

Mid-Atlantic Newsletter



PUBLISHED BY: Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the Advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through Education and Merit

Volume XXX

June 1977

Number 6

June Meeting

The June meeting of the M.A.A.G.C.S. will be held June 7th at the Sparrows Point Country Club in Baltimore, Maryland. Our host will be Alex Watson.

Al Watson was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and came to the United States when he was two years old. Al was raised in Warwick, Virginia. He attended and graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute class of '49. Al also graduated from the American Landscape School. Al became a Certified Golf Course Superintendent in 1976. Al has been the Golf Course Superintendent at Sparrow's Point for 17 years.

Sparrow's Point was designed and constructed by Bill and David Gordon. The original 18 holes were built in 1953, and the newer nine were completed in 1960.

The Greens at Sparrow's Point are primarily C-1 and C-19. Fairways on the 9 hole facility are Bluegrass, Bent fescues and, until the winter of '77, Bermuda. The 18 hole facility fairways were being converted to Bermudagrass, a program which started three years ago. A large precentage of the grass was lost during the '77 winter. Much of the Perennial Ryegrasses seeded last fall were lost during the deepfreeze. At this point in time Bermuda with Perennial Ryegrasses are being seeded into the 18 hole facility fairways.

Directions to the club: From Beltway #695 North

thru the Harbor Tunnel to Exit #1. Follow Holabird Ave. to Dundalk Ave. Intersection. Straight thru until it becomes Wise Ave., and down to the club on the right. Those coming from Glen Burnie on the Eastern Shore can use the New Bridge and come off at Bethelem Blvd. to Route 151 (North Point Blvd.) to Wise Ave., turn left at the stop light to the club on the left.

Program: Golf: Cocktails: Dinner: Speaker:

Anytime 6:00 7:00 Dr. Fred Miller University of Maryland

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our May 10th Superintendents-Pro outing at Hog Neck Course in Easton, Maryland was a tremendous success. The tournament's success was because of the pre-planning by our host Ben Stagg, our Golf Chairman Ken Braun and the host Pro John Medvel. Thanks guys, it was great.

As most of you know, I have assumed the position as Golf Course Superintendent at Chevy Chase Country Club, replacing Fred Scheyhing, who is returning to New York. Paul O'Leary has succeeded me at Eagle's nest. I wish them both great success.

Our June 7th meeting, at Sparrow's Point Country Club, is a date change. It's the first Tuesday of the month. Our host Al Watson will order up a super day for us. Let's have a good turn out. Our attendance at meetings is on the rise, let's keep it going up.

Yours for finer turf, for better golf and a cool damp summer.

Bill Emerson

ALEX WATSON



WAYNE'S PLACE



Anyone who attended the Superintendent-Pro outing at Hog Neck Golf Course certainly received royal treatment. Ben Stagg and John Medved teamed up to really put on a well run tournament and showed us city boys real Eastern Shore hospitality. It was a pleasure to see how two professionals can work together smoothly to establish an end result like they have at Hog Neck. That end result is a golf facility second to none. The entire facility has an air of professionalism that many of us could take lesson from.

Never let it be said that the Mid-Atlantic Section isn't a merry-go-round. This year is becoming the biggest game of musical chairs in the past few years. This year Superintendents are making moves quicker than I can keep track of. I'll endeavor to get everyone in here so that everyone gets their share of congratulations. Harry Allen has left Redgate and taken the Superintendent's position at Manor Country Club. Ford Staurser of Woodholme has retired, and Jack Monticalvo of New Jersey has succeeded him there. Fred Scheying of Chevy

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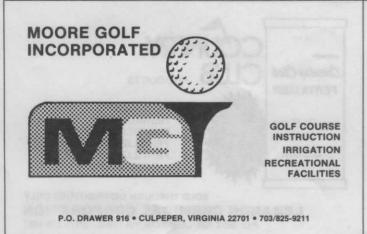
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Chase is going back to New York to the Mt. Kisco Country Club. Bill Emerson will be succeeding Fred at Chevy Chase and Paul O'Leary ex-assistant at Hunt Valley, will be taking over at Eagles' nest when Bill leaves. John Scott of Montclair Country Club in Dumfries, Virginia will be moving to the Superintendent's position at Andrews AFB Golf Course, which was vacated by Virgil Robinson last winter. Virgil is now at the Burning Tree Club. John Scott's assistant at Montclair, will be moving up the Superintendents position. Whew, I think that's got it. Congratulations to you all, and best wishes to you all in your new endeavors.

Recently, while attending a Mid-Atlantic meeting, I overheard a young assistant superintendent speaking about his boss, a golf course superintendent, in a derogatory fashion. He was busy telling two superintendents how his boss was doing things wrong and that he had all the answers. The superintendents, of course, chastised the young assistant for his remarks and he was soon shut up. An attitude, such as this assistant had, is probably one of the reasons that schooled assistants are becoming an endangered species. Young men, if you have suggestions, tell your superintendent. Work with him, not against him. It will be a good learning situation for both of you. Wise man once say, "animal that bites the hand that feeds him, soon become very hungry." Nuff Said.

Monthly Overseeding of Greens Woodmont Country Club

by BOB SHIELDS

All of us have various amounts of Poa Annua grass in our putting greens. All of us would like to eliminate the Poa and replace it with Bentgrass for a better putting surface and a grass that is more reliable and easier to maintain.

I'm not going to tell anyone that I can get rid of all Poa but I can list some of the approved methods of keeping it

(continued on page 4)



Monthly Overseeding

(continued from page 3)

within acceptable limits.

Poa likes water, so let's start with drainage. If you have wet greens, then get rid of the excess water any way you can. When necessary to add water in dry weather, apply just enough to keep the grass alive. Keep the surface on the dry side.

Put on your Poa inhibitor chemical to prevent as much germination as possible. We used Tri Calcium Arsenate for several years and I hope it is back on the market soon before my present supply is exhausted. If you use it, be careful, because you can easily get an over-kill.

Use very little phosphorous in fertilizer applications. Too much will neutralize the chemical in the Poa preventer.

Aerate early in the season, before Poa produces seed, mow the green, then topdress with weedfree topdressing. We use John Strickland's material which has been sterilized. Drag or brush the surface in two or more directions to work the material down into the aerifier holes.

As soon as the dragging is finished, overseed with Penncross Bentgrass seed at the rate of one pound of seed per green and water in.

A month later verticut and spike in two directions, then mow the green and seed again at one pound per green. Repeat this operation at monthly intervals for the rest of the season and you will have a better green that you had at the start.

This program may not give you a perfect Bentgrass green but punching many little holes and placing a seed in each hole certainly improves your chances. Then by doing it at monthly intervals, you have a chance of having new growth coming on all the time.

We know we can grow Bentgrass in this area a lot easier than we can grow Poa Annua, so I'm going to keep on spiking and seeding.

The most valuable gift you can give another is a good example.

EMPLOYMENT REFERRAL SERVICE Golf Course Superintendents Association of America April 4, 1977

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E. E. Johnson, P.O. Box 50027, Nashville, TN 37205 Deadline Date For Applications:

May 1, 1977.

NOTE: Please refer to the GCSAA Code of Ethics before making application for this position.

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If You Lost Bermudagrass This Winter - Consider -Zoysia

by DOUGLAS T. HAWES Institute of Applied Agriculture University of Maryland

INTRODUCTION

As a New Englander, who just arrived in the hot, humid transition zone eleven years ago, I have just recently come to a full appreciation of zoysia. I was raised on Kentucky bluegrass and colonial and creeping bentgrass with more than ample amounts of *Poa annua* thrown in. Zoysia was just one of those tropical grasses Southerner's grew.

In my early years in Maryland bermuda not zoysia was selling like hot cakes to new homeowners. Their hydroseeded bluegrass-ryegrass lawns on Maryland subsoils had failed the first summer and they were finding bermuda a cheap, rapid covering turf species. My first experience with bermuda was with common bermuda in my weedy bluegrass lawn. It took awhile to comprehend just how fast that weed could grow. I had pulled a lot of bermuda out of only 800 sq. ft. before I gave up and decided to grow it instead. I still think of it as a nasty but useful weed. Winter kill, spring dead spot and a high nitrogen requirement make bermudagrass a questionable choice for most turf areas. On athletic fields where ability to recover rapidly from intense traffic is essential, bermudagrass overseeded to 'Manhattan' or 'Pennfine' perennial ryegrass is an excellent choice for the transition zone. But bermudagrass is not an excellent choice for homeowner lawns, golf course fairways or like areas receiving only moderate traffic.

After four or five years in Maryland, I learned that annual bluegrass truly should be considered an annual. Kentucky bluegrass would grow well only where protected form the afternoon sun. Colonial bentgrass didn't exist in Maryland. Fine fescues were fine for well drained shady areas. Creeping bentgrass survived on putting greens if you had lots of fungicides and water. Tall fescue was a coarse bladed weed which only gave decent turf if mowed 3 inches or higher but, zoysia survived in sun or shade, mowed or not, fertilized or not.

It really wasn't until two or three years ago that I became a full fledged zoysia fan. There was no one characteristic that converted me. Just years of hopeless disgust with everything else combined with a quietly growing respect for this grass of oriental origin. Let's look at its advantages.

MID-ATLANTIC NEWSLETTER

Advantages of Zoysia for Transition Zone

Zoysia requires a minimal amount of nitrogen, water and mowing. The nitrogen requirements once fully established appears to be about 1 to 2 lb.N/1000 sq. ft. per year. This amount gives you a very nice dense turf. Only bermuda and tall fescue seem to need less water than this drought tolerant species. Mowing needs in the transition zone are highest in July and August. Although this grass is often advertized as needing only infrequent mowing, the fact is that more is needed for long term quality turf. If mowed infrequently with a light mower it will create 3 to 4 inch carpet in 5 years even if the mower is set for ½ inch, mowing should be 2 to 3 times per week in July and August. Only heavy reel type mowers should be used for best results.

Another advantage is resistance to scalping at least with the Meyer variety. This resistance to scalping is due to erect, stiff, very high fiber blades. The blades on the preferred variety, Meyer, are so stiff and dense that they tend to hold a mower up. They are also very difficult to cut off. Thus a heavy mower set too low will probably stall before it does serious damage.

The japonica strains of zoysia are much more winter hardy than even the most winter hardy bermudas. They are however, still brown from the first frost until spring.

Zoysias can withstand close mowing. The nine hole course at the Naval Ordinance Laboratory just north of the District of Columbia has had Meyer zoysia greens for the past 24 years. They don't begin to compare with creeping bentgrass greens in putting quality, but the point I would like to make is they have survived for 24 years with a minimum of maintenance at a cutting height of about 1/3 of an inch. There are two things I would like you to consider here. First, that zoysia is quite capable of surviving under low mowing. Secondly, zoysia may be at its best when managed at a low level of maintenance.

Time and time again I have seen zoysia persisting in quite acceptable conditions, where it received only minimal management. Dr. Strickling, Maryland's long time turf consultant for athletic fields, calls this "benevolent neglect." He claims turf often does better with this type of management. I'm not asking you to buy that but, you will find zoysia is capable of providing decent turf when managed with "benevolent neglect."

'Meyer' zoysia is not a weed problem like bermuda. It will only slowly invade sand traps and flower beds. I have never seen it growing up into shrubbery the way bermuda does. I'm told, though, that it will break up asphalt almost as fast as bermuda. Last but not least, if you have to manage turf in or on the edge of a city, it is very tolerant of air pollution. Zoysia's ability to tolerate heat, air pollution and some shade make it an ideal grass for lawns in heavily populated urban areas of the transition zone.

Disadvantages of Zoysia for the Transition Zone

Establishement problems have to be the prime reason why zoysia is not more widely used than it presently is in the U.S. I would like to note here that all the reports I have read note it as the dominant turf species in Japan, its apparent origin. In Japan, Zoysia is the predominant forage species in pasture as well as the dominant turf species on golf courses.

To be useful, Zoysia must be established vegetatively from winter hardy varieties. Horizontal stem material is extremely slow to root. Meyer, the preferred variety, is a very slow spreader. Put these three factors together and you have the basis for understanding why zoysia sod is expensive. This explains the reason for primarily establishing zoysia by plugs or sod. Research is needed to find a way to cause zoysia stolons to root faster.

Mowing is dfficult. Heavy reel-type mowers that are kept sharp will give best results. A complaint of bristlelike sponginess appears to be due to a combination of management practices. Excess nitrogen with or without too high mowing, results in a slightly unstable footing. The long stiff bristle-like growth isn't quite strong enough to hold one up firmly. Using a mower that is too light, or mowing too infrequently will produce the same results.

There are billbug and nematode problems that can't be ignored. They definitely are causing losses in the Maryland area. The conditions under which the turf becomes susceptible to damage by these two turf pests are not known. Both pests are difficult to diagnose and usually have caused much damage by the time a correct diagnosis is made. More research is needed on these two problems.

The brown winter color is disliked by many but it provides a better sports turf cushion than bermuda when dormant. Zoysia is also much more difficult to overseed in the fall for winter-green color. It does appear, though, that if managed to favor Kentucky bluegrass a reasonably satisfactory combination turf can be managed without yearly reseeding. Such a combination turf does have the drawback of a patchy fall transition period though.

Warm-Cool Season Grass Combinations

My present research is with such combinations. I have found that a bermuda-creeping bentgrass combination properly managed provides one with an aggressive turf which will survive nicely under low mowing. Meyer zoysia and Kentucky bluegrass is another promising combination for the transition zone. Both of these I will look closely at in the years to come.

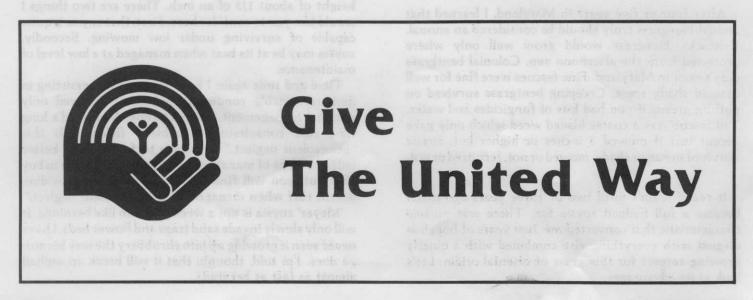
In my first study on combination turf, a warm season nitrogen fertilization program resulted in bermuda invading all combinations and in the death of the cool season grasses. Zoysia survived, but did no more than hold its own. The same combinations under a cool season nitrogen fertilization program resulted in creeping bentgrass and Kentucky bluegrass dominating the plots in spring and early summer. Bermudagrass would dominate by the end of summer and in early fall. Zoysia still did nothing more than hold its own. This research was conducted at moderately high nitrogen(N) level of 6lb of N/1000 sq. ft. Future work on zoysia will be conducted at varying N levels, emphasizing lower N rates which should favor zoysia.

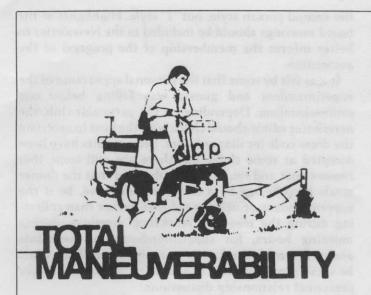
Summary

In the transition zone zoysia is capable of handling the heat, humidity, and pollution with less tendency to be weedy than bermudagrasses. It is also more winter hardy and requires less management than bermuda.

Zoysia is however, difficult, slow, and expensive to establish. It does have pest problems, but these do not appear to be as serious as those of other turf species used in the transition zone.

I think a move from bermuda fairways to zoysia is in order.





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Dates to Remember

JULY 12 Hunt Valley Golf Club AUGUST

Ladies' Night AUGUST 24

USDA Turf Field Days, Beltsville

SEPTEMBER 20 Suburban Country Club

OCTOBER 11 Woodmont Country Club

NOVEMBER 11 Maryland Country Club

DECEMBER 13 U.S. Naval Academy Election Meeting

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Past Presidents Meeting

On March 16, 1977 the first Past Presidents meeting of the M.A.A.G.C.S. was held at the Allview Golf Club in Columbia, Md. Those in attendance were David Fairbank (1976), Alex Watson (1975), Paul Barefoot (1974), Lee Dieter (1973), George Thompson (1972), Bert Yingling (1971), Robert Milligan (1969), George Cleaver (1968), Angelo Cammarota (1966-1967), Thomas Doerer (1964-1965) and Bob Shields (1951-1952) (1955-1958).

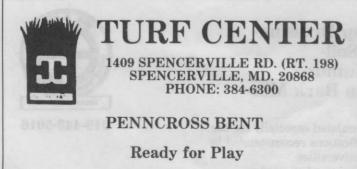
The meeting was informal and everyone was given the opportunity to voice their opinion of any activity or order of business within the association or any ideas that may benefit the association.

The Mid-Atlantic AGCS recent survey was discussed, some thought its length was unnecessary, and that many of the questions were not pertinent to the superintendent. Some thought that surveys were not of much use because of the varying sizes of clubs, and poor survey return.

The Newsletter was discussed as to whether one editor alone, can do justice to the publication. It was thought that a dual-editor be considered like there had been in the past. With the exception of the President's Message, all other writing in the publication should be in



Pictured: 1st row; L - R Thomas Doerer, George Cleaver, Lee Dieter, David Fairbank and Angelo Cammarota. 2nd row; Bob Shields, Alex Watson, Bob Milligan, Bert Yingling, George Thompson and Paul Barefoot.

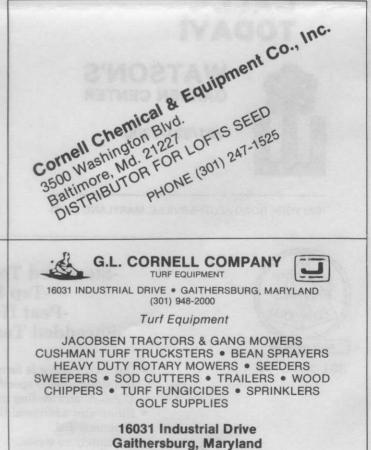


Scott's Transition Blend State Certified Blends the second person style, not "I" style. Highlights of the board meetings should be included in the Newsletter to better inform the membership of the progress of the association.

It was felt by some that the personal appearance of the superintendent and guests was falling below our professionalism. Depending on the particular club, the newsletter editor should check with the host to ascertain the dress code for dinner hours. Leisure suits have been accepted at some clubs, but there are still some that require coat and tie. It was emphasized that the dinner meals be collected by a club representative, be it the superintendent or other employee, rather than collecting during the meeting. Workshop meetings, during morning hours, for superintendents and assistants and/or foremen, mechanics were discussed. They could be small groups located in shops for mechanical and/or personnel relationship discussions.

For Mid-Atlantic AGCS members who reside in fringe areas or not within the Mid-Atlantic area should be considered for reduced dues.

Public relations were discussed at length, the "superintendent identity" point in particular. After varying suggestions as to how the superintendent can make himself known, both at his club and to the layman, it was agreed that ech individual is responsible for raising his dignity or identity at his own individual club. Public relations in the GCSAA should go all out in a program of bringing our profession to the attention of (continued on page 10)



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Results of the Superintendent-Pro Tourney

LOW PRO

75 76 77 78 78 79 80 80
90 80
64 74
64
66 67

GUEST LOW NET

Mike Hannah 112 40 72

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Tom Comalli												78
Bert Yingling												89

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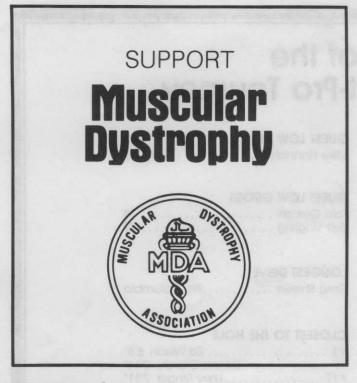
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More Terminal Bermuda News

Dr. Doug Hawes reports the following observations and feedback on bermudagrass winterkill. On the University of Maryland demonstration plots, only Midiron (P-16) survived the winter to any extent. Tufcote appears lost in Dr. Hawes's Tee Turf Research Plots and in a new area he overseeded last fall to Penncross. The overseeding was done to continue studies on bermuda-bentgrass turf. A similar overseeding done at the same time of Kentucky bluegrass into Meyer zoysiagrass was made without any apparent loss of Meyer.

A large plot area of Tufcote not currently in a research project on the farm was lost except for a strip within 20 feet of a snow fence on its north and west sides. Protection from northwest winds appeared to be a factor in survival of Tufcote lawns in the Bowie area also. Older (thatchy) lawns appeared to suffer more damage than newly established lawns. Traffic also increased the chances of winterkill.

Research plots at USDA-Beltsville, Md. suffered severe damage as observed by Doug on May 5th. Essentially all Tufcote was killed. Midiron looked a little better. One as yet unreleased Kansas variety and one from Missouri came through in good shape, also a coarse bladed selection from Columbia Country Club. Dr. Hawes suggests you come to the Beltsville Field Day to hear a report on this by Jack Murray. Field Day is scheduled for August 24th.



Past Presidents

(continued from page 8)

the public. Next year, the Mid-Atlantic AGCS will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and it would be an excellent opportunity to use some public relations in the Mid-Atlantic neighborhood.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

It was suggested that a seminar be tied in with the Annual Turfgrass Conference in January, preferably on Landscape or Nutrition.

New members should be made more welcome, some never hear from the association once they've sent their money and received their card. Attention getters should be available at the meetings, guess the size of the green, photo quizzes, etc. Name tags should be reinstituted since there are so many new faces. More order is needed during the meetings, either from the chair or sergeant of arms.

The financial aspects of the association were discussed, particularly, non-profit status, the availability of financial statements at year end, and the availability of a budget for the membership.

The meeting certainly did not lack for discussion, but did tend to jump back and forth considerably. Many discussions were dominated by one or two individuals, but it was the chairman's decision not to cut off any one individual for fear of losing any further discussion and/or ideas that he may share. The meeting was well accepted by all, and it is this chairman's opinion that it should be continued on an annual basis.

Respectfully submitted,

David S. Fairbank Chairman, Mid-Atlantic AGCS Past Presidents Meeting

Mid-Atlantic Newsletter

WAYNE EVANS 1804 Ironton Drive Oxon Hill, Maryland 20021 301-567-9386



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