



PHOTOS BY ERIC FISHER

bad can this be?" When I got there, the tractor was up against two trees, it had two blown tires, and the mowing deck was jack-knifed. To top it off, this grizzly scene played out on the side of the steepest hill on the course.

After surveying the damage, Jim and I headed back to the shop to get the proper tools and equipment to free the pretzel. It took about an hour to free everything and get the tractor to a safe place where we could to repair the tires. I determined that it was a good time for lunch. So what if it was only 10:30 in the morning?

After lunch, my assistant Scott and I went back to repair the fairway unit that was still sitting on the cart path in a puddle of oil. With the blown hose replaced, I was sure the rest of the day would go smoothly. Boy, was I mistaken.

"Dale, do you copy?" came a voice over my radio.

"Go ahead," I answered, a little gun-shy.

"Well, we have a situation here. The rough tractor is in the lake, and it's stuck."

I called back and laughed, "Yeah right." I thought someone was playing a sick joke on me, the kind of thing the guys like to do when I'm stressed. I put the radio down and resumed work on the mower. A few minutes later, a desperate call ("Are you coming?") came over the radio followed by a request for the four-wheel

drive and some chains. At that moment, I knew it wasn't a joke.

I went back to the shop to get a chain. That's when I got a telephone call from Andy, my other assistant. He wanted to report that a bee had stung an employee, and now the poor guy was having an allergic reaction. I instructed Andy to get him directly to the clinic.

Soon, I arrived at Mystic Lake to find the tractor stuck in the mud on the lake's edge. My other rough operator, Dick, assisted as I hooked the chains around the axle and pulled her clear. The rescue went smoothly. Something was finally going my way.

I returned to the shop as the crew began to return, one by one, parking the equipment for the evening. After everyone had punched out, Andy pulled into the lot with the young bee-stung victim. This had been one of the longest days of my life, and I was glad to see it come to an end.

So, when you're having a bad day, think of me and remember — while I try to forget — that foggy morning in mid-July known as "Black Monday." ■

Veteran superintendent Morrison has had better days than Black Monday, but hopefully he won't have one worse. He can be reached at trapperssupt@yahoo.com.

Morrison's first assistants, Scott Murkve (left) and Andy Putzer (center), made it through Black Monday with him.



Tips

Late-Year Fertilization

The year's last fertilizer application is also the most vital and lays the foundation for how turf performs the following year

BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR

“We don't do anything spectacular,” says Terry Bonar, certified superintendent of Canterbury GC in Cleveland, when asked about his course's late-year fertilization strategy.

That said, Bonar realizes that late-year fertilization is vital to the overall health of the golf course. “You want to push it a little more in the fall because that's when the roots grow better,” he says.

The importance of late-year fertilization is not lost on Bob Brame, the USGA Green Section's director of the North-Central Region, and USGA agronomist Matt Nelson, who covers the Northwest Region. Brame and Nelson say late-year fertilization is probably the most important application of the year.

Brame says the application lays the foundation of how turf performs the following year. “Superintendents need to watch it closely and tweak it based on soil tests to make sure they're feeding the plants correctly.”

Nelson notes that plants still breathe slowly over the winter, and late-year fertilization provides early spring green up without excessive top growth. “Inexpensive formulations of nitrogen and potassium usually provide good results,” he adds.

USGA agronomist James Skorulski, who covers the Northeast Region, notes that late-year nitrogen fertilization may eliminate the need for early-spring fertilization, especially on fairways. “It's one less thing a [superintendent] has to do in an already busy spring,” he adds.

Bonar's strategy calls for applying a pound of ammonium sulfate on fairways and tees in late November.

“We wait until top growth stops, but the turf is still green and photosynthesis is still taking place,” Bonar says. “[The application] pays dividends.”

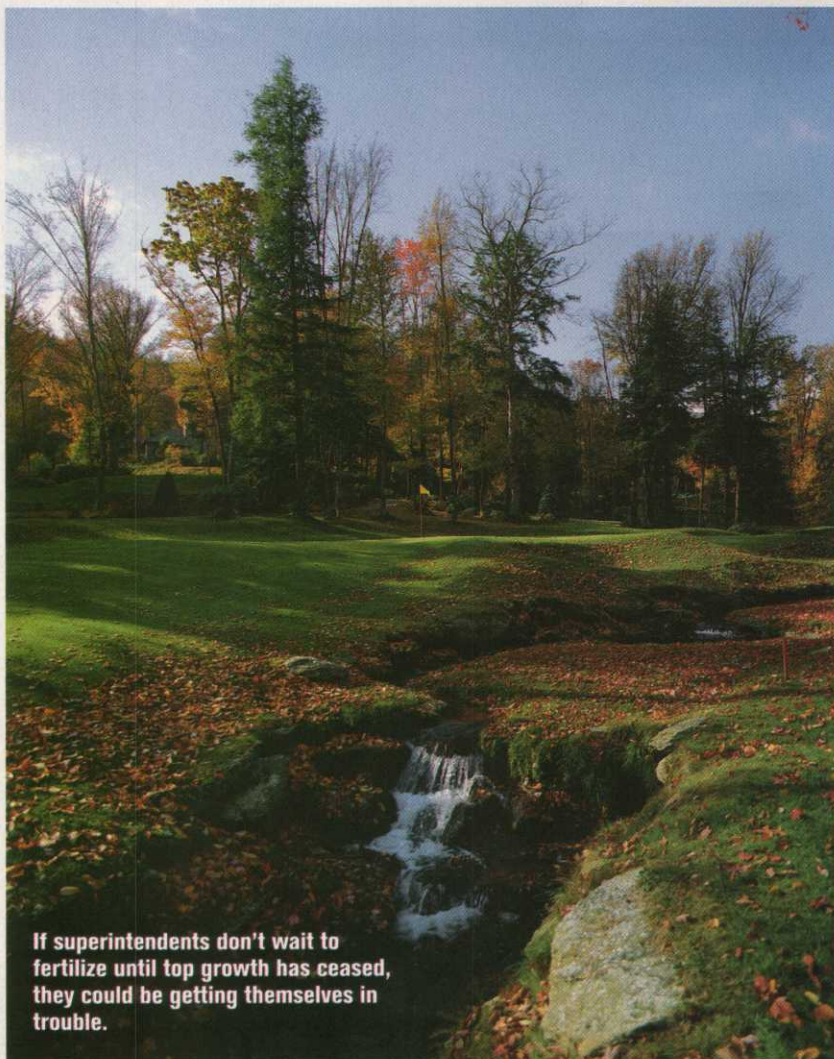
Brame suggests superintendents use up to one-half pound of 100-percent

readily available fertilizer on greens, tees and fairways for turf to achieve “a more pronounced kick.” Then they should use a slow-release product in the early winter to maintain growth.

Skorulski recommends controlled-release fertilizer. “I feel safer with controlled-released nitrogen sources, especially those that are not completely temperature dependent,” he says.

In the South, USGA agronomist Todd Lowe, who covers Florida, says many courses bulk-fertilize tees and fair-

Continued on page 55



If superintendents don't wait to fertilize until top growth has ceased, they could be getting themselves in trouble.

MIKE KLEMM

Golfdom

November 2002
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- 11 115 Distributor/Manufacturer/Consultant
- 12 100 Others Allied to the Field (please specify) _____

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- 18 70 Green Chairman
- 19 45 Club President
- 20 75 Builder/Developer
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- 23 65 Other Titled Personnel (please specify) _____

3. What is your facility's annual maintenance budget?

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- 27 D \$500,001-\$750,000
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4. If you work for a golf course, how many holes are on your course?

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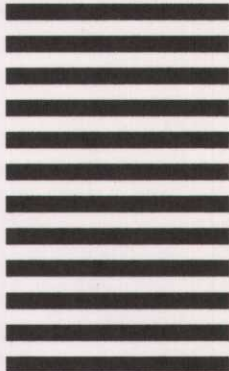
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- 30 G Less than \$150,000

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Tips

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ways at rate of 1 pound to 1.5 pounds of nitrogen using mostly slow-release products. But Lowe suggests not to forget potassium. "It's important to apply a similar ratio of potassium to nitrogen because it improves winter hardiness and aids in fighting winter diseases."

As in other regions, the basic principle in Florida is not to apply too much nitrogen in the late fall, Lowe notes.

"Varying temperatures in the fall create a roller coaster-like effect with flush growth on putting surfaces," he says. "Excessive nitrogen creates succulent growth, which encourages diseases like brown patch. It also stimulates shoot growth at the expense of root growth."

Strong root growth is important during fall months so turf can store carbohydrates for spring shoot emergence, Lowe says. "Superintendents should focus more on iron and manganese for color instead of nitrogen at this time of year," he adds.

If superintendents don't wait to fertilize until top growth has ceased, they could be getting themselves in trouble, Nelson says.

"[If they don't wait,] disease pressure will increase and plants will not harden properly to tolerate environmental extremes," he adds. "Proper fertilization will promote strong hardening. Potassium has long been known to improve disease resistance and tolerance of environmental extremes."

Timing is everything, Bonar agrees. "We try to beat the snow, but we've been snowed out before," he says.

Bonar and his crew have also fertilized too early. Last year, remembering they were snowed out the year before, they applied fertilizer earlier than usual. The weather warmed up, and the grass began to grow. "It's usually more trouble if you fertilize too early than if you fertilize too late," Bonar stresses.

In the South, Lowe says many courses overseed bermudagrass during winter months, and it's important not to stimulate bermudagrass growth as

Expert Advice

■ Use up to one-half pound of 100-percent readily available fertilizer on greens, tees and fairways for turf to achieve "a more pronounced kick."

—Bob Brame, USGA Green Section's director of the North-Central Region

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—Matt Nelson, USGA agronomist, Northwest Region

■ "Excessive nitrogen creates succulent growth, which encourages diseases like brown patch. It also stimulates shoot growth at the expense of root growth."

—Todd Lowe, USGA agronomist, Florida

■ "I feel safer with controlled-release nitrogen sources, especially those that are not completely temperature dependent."

—James Skorulski, USGA agronomist, Northeast Region

the overseeding establishes.

"In fact, some courses apply plant growth regulators during this time to decrease bermudagrass growth and improve overseeding establishment," he says. "Once the seedlings have established, fertility should be provided to the overseeding as needed to maintain good color."

Skorulski does not recommend late-year fertilization on greens where insulating covers are used for freeze injury protection. "A release of nitrogen under the covers is certainly not helpful," he adds.

In reference to timing, a question keeps resurfacing, especially in the cold-weather states: What time constitutes late-year?

"That's the part that's getting redefined," Brame says. "At one time, you

used to think Thanksgiving was late. But now it's not uncommon to see guys still mowing greens in early December."

Do you chalk it up to global warming? Brame isn't sure, but he knows one thing. "There's going to be a variance in the weather from year to year that makes it difficult to decide when that final fertilizer application should go on," he says.

But Brame stresses that superintendents can better gauge the final application by using readily-available fertilizer because of its quick response. From early to mid fall, turf experiences a distinct increase in growth from application to application, but that will stop as the soil temperature cools.

"Eventually, there's going to come a point in late fall where you'll make an application, and there won't be any growth response," Brame says. "It's to the point where soil temperatures have stopped growth. Then you should wait a few days and come back with a slow-release application. If it's November when that happens, that's fine. If it's mid-December, then that's the way it went that particular year. You never know how one year is going to go from the last."

Too many superintendents rely strictly on the calendar for their fertilization cycles, which is not a good strategy, Brame says.

No matter where you are tending turf, another vital component to successful late-year fertilization is consistency, says Brame, a former superintendent. Brame admits he never approached late-year fertilization with any consistency in his 17 years. He listened to what his peers said about certain philosophies and technologies and tried some of them.

"I see a lot of superintendents today are in the same boat I was," Brame says. "As a result, many of them don't have a consistent philosophy from year to year." ■

You can contact Aylward, the author of this story, at laylorward@advanstar.com.

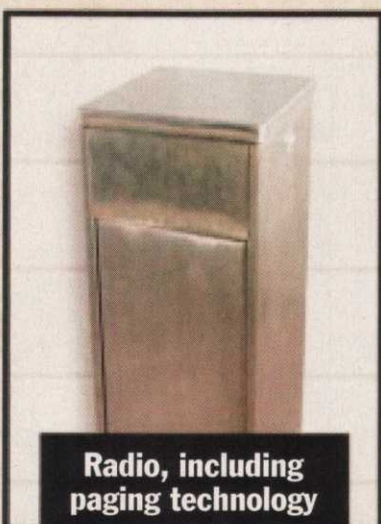
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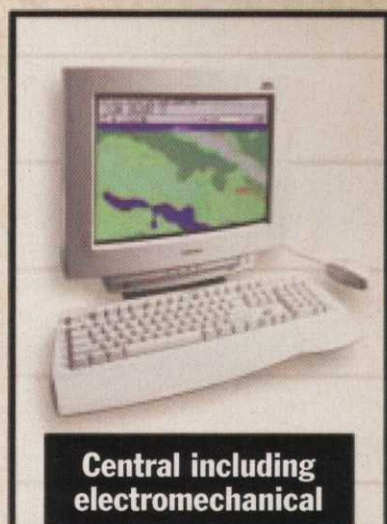
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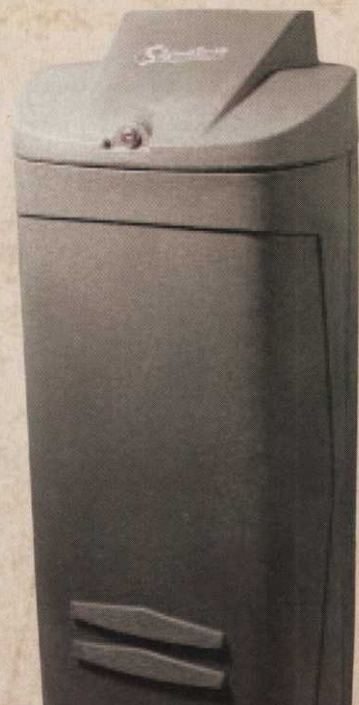
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CIRCLE NO. 201

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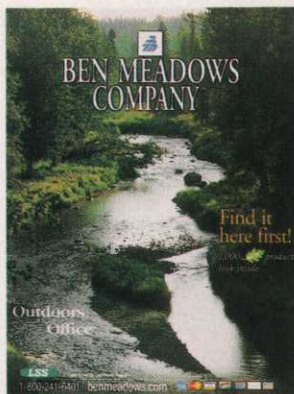
Full Coverage Irrigation has expanded its line of high uniformity nozzles to include two nozzle sets to retrofit the Toro

Model 750 sprinkler. The Toro 750 nozzles are designed as replacements for the factory No. 56 (Red) and No. 57 (Gray) sizes. The FCI nozzles optimize coverage and minimize wet and dry spot development.

Full Coverage Irrigation has also expanded its line of high uniformity brass and stainless-steel sprinkler nozzles to include retrofits for the Rain Bird Model 700 Eagle sprinklers. The FCI #32 (Blue) and #36 (Yellow) closely match flow and radius of the factory nozzle sets. Other sizes and low trajectory models for windy sites are under development with availability scheduled in early 2003.

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10. **This publication is owned by:** Advanstar Communications Inc, 7500 Old Oak Boulevard Cleveland, OH 44130. The sole shareholder of Advanstar Communications Inc. is: Advanstar, Inc. 545 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02116
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	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total Number of Copies	32,102	32,672
B. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
1. Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541	26,311	27,169
2. Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541	0	0
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	133	130
4. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	26,444	27,299
D. Free Distribution by Mail	0	0
1. Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541	4,789	4,668
2. In-County as Stated on Form 3541	0	0
3. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
E. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	763	514
F. Total Free Distribution	5,552	5,182
G. Total Distribution	31,996	32,481
H. Copies Not Distributed	106	191
I. Total	32,102	32,672
J. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	82.6%	84.0%

17. **Name and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner:** Robert A Dahl, Group Circulation Director
Date: 09/01/02

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