Williams, noting that his old friend has a tougher gig. Williams' course spans 27 holes and has no water on the fairways. He also oversees grass tennis courts.

It doesn't hurt, either, that the men are friends. Not only are they playing partners, Williams and Etheridge have known each other since they were 7 years old. The two

The Silent Majority

Did you know that 75 percent of all golfers are only responsible for 20 percent of all rounds played, while a mere 25 percent of so-called "rabid" golfers (excuse us, that's "avid") play the remaining 80 percent?*



*Avid golfers are those that play 25 rounds or more per year.

SOURCE: NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION

ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEBY

graduated from high school together before heading their separate ways. Eventually their paths crossed again and, ultimately, Etheridge wound up at Southampton because of Williams, the club's former superintendent.

"I am grateful for that," Etheridge says. "I learned a lot from him. We're still close friends."

Stumpf is a free-lance writer from Medina, Ohio.

Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews www.pgatour.com/partner/wtw

(All sites are preceded by <http://> unless otherwise noted)

If you want to get a daily feel for what's going on in the golf business, you've come to the right place. The PGA Tour has partnered with Robinson Holliday, a golf writer who formerly produced a golf industry newsletter called, "What They're Writing." Now her newsletter is available to the general public through the PGA Tour's Web site. The newsletter is organized into easy-to-navigate sections.

The "Players" section contains updates on your favorite tour players, along with columnists commenting on their exploits. There is also a "Senior Tour" section, the

content of which mirrors the "Players" section, only focusing on the older players.

There's a section that focuses on stories about the past week's tournament. This week, it had a story about Buick Invitational winner José Marie Olazábul. It also had one about how the renovations done at Torrey Pines for the tournament will affect the public who play the course long after the professionals have moved on. Another section compiles stories on other tournaments throughout the world.

The final section, "Other Stories," often contains general-interest stories, which

focus on golf industry business news, but occasionally explore issues like club politics and agronomy.

The variety of sources and the notoriety of some of the authors are impressive. In the end, www.pgatour.com/partner/wtw will save you from spending hours scanning the Web looking for golf business information. Instead, you can spend the time taking care of the golf course.

Goldfom's managing editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. compiles Scanning the Web and wants to find a Web site that will save him from hours of writing stories every month. You can reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.

HOW WILL YOU MANAGE

*Summer
Decline*

THIS YEAR?

CONTROL DISEASE AND IMPROVE **TURF QUALITY** ALL YEAR LONG.

Turf quality is a common term. It encompasses color, density, playability, vigor, uniformity and the list goes on. There isn't one simple definition for the term because it is comprised of so many factors. However, despite being hard to define, turf quality is of the utmost importance to golfers. They may not know what it takes to keep turf in top shape, but golfers definitely notice when turf quality isn't up to par. The bottom line, superintendents are paid to produce turf quality.

Summer Decline — What Is It?

Summer Decline is the deterioration of turf quality during the warmer time of the year caused by the interaction of diseases and stresses. The major diseases on bentgrass are *Pythium* and *Rhizoctonia*, while on *Poa annua*, Anthracnose plays a role. There are just as many stresses contributing to decline as there are indicators of turf quality, making maintaining good turf quality a full-time job. As temperature and humidity increase during the summer, the turf becomes more stressed. In addition to environmental stresses, other factors include management-induced stresses (such as increased traffic and mowing heights, improper fertility, aerification, irrigation, the use of DNA herbicides, and some DMI fungicides) and root zone problems (such as poor drainage, compaction, and nutrient imbalance).



As turf becomes stressed, the turf plant becomes more susceptible to diseases that further weaken the turfgrass. This causes more vulnerability to stresses, which in turn leads to more disease as the stress-disease-stress cycle continues.

Summer Decline — Where Does It Occur?

Originally, it was thought that Summer Decline only occurred in the transition zone. However, Summer Decline has been witnessed throughout the United States, causing poor turf quality on both bentgrass and *Poa annua*. In the South, turf stress has been witnessed on Bermudagrass, as well. Summer Decline can occur in any region of the country if the turf undergoes a period of stress and disease pressure.

For years, superintendents coped with the Summer Decline problem on their turf, often unsuccessfully. Fungicides have proved an important tool, but controlling disease is not the complete answer to the Summer Decline problem. In response to questions posed by superintendents, researchers at North Carolina State University conducted extensive research to try to find some answers. In the early

1990s, Dr. L.T. Lucas, N.C. State extension turf pathologist, concluded that the decline in turf quality was due to disease and stress interaction.



Summer Decline on Bentgrass green

Aliette[®] + Fore[®] then, Chipco[®] Signature[™] now

After recognizing what Summer Decline really was, Lucas began working on a way to cope with the complex. He found that a combination of Chipco Aliette and Fore fungicides resulted in vastly improved turf quality above and beyond the disease control being offered by each alone. Researchers found that an ingredient in Fore combined with Aliette produced a synergistic effect that allowed the turf to flourish under Summer Decline conditions. This resulted in turf quality that was superior to that provided by any other fungicide combination. The formula was patented, and today the product is called Chipco Signature.



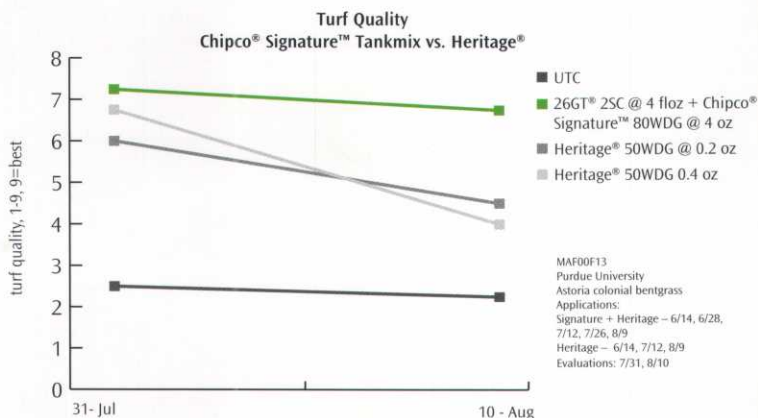
Alleviating Summer Decline

Besides controlling *Pythium*, Anthracnose† and other diseases associated with Summer Decline, a program that includes early applications of Chipco Signature will improve turf color, vigor, and root development, providing unmatched improvement in turf quality. (That's right. No other product improves the quality of turf under Summer Decline conditions as dramatically as Chipco Signature does.)

And, because Chipco Signature now allows for a wider range of tankmix partners than ever before, you can easily increase your disease control spectrum, controlling other summer diseases like dollar spot and brown patch while providing the foundation of a Summer Decline management program.

Field Performance

Turf quality is rated by visual assessment. On a scale from 1 to 9, a rating lower than 7 is usually considered unacceptable by researcher standards. Studies show that Chipco Signature, alone or tankmixed, consistently provides higher turf quality ratings than competing products do.



The left plot was treated with a tankmix of Chipco Signature + Daconil. Notice the lack of disease as well as the color and vigor of the turf compared to the plot on the right which was treated with Heritage alone.

Recommended Summer Decline Program

For optimum control, multiple applications of Chipco Signature, tankmixed with other fungicides, must be started prior to the appearance of disease and/or conditions that increase turf stress. A target time to start Chipco Signature tankmix applications is 4-6 weeks prior to the onset of stress. You should continue treating every 14 days until Summer Decline is no longer a factor. However, this is only a recommendation. Any disease management program should be customized for each individual situation, depending on the area of the country and the seasonal climate.

For more information on "Signature-izing" your Summer Decline Program, contact your local Chipco Sales Representative at 1-800-438-5837 or visit our web site at www.aventischipco.com.

Chipco Signature Tankmixes Relieve Illinois Super's Summer Stress



"For Summer Decline, I don't think there is a better manage-

ment tool than Chipco Signature," says Luke Strojny, CGCS and Superintendent of Poplar Creek Golf Course in Hoffman Estates, IL.

Strojny learned about Signature firsthand from Dr. L.T. Lucas of North Carolina State University, a leading researcher on Summer Decline.

"In 1995, I heard Dr. Lucas speak," Strojny says. "He discussed his studies on Aliette plus Fore (a mix that later became Chipco Signature). That got me thinking and prompted me to try that tankmix."

Strojny appreciates how Chipco Signature can be tankmixed with a fungicide of his choice, giving him greater options for customizing his summer stress program.

"I've always used Daconil," says Strojny. "When I found out Signature was compatible with it, I knew I wanted to look at tankmix options between the two products."

So how is turf quality at Poplar Creek?

"I've seen improvements in root and turf quality in terms of greener, denser, healthier turf," says Strojny, "and I haven't been hit with stressful disease."

CHIPCO PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTS FOR YEAR-ROUND CONTROL

Maintaining turf quality is a year-round job. Cool temperatures, snow cover, and high humidity are some factors that lead to disease in the cooler months. In the spring and fall, leaf spot and patch diseases are prevalent. In the winter, gray and pink snow mold are common. However, Chipco Professional Products can help with these diseases as well.

See the seasonal chart for a list of diseases and the Chipco products used to control them.

FOUR SEASONS OF TURF QUALITY

| PROBLEM | CHIPCO SOLUTION |
|--|--|
| SUMMER | |
| Summer Decline (<i>Pythium</i> , Anthracnose†, and <i>Rhizoctonia</i> spp.) | Chipco® Signature™ + 26GT® |
| Dollar Spot | 26GT |
| Brown Patch | 26GT or ProStar® |
| <i>Pythium</i> Diseases (Damping off, Blight, Crown and Root Rot) | Chipco Signature or Banol® |
| Fairy Ring | ProStar |
| Fusarium Blight (<i>Fusarium</i> spp.) | 26GT |
| Necrotic Ring Spot* (<i>Leptosphaeria korrae</i>) | 26GT |
| Anthracnose† | Chipco Signature + 26GT |
| Bentgrass Deadspot† | Chipco Signature + Daconil® or Fore® Rainshield™ |
| FALL | |
| Leaf Spot (<i>Drechslera</i> spp.) | 26GT |
| Corticium Red Thread (<i>Laetisaria fuciformis</i>) | 26GT or ProStar |
| Pink Patch (<i>Limonomyces roseipellis</i>) | ProStar |
| Large Patch* (<i>Rhizoctonia</i> spp.) | 26GT |
| Yellow Tuft | Chipco Signature |
| WINTER | |
| Gray Snow Mold (<i>Typhula</i> spp.) | Chipco Signature + 26GT or ProStar |
| Pink Snow Mold (<i>Microdochium nivale</i>) | Chipco Signature + 26GT |
| SPRING | |
| Leaf Spot (<i>Drechslera</i> spp.) | 26GT |
| Corticium Red Thread (<i>Laetisaria fuciformis</i>) | 26GT or ProStar |
| Yellow Tuft | Chipco Signature |

* Not registered for use in California.

† Chipco Signature registration for Anthracnose and Bentgrass Deadspot are pending in California and New York.

