



CHARTER

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Topdressing By Michael Larsen

A sound topdressing program is an important and integral part in producing a quality putting surface. As turfgrass managers, we are all conscious of the benefits of topdressing: leveling the putting surface, controlling thatch, adding a more desirable soil for turf growth and development, and alleviating grain by promoting the upright growth of the grass plant. In this article, I will outline the successful topdressing program I have employed at Hillendale Country Club over the years.

The greens, which average 5000 square feet, are closed the latter part of December and temporary greens are played until favorable conditions warrant reopening them in the spring. Just after the greens are closed for the winter we apply our heaviest application of topdressing of approximately 2 cubic yards of material per green. This application serves several purposes. First, it protects the crown of the plant from winter dessication. Yet another



April President's Message

As always, the Mid-Atlantic Association was well represented at the GCSAA Conference held in St. Louis, Mo. Everyone will agree that the Equipment Show and Convention Center was second to none.

Educational sessions were not as good as in previous years. Fertility, Pythium Control and "Think Superintendent" were probably the highlights of the educational session.

However, more and more superintendents are taking advantage of the pre-conference seminars such as Plant Nutrition, Landscaping, Irrigation, Pesticides and Management, for certification renewal or for a personal achievement.

Hopefully, GCSAA will continue to offer these seminars and more, to strengthen and broaden superintendents' education and ability to make us better turf managers.

George Thompson is our GCSAA Chapter Relations Representative. If you have any ideas that you would like to see implemented in the National, please contact George.

A big thank you is in order to Gerry Gerard and co-workers at Bretton Woods for the hospitality extended to us for our March meeting. I'm sure the more than seventy that attended fully enjoyed themselves. **THANK YOU, GERRY!**

As scheduled, our April meeting will be held at Green Hill Yacht and Country Club, Salisbury, Maryland. Eastern Shore's hospitality is always great. Looking forward to seeing all of you on April 8 with Lou White as our host.

Ron

advantage to this heavy topdressing is the early spring green up it gives due to the dark particles attracting sunlight and heating up the soil surface. Presently, I am conducting an experiment on a bentgrass nursery to illustrate this striking effect. Hopefully, I will be able to share some of the resulting information with you at one of our monthly meetings through a slide presentation.

Starting in April, we routinely topdress greens every 3 weeks throughout the season. For these applications a smaller amount of material is applied, usually about 1/3 cubic yard per green. This amount of topdressing suits our needs and was decided upon through experimentation and recommendation suggested by the U.S.G.A.

The topdressing we use in the Egypt Farms 7:2:1 mix and is applied with a Cushman topdresser. The spreader setting for the heavy winter application is 1, the lighter application setting is below 1/4.

During the spreading operation the Cushman is operated in 1st gear low range at approximately 2500 RPM.

As with all operations on the golf course, there is a certain procedure we follow in our topdressing program. The greens are first verticut lightly in two directions, mowed, then topdressed. Although, verticutting is an integral part of the topdressing program, we sometimes verticut between topdressing applications. The topdressing is worked in by using a Har Tru tennis court brush, an idea passed on to me by Jack Montecalvo at Woodholme Country Club. The light applications of topdressing virtually disappear after brushing.

Topdressing greens is performed on Mondays because of minimal player interruption. The entire operation of vertical mowing and brushing 19 greens takes 4 men about 6 hours to complete.

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