



Golfers and Turfgrass Research

By Dr. David U. Cookson

We players are generally content to exercise our golfing passion on the ground and with the conditions presented to us by the green superintendent, complaining to the green chairman or the superintendent himself if things are not as we would like, but not particularly concerned about why a disease process has established itself nor what needs to be done about it. As club members, we are touched with the costs of improving or correcting turf problems as it affects our monthly dues, but on balance we do not concern ourselves with the long term or the big picture, but only with the immediate situations we observe at the time we play. For this reason, the focus of this issue of the newsletter is important, for the player as well as the superintendent, since basic research is the bedrock giving stability to efforts to continue our game on its future path with the same degree of success and sustenance that it has enjoyed heretofore. I believe it should be part of the

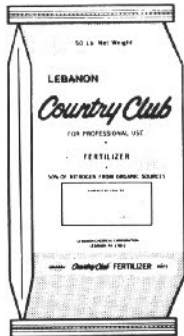
job description for the green superintendent and the green chairman to deliver this message to the player whenever the opportunity presents, so that Boards of Directors and individual golfers will be aware of the importance of turf research and support its funding when called upon.

As a physician, I know that medical progress is totally dependent on research efforts both in the understanding of the origins of the disease and in the need to define the best therapy to correct and prevent such disorders. The analogy for turf management is directly applicable, with the additional factor that advances must also be made in improving the nature of basic materials inherent to the game such as water sparing and disease resistant grasses. With the increased costs of dealing with turf diseases as well as environmental constraints involving water usage and the nature of some of our long established pesticides, herbicides, and other turf enhancers, re-

search efforts to deal with these continuing and increasingly formidable golf problems are mandatory and essential to allow golf to remain as it always has been and should be; accessible to all who want to play, healthful and enjoyable exercise and recreation, and responsive to the legitimate concerns of society.

My message then is twofold, first, that we as golfers must take a larger view of the future of the game, while continuing to indulge our current enthusiasm for playing, by underwriting and supporting the need for research when asked to do so. Secondly, green superintendents and those with daily contact and exposure to the research needs of turf grasses and turf management must take it upon themselves to educate those who will be asked to fund research as to the reasons and need for continuing support.

David U. Cookson



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