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Golf Course Snow Mold Survey

We have just come through one of the longest and "snowiest" winters on record. Reports on snow mold development have been quite variable, ranging from those courses that have come through with minimal damage, to those that have considerable damage.

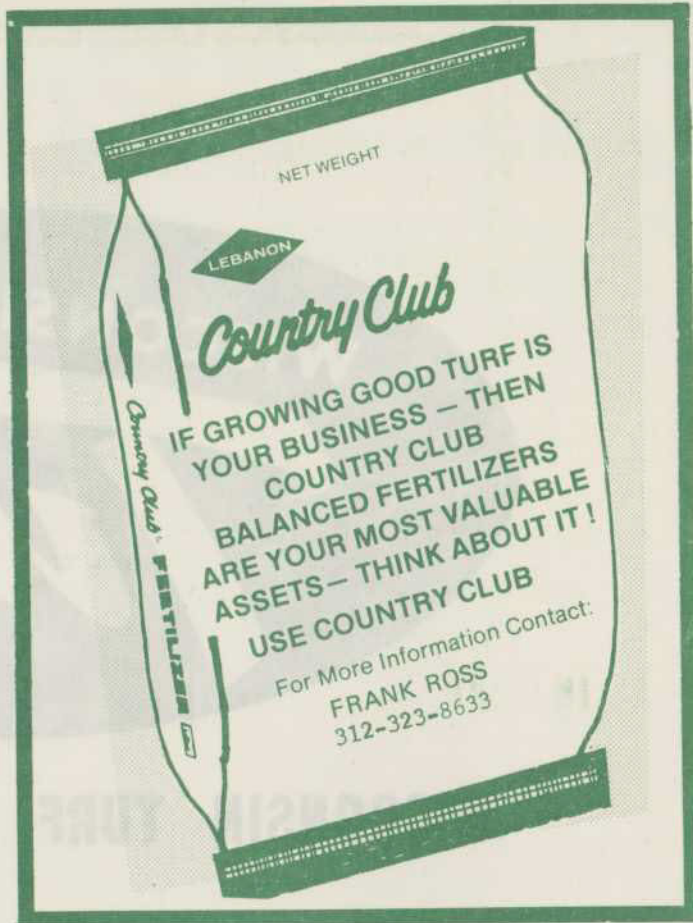
It occurs to me that we would be remiss if we did not make some effort to assess what damage has occurred and to look for factors that influenced the variations. Accordingly, I have prepared a questionnaire and if you are willing, I would appreciate your completing it and returning it to me. The questionnaire is being distributed to WGCSA members and a few others. You will notice that it is divided into a section on "greens" and one on "Fairways", the questions are similar.

The summary should be interesting and we may learn something about snow mold activity and control that we cannot learn through fungicide evaluation plots.

You may sign the questionnaire or not, as you wish, but please indicate the county.

Thank you for your cooperation.

GAYLE L. WOLF, Professor G.L.W.



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What Can You Ask When You Interview

As spring approaches, superintendents' thoughts turn to the annual chore of hiring a summer crew. Nobody likes to interview applicants for jobs, but antidiscrimination laws now make the task even more difficult.

Laws vary from state to state, but it is almost universally true that asking questions about religion, race, age or ethnic background is illegal. In some states, it is also illegal to inquire about marital status. Be very careful about asking even indirect questions if they might reveal information that could be prejudicial.

So what can you ask?

You are entitled to an employment history, including names and addresses of previous employers, and to details about the education the applicant has received. You may ask for dates, the names, the schools and about any diplomas or degrees received. You may also ask if the applicant ever used a different name, so you can check past employment and education records.

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You may ask for a current address and for the length of time the applicant has lived there. You may ask if he or she is a U.S. Citizen and if not, what his or her status is.

You may inquire about any physical or mental handicaps that relate directly to the applicants' performance of their duties.

You have a right to know if the applicants have ever been convicted of a crime, and if they have, you may ask where, when and about the final settlement of the case.

Continued on next page . . .

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"What Can You Ask . . ." cont.

Ask the employees if there is anything else about their job that they would like to know, or if there's anything else about their background that you should know.

When you have completed this portion of the interview, you may find it useful to ask other questions as well, to determine whether the applicant will be able to work effectively for you.

Consider these:

☆ **Describe the best and the worst boss you've ever had.** Ask yourself which you resemble the most.

☆ **What parts of your last job did you like the best?** How does that job compare to this one?

☆ **What do you consider your greatest talent? Your worst weakness?** What does that imply about the applicant's probable performance in this job?

By comparing the answers to these questions to the work situation at your course and the position you envision for this employee, you can draw some useful conclusions about how satisfactory his or her performance would be.

- Credit Fore Front Jan. 79

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Address: 201 Myrtle St., Shelton, CT 06484

Telephone: (203) 734-0230

Age: 22 Height: 5'11"

Weight: 185 lbs. Married: No Children

Education: Graduate of McNeese State University, May 11, 1978

Degree: Bachelor of Science
Major: Horticulture

Minor Subjects: Agronomy, Biology

References: Mr. Paul O. Messner, Head Golf Professional, Country Club of Beloit, Box 538, Beloit, WI 53511

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Food For Thought

"TAKING THE HEAT"

Superintendents throughout their careers take an abundance of verbal abuse. Usually an attack is best controlled by allowing an irate member to get it out of their system without interruption. When they have exhausted their energy, it is the superintendent's opportunity to explain and justify his actions. This opportunity to communicate is for explanation and not to "give 'em Hell". A quick and hot reaction will only serve to add fuel to the fire.

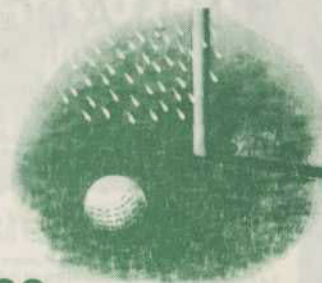
Keeping an explanation extremely low key and clear will serve to calm the member as well as answer their demands.

Refusing to become upset in an undesirable situation is the best method of controlling the conversation and achieving the goal of communication. *TWO POINTS:* Justify your actions rather than arguing a point, and Make your reaction the opposite of the expected outrage. Try the "cool" approach — it will work for you.

Food for Thought is opinion. Let us hear from you if you agree and especially if you disagree.



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Snow Cover Or Not, Snow Mold A Problem

Year in and year out, snow mold, or scald, may give many of you headaches. Because of the severity of the winter just past, many Northern regions should be prepared for an exceptional year of snow mold problems.

"In our area, since in many places the ground is not frozen underneath a heavy snow pack, there's going to be a lot of snow mold activity," says Dr. Richard Smiley, turfgrass pathologist at Cornell University. "This will be particularly severe where there have been no protective fungicides applied and where the soil has remained unfrozen throughout most or all of the winter."

Dr. Smiley points out that some areas, where the snow cover is limited or was blown off, do have a thick layer of frost in the ground. He says these areas shouldn't experience as many snow mold problems as he predicts for heavy snow covered locations. But these snowless regions aren't immune to snow mold, either.

Two problem snow molds are Typhula Blight (gray snow mold) and Fusarium Patch (pink snow mold). Smiley says the Typhula Blight is prevalent when there is a good snow cover. Meanwhile, Fusarium Patch can work on open ground as well.

"In northern New York, we can have relatively severe problems with Fusarium Patch throughout the year," says Dr. Smiley.

The same situation exists to the west.

"The longer we have snow, the more chance there is for problems with snow mold", says Dr. M.C. Shurtleff, Extension plant pathologist at the University of Illinois. Shurtleff says the snow mold problem will cause the most damage in areas where the snow cover is deep and slowest to melt.

Snow mold can raise havoc with your turfgrass. Shurtleff alerts you to keep an eye out for this disease. He says snow mold is especially a problem where snow has been packed down. Thus, areas of golf courses and lawns that have been traveled over by tractors, cars, snowmobiles and the like are more susceptible to the disease.

Shurtleff says the best defense against snow mold is application of a protective fungicide in the fall. But this solution won't help you control a snow mold problem now. So what can you do if you see a snow mold problem developing in your turfgrass?

Dr. Smiley gave some suggestions. "We have done trials at Cornell to try and find the best way to get recovery of grass when it is coming out of winter in a pretty tattered and torn condition. Fungicides were applied as soon as we saw the disease when snow was receding, but at that point in time the fungicides just didn't help us at all.

Continued on next page . . .

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"Snow cover or not . . ." continued.

"What has helped most of all is physically raking that grass up," Dr. Smiley continued. "When it's molded it is flat and horizontal, not getting much light. By physically raking it you get the leaves upright so the sun rays can get down to the soil and be absorbed sooner. Thus the soil warms up sooner, and you get better bud germination." Dr. Smiley adds that a light fertilizer application when you are raking up the spots will assist in getting a quicker regrowth.

You should keep a close eye on your turf. Have your rake and a little fertilizer ready so you can catch any snow mold problems early this spring.

Shurtleff says the best time to control snow mold is by taking measures in the fall. It's recommended in Northern states that you do not fertilize after September 15. Avoid having your turf growing at a fast rate as it heads into winter. Keep the grass cut to recommended height to prevent a mat of grass from forming. And before the first heavy snow and during winter thaws, treat turf with a fungicide recommended by your turf dealer.

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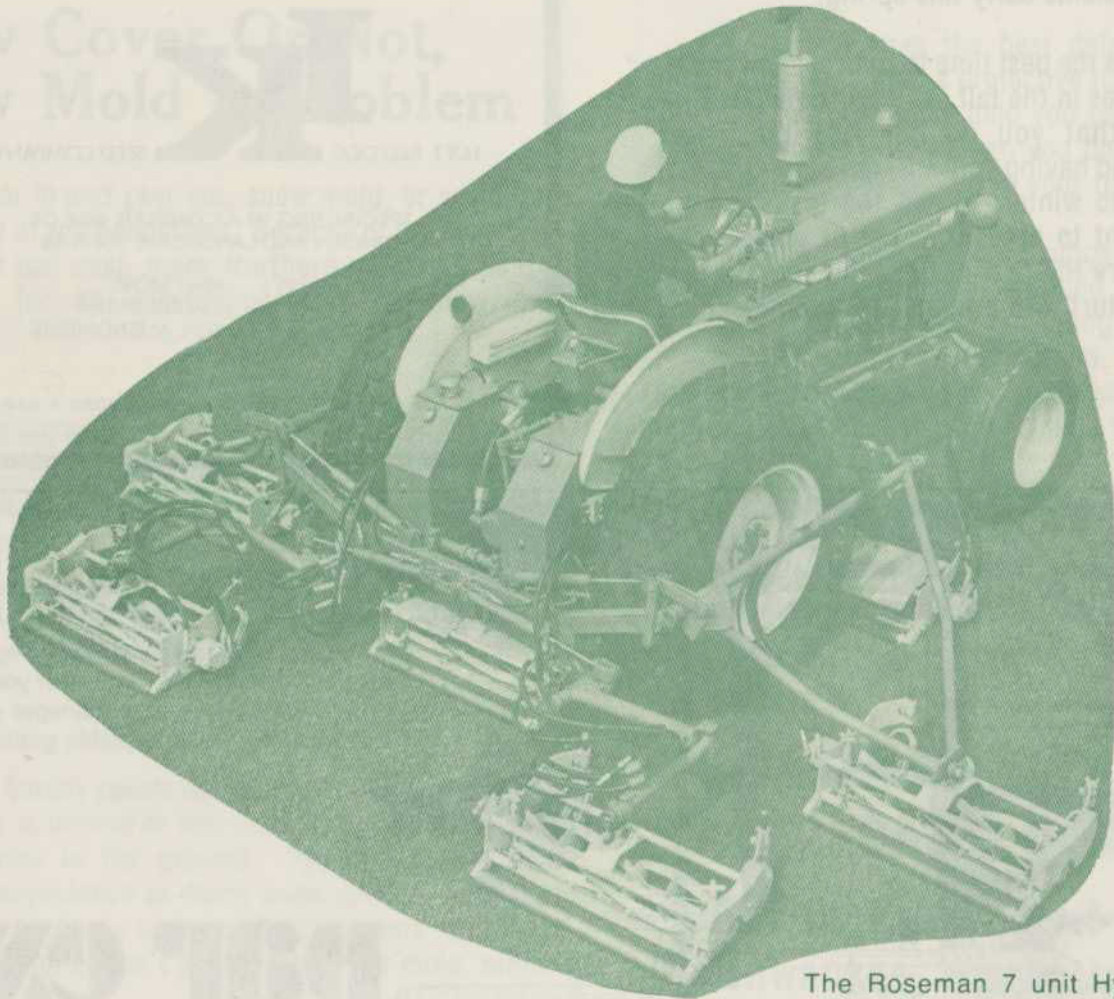
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