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## ABOUT THE COVER

The logo for Erin hills and the 2011 U.S. Amateur Championship.

*When the snow is still blowing against the window-pane in January and February and the wild winds are howling without, what pleasure it is to plan for summer that is to be.*

**By American Poet Celia Loughton Thaxter, 1835-1894**

This quote by Loughton reminds us enjoy the howls of winter as we plan for the joy of summer.

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## THE GRASS ROOTS

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## Growing our Profession Through Community Outreach

By Jeff Millies, Certified Golf Course Superintendent, Edgewood Golf Course

I would like to thank everyone for allowing me to serve as the current WGCSA President. It is an honor to lead this prestigious association in the upcoming months and I look forward to this opportunity.

As 2010 comes to an end, I can not help to reflect on the past year. The weather sure stands out as the most significant factor. At one point I considered the need to build an ark vs. rebuilding a fairway. Mother Nature was not very kind to us during these tough economic times. Trying to accomplish our goals despite the challenges that are placed in front of us is always difficult. However, by having a plan and being creative, we can achieve our goals. Looking back, how many of you remember what your goals were for 2010 and did you succeed in accomplishing them?

As we enter 2011, I would like to challenge all of you to set some new goals. Projects are always my preference, but with the economy being the way it is money is tough to come by. This year, consider improving your skills which does not involve money, just your time.

I believe that volunteering and doing community service are often areas that get overlooked. Getting involved within the community not only reflects positively on yourself, but it also exposes you to the non-golfing public. This can lead to educating the non-golfer about our profession as well as the benefits golf courses have within the community.

Today's society seems to be slowly deteriorating due to small groups of misinformed individuals who make a lot of noise for their

concerns and beliefs. Many times their logic is based on fear, false information, and incorrect data published on the Internet. The next time an environmental issue pops up within your community, wouldn't it be great if the community saw the golf course as a possible resource.

As superintendents we need to put ourselves out there. Many of us are uncomfortable in these types of situations, but in order for change and personal growth to take place, you need to take risk and venture outside your comfort zone. So I encourage you to get involved, it benefits everyone while increasing your social network to adding depth to your resume.

PAR 4 Research is underway for the second year and it's not too late to donate a golf related time. Last year there were several comments from bidders wondering why their course wasn't participating. Don't be left out this year. Items should be provided by February 15 because viewing of the items begins that day. Bidding then begins on April 1 and ends on the 10th. We also need your help in promoting this auction, please consider doing an email blast to your members. Articles are available for you to send out, just contact the WGCSA Chapter Manager, Brett Grams or visit [www.PAR-4Research.com](http://www.PAR-4Research.com).

It was a tough year for many of us with the weather and economic conditions. Hopefully 2011 will bring much more favorable conditions. I wish all of you a safe and prosperous year.

### WGCSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of the game of golf through education, communication and research.

### WGCSA VISION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state.
- Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership throughout Wisconsin.
- Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship.
- Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service.
- Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf.



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**Kestrel**

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# Annual Updates

By Brett Grams, WGCSA Chapter Manager

I hope everyone were able to enjoy the Holidays with family and friends. It appears that the winter has firmly taken hold of the entire state with a blanket of snow now covering all of your courses. I hope that you are able to enjoy the hopefully slower time of the year.

January and February are actually my busiest months of the year. Membership renewals, Industry Partner Contracts, and our newest effort the PAR4 Research Auction are well underway and take up the majority of my time. I am happy to report that at the time of this writing we have received approximately 1/3rd of the membership renewals (Due Feb 1st). Thanks to those of you who quickly renew as you save the association the added expense of the final notice.

In addition to the "office work" we are also finalizing the plans for education topics for our monthly meetings, finalizing the last of the locations for our 2011 meetings, and completing the details for the WI Hospitality Room in Orlando. This year's event will be held once again at the Best of British Sports Pub on I-Drive on Wednesday Evening Feb 9th from 6 to 8 PM.

I wanted to remind everyone that our Job Opportunity Service has been modified. In reaction to the GCSAA now making their Job Service free to prospective employers and changed the service exclusively web based. The WGCSA now offers two levels of service for Courses/Companies wanting to post opportunities to our membership. The electronic service is now a

free service. Any Course/Company can post the job details to our form on our website. The post will be reviewed for accuracy and clarity and then activated on our Member's Only side of our website for all of our members viewing and use. Each member who has their email address on file with the WGCSA will be sent an email notifying them that a job has been posted so they know to go to our website and review it.

The second level of Job Posting will be the continuation of our former service of preparing and printing a hard copy mailing of the Job Notice. Just like in the past this is a service charged to the Club/Company who is posting the job. To date we have had several job notices posted electronically on our website. This complimentary service appears to be more popular than the paid hard copy service option. If you are looking for employment please make sure you have a valid email address on file with the WGCSA and be on the lookout for any email notices as they are sent to you.

Please consider participating in our 2nd Annual PAR4Research Online Auction. We will be able to grow this event if we can increase the number of our members clubs that participate this year.

As always if you have any questions or need help with any issues please feel free to contact me. I can be reached via phone at 920-643-4888 or via email at [bgrams@wgcsa.com](mailto:bgrams@wgcsa.com)

I hope to see many of you in Orlando at the WI Room and at our Spring Business Meeting on February 28th at the Ramada in Fond du Lac.



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## Minimizing Annual Bluegrass Encroachment with Trimmit: A Growing Degree Day Approach

By Dr. Doug Soldat, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin - Madison

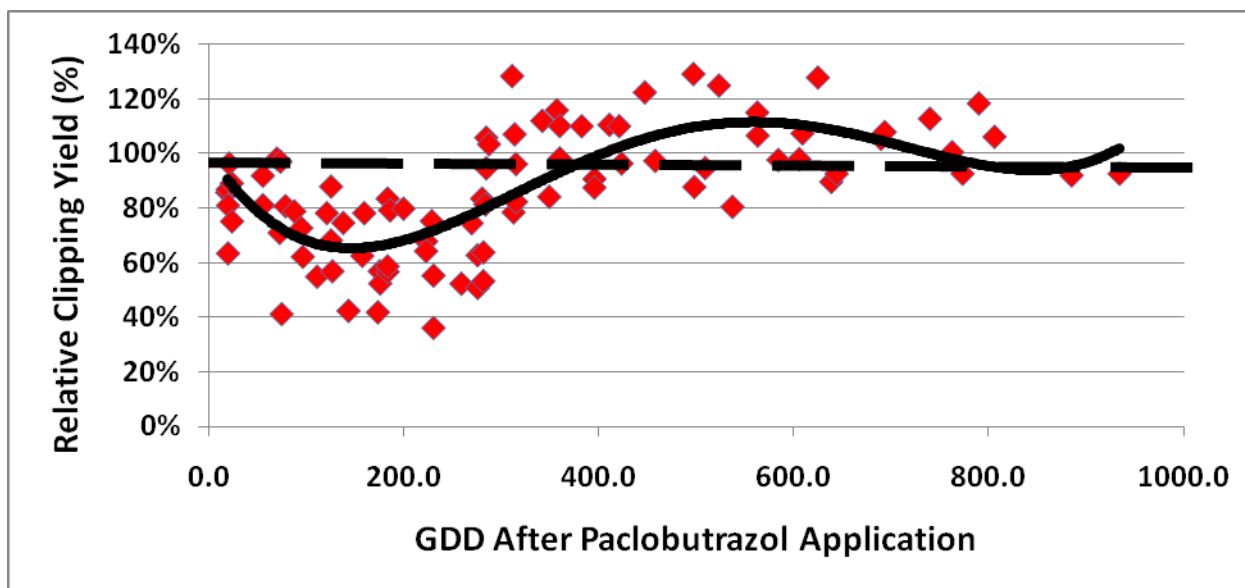
During our work developing a growing degree day (GDD) re-application schedule for Primo, we added some treatments with Trimmit (paclobutrazol) based on questions from superintendents. Like Primo, Trimmit is a growth regulator that affects gibberellic acid synthesis, but does so in a different manner. The label for Trimmit recommends 6 to 16 oz/acre of product (0.1-0.25 lbs a.i) for creeping bentgrass putting greens. The label also mentions that annual bluegrass control is possible at the high rate (16 oz/acre). While the label is ambiguous about the amount and length of growth reductions for bentgrass, it seems to imply that 6-8 weeks of 50% growth reduction can be achieved.

Using the same rigorous methods used in the Primo research, we collected clippings several times each week from plots treated with Trimmit at 16 oz/acre and compared the daily clipping growth to non-treated plots. The overall pattern of a period of growth regulation followed by a period of growth enhancement (or rebound phase) was similar to the Primo study. However, unlike the results from the Primo work, we found that the label statements for 50% growth reduction were fairly accurate (Figure 1); although this reduction rarely lasted for more than three weeks (never six to eight, as on the label). After coming out of regulation, the Trimmit treated bentgrass grew 10-25% more than the non-treated control for a pe-

riod of about two to three weeks.

Applying what we learned from the Primo studies to the Trimmit data, we should see maximum bentgrass regulation if we re-applied Trimmit every 300 growing degree days (base temperature 0°C). Perhaps the main reason superintendents choose Trimmit over Primo is to minimize annual bluegrass encroachment. So in addition to testing Trimmit on bentgrass, we also applied it using the label directions and every 300 GDD to an annual bluegrass putting green. The putting green was established from seed in 2008 and was obviously dominated by “annual-types”. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to keep 100% cover on the putting green all year. We battled with huge seed-head flushes in the spring (which caused a die off immediately after), and had major trouble (as did many) keeping the annual bluegrass alive during the intense summer of 2010. So please excuse the relatively ugly looking control plots shown in Figure 2, and focus on the much uglier looking plots of the 300 GDD treatments.

In summary, we confirmed that following a 300 GDD re-application schedule on bentgrass-dominated putting greens can maximize the regulation of bentgrass growth, while putting enormous pressure on annual bluegrass populations.



**Figure 1.** Relative clipping yield for creeping bentgrass treated with Trimmit compared to the non-treated control plots (dashed line representing 100% relative yield). Maximum growth regulation was achieved between 100 and 250 growing degree days (base 0°C) and rebound phase began at 350 – 400 growing degree days. In May, 100 growing degree days represents about one week, while in a typical July 100 growing degree days might take only 4 days

## WISCONSIN SOILS REPORT

Trimmit is known to give bentgrass a temporary bluish (almost sickly) hue that is somewhat undesirable, but in reality probably only noticed superintendents. Anecdotally, we did not observe this coloration to be any more or less severe with the 300 GDD re-applications than compared to the labeled re-applications (7 weeks).

It is likely that growing degree day-based applications make sense for much more than just growth regulators. Most pesticides are also metabolized by the plant and the rate of that metabolism is probably highly temperature dependent. In the upcoming season, we plan to work with Dr. Kerns to investigate the amount of growth regulation achieved by several DMI fungicides, which are known to have growth regulation properties. Hopefully, this work will eventually expand beyond growth regulators and lead to more precise estimates of the expected duration of disease and insect control following a pesticide application.

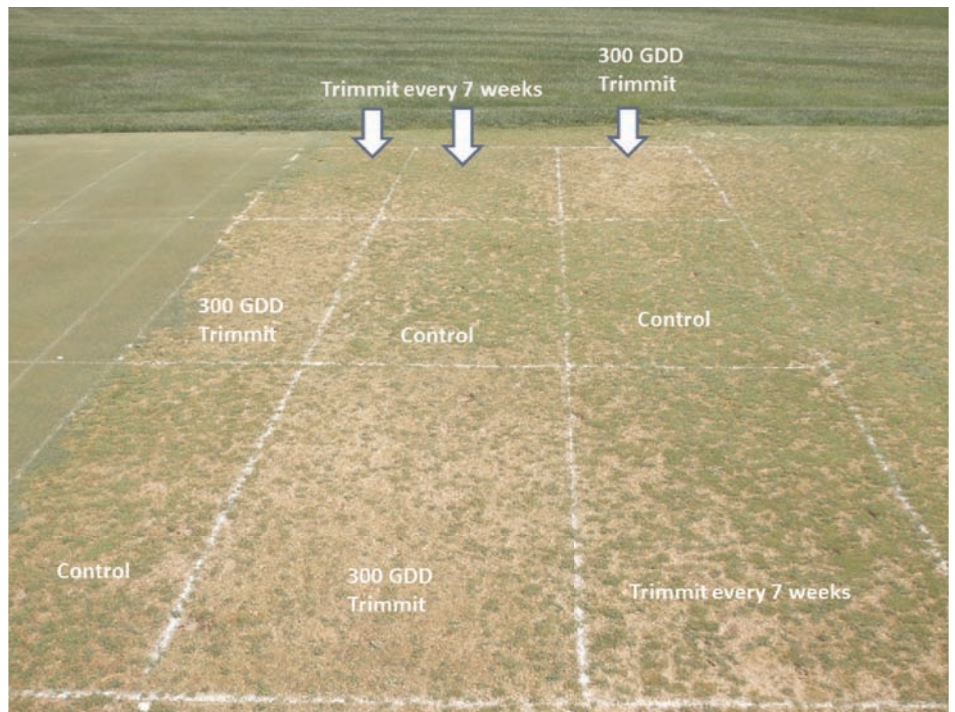


Figure 2. Mid-summer image of an annual bluegrass putting green treated with Trimmit every seven weeks, or using a 300 growing degree day (base 0°C) re-application schedule. The 300 GDD treatments resulted in substantial death of annual bluegrass compared to the labeled rate (7 weeks at 0.25 lbs ai/acre or 16 oz product/acre).

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## Value of Independent Research and Information

By Dr. R. Chris Williamson, Department of Entomology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

So, where do you get product information that enables you to make an informed product selection decision? Such information can have a profound impact or effect on your desired results or outcome. There are often many responses to this question that range from a “buddy,” friend, colleague, sales representative, vendor, supplier, an internet site or blog, industry magazine advertisement, marketing literature, etc.

What source is “most” accurate? Is all, some or any of the information afforded to you inaccurate? Is your source of information providing you everything you need to know about the product, including the potential negative attributes or characteristics? The answers to these questions are critical as you develop your respective turf management strategies.

Not all information is created equal! And, seldom are the potential negative attributes or characteristics of a product revealed or made available. This is not to say that manufacturers are hiding something, but rather they primarily promote or emphasize the strengths of a product in order to separate it from their competitors. So, where can you get information about the potential negative attributes or characteristics of a product? Can you rely on the aforementioned sources that you rely on for product information?

This is a rather loaded question that also likely has many different responses, as well as no simple answer. Nonetheless, you must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of a product in order to make an appropriate and informed decision. The bottom line is that the more you know about a product, the greater the likelihood of success you will have.

Non-biased research results and information can be readily obtained from university researchers, extension specialists as well as most independent researchers and consultants. This is not to imply that you can't get important product information from other sources, but understand that university researchers, extension specialists and independent researchers and consultants “should not” have an agenda or motive (economic or otherwise) to promote or criticize a respective product.

Their objective should be to openly discuss and provide information regarding the pros and cons of respective products. To this end, they are neither promoting



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or criticizing a product, but merely providing valuable information and awareness. In addition, it is important to look at more than one study or set of data (not just the good or successful ones, but the “bad” ones as well) regarding a product as variability does exist, thus the performance or results can vary greatly as well. Again, such information is critical in making an informed product selection decision.

So, the next time you have to make an important product selection decision, consider a university researcher, extension specialist or an independent researcher or consultant as they will provide you with valuable research results and information



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