

# Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association

AFFILIATED WITH THE GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

JULY 1979

## HOLE



## NOTES

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## ANTHRACNOSE TIME IS HERE

The months of July and August are upon us. Associated with these months are the hot, dry, stressful conditions which were specifically designed to provide the golf course superintendent with ulcers, grey hair and assorted other symptoms of anguish. This article is an attempt to familiarize the superintendent with a problem most often seen at this time of the year which will hopefully relieve rather than alarm.

Anthracnose is a disease most readily diagnosed during the stressful days ahead of us. For those of us "blessed" with an abundance of *Poa annua* on greens, tees and fairways, anthracnose is of particular concern. The disease has also been associated with Kentucky bluegrass and red fescue, but is not as damaging as is evidenced on *Poa*.

Anthracnose is often mistaken for *Pythium* and *Helminthosporium*, but is most often mistaken simply as wilt or high temperature stress. All the water you have can be applied to the area with no positive results. Symptoms associated with anthracnose are a yellowing of infected areas rather than a darkening as seen with wilt and the ability of the turf to spring back when stopped on as opposed to wilt. The disease appears as an irregularly shaped area ranging anywhere from a few inches to several feet in diameter, frequently covering the entire area. Black fruiting bodies on the infected grass blades are barely visible to the naked eye and are more readily observed with the aid of a hand lens or microscope. The disease is also more prevalent in areas of heavy soil, heavy traffic or compacted soil.

Control of anthracnose can best be achieved through the use of a systemic fungicide. However, the cost of such a venture can be quite high. According to Dr. Ward Steinstra of the University of Minnesota, if you do have an anthracnose problem, you might do well to reassess your fertility program. A healthy and vigorous turf is less likely to be severely damaged and recovery is likely to be faster.

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