

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER

Published by this Association to aid the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through education and merit.

Claud Corrigan, *Editor*
Joe Gambatese, *Photographer*

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From the Editor . . .

According to reports from several Directors, a number of members of the Association expressed some dismay that last month's issue contained a brief mention of the Daconil suit against a member club and a major chemical manufacturer. I, in turn, found this a bit surprising. In what other publication would this news item be more appropriate? To whom would it be of more concern, especially if out-of-D.C. papers had not carried the item? For all I have been able to gather, nearly every superintendent in this area uses that particular fungicide and hence could find himself facing the same sort of problem that one club in the Mid-Atlantic now faces. If they hadn't heard the news before this (and a number of them hadn't), superintendents should welcome the opportunity.

NEW MEMBERS

Lenn Weidenhammer, Class D
Assistant Superintendent
Woodmont Country Club

Brian T. Ault, Class G
Golf Course Architect
Edmund B. Ault, Ltd.

William Love, Class G
Golf Course Architect
Edmund B. Ault, Ltd.

Don't Miss Our Aug. 9 Picnic at Bretton Woods

Lots of food and drink, swimming, games, and even golf, if you don't mind the heat, will be the features of the Mid-Atlantic's annual picnic to be held Tuesday, August 9, at Bretton Woods Recreation Center, which is out River Road. Take the River Road exit from the Beltway (495) and go 11½ miles toward Potomac, to the northwest; the club is on the left side of River Road.

The golf course, says Superintendent Gerry Gerard, has benefited greatly from its new automatic watering system. He can now water in about 3 hours, a job that took 8-10 hours when the system was manual. He is sprigging P16 Bermuda on No. 15, 16, and 17 fairways, and you're invited to take a look. He also is still using Rubigan on 10 of his greens.

MAAGCS member and golf course architect Eddie Ault designed Bretton Woods, which opened in 1968. Greens are Penncross bent, mowed 4 to 5 times a week, and fairways which originally were a mixture of Highland and Astoria bent have been overseeded with perennial rye and bluegrasses. Tees are either Penncross bent or bluegrass.

The picnic itself starts at 1:30 p.m., although the course is available for golf anytime and the pool will open at 11 a.m. The Association is providing hamburgers, hot dogs, crabs, ribs, sweet corn, beer, and sodas, and families are asked to bring a covered dish such as

President's Message

Well, August has finally arrived, and it looks like there is little or no relief in sight. The month of July has set many records in the Baltimore-Washington area — most days in the 90's, most consecutive days above 95° — and it has been the driest July I can remember.

Next week we will be having our family picnic at Bretton Woods, with Gerry Gerard as our gracious host, and we, the members of the MAAGCS, would like to thank the companies and individuals that are donating some of the food and beverages for the picnic.

The September meeting, which is usually a joint meeting with the Philadelphia Superintendents Association, has been cancelled; they explained that the reason was lack of attendance and the need to provide better service to their members by meeting closer to home. Our meeting will still be at Bonnie View Country Club on September 13.

Ken Braun, *President*



salad (green, potato, or macaroni) or a dessert. TESCO is buying a keg of beer, and Tom Harris is bringing the watermelons. Check with Paul Barefoot (722-3262 or 291-2095) for further information.

Pythium and Sand Topdressing

Increasing Evidence for *Pythium*-Induced Root Dysfunction of Creeping Bentgrass Grown in High Sand Content Mixes

by CLINTON F. HODGES, *Department of Horticulture*
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

The presentation made by me at the 1981 M.G.C.S.A. annual conference implicated *Pythium* in a root dysfunction of creeping bentgrass grown on reconstructed high sand content greens. The disease in question killed grass very rapidly and in a manner typical of *Pythium* "cottony blight." Examination of diseased plants, however, failed to yield *Pythium* or any other pathogen from above-ground portions of the plant. *Pythium* was found throughout the root system of diseased plants. It is believed that when a green on an old golf course is renovated to sand, *Pythium* may infest the sand from the collar and apron soil of the old green. The sand probably offers little microbiological competition for the *Pythium*, and increased levels of irrigation and fertilization of sand greens may further promote the *Pythium*. There also is some evidence that more root mechanical damage may occur in sand than in soil; this could contribute to *Pythium* infection. This problem has not been observed in the roots of plants grown in traditional soil mixes.

To date, we have isolated four species of *Pythium* from the roots of creeping bentgrass associated with rapid death of infected plants. We are currently in the process of identifying the isolates to the species level and testing them for pathogenicity. It

(Continued on page 3)

U. Md. Offers Turf Course at Night

Turf Management (AGRO-405, 3 credits) is an introductory course designed for new and experienced professional turfgrass managers as well as for college students. The course primarily contains applied information but also stresses academic principles. Initially, terminology, morphology, and growth and development of turfgrass are discussed. A great deal of emphasis will be placed upon the description, and discussion of the strengths and weaknesses, and mixing and blending of turfgrass species and cultivars. The influence of soil physical and chemical properties and the soil environment upon turfgrasses will be reviewed. Cultural practices such as mowing, fertilization and liming, fertilizer sources, irrigation, drainage, thatch and traffic management, shade culture, establishment and renovation, etc., will be discussed extensively. Identification and control of weeds, diseases and insects will also be reviewed.

Special emphasis is placed upon pesticide selection and cultural practices that help minimize pest injury to turfgrasses. This course is offered through University College, and tuition, fees, and parking will cost \$240.

Information regarding scheduling and preregistration can be obtained from University College at (301) 454-5802. The deadline for preregistration is August 5, but there will be a walk-in registration on August 29, 30, and 31. For information about the course call Peter Dernoeden at (301) 454-3717. This course will be given Tuesday nights from 7-9:40 p.m. from September 6 through December 23, 1983.

Match Play Tourney Now in Semifinals

At the July meeting at Mt. Pleasant Golf Course in Baltimore, the quarterfinals of the annual match play tournament were completed. Wayne Evans defeated Mike Larsen 5 and 4, Dave Kroll edged Bill Neus on the 19th hole, Bob Orazi eliminated Sam Kessel 6 and 5, and Walter Montross got by Tom Regan, 1 up. The semifinal round will be played prior to the September 17 meeting at Bonnie View, with Evans meeting Kroll and Orazi taking on Montross.

The Challenge of Serving on the Board

by Michael J. Larsen, CGCS

Five years ago, when I was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents, I was unaware of the personal and professional impact it would have on my life. To be given a vote of confidence by one's fellow superintendents is certainly an honor, but the sense of elation was quickly put into perspective.



After my first Board meeting, I began to realize and appreciate the full extent of the obligation Board members have to the 230 members of the Association. Monthly meetings, educational programs, golf tournaments, directories, and the annual Turfgrass Conference are only a few of the important areas to be addressed. I was personally embarrassed at having previously taken all of this for granted. Difficult decisions sometimes have to be made, and personal preferences often must take a back seat when considering what is best for the entire organization.

The more involved I became, the more demands were made upon my free time. As with most endeavors, however, you get out of something what you put in, and in this case, the merits far outweigh the negative aspects. It afforded me the satisfaction of seeing many worthwhile projects through to completion. The opportunity for personal contact with local and national members and for developing lasting friendships continues to be a rewarding experience for me.

Serving on the Board is a challenge, always stimulating and sometimes difficult. I will always take pride in having served on the governing body of my professional association, an association that has survived good times and bad since 1928. I strongly encourage all members to take an active interest in the health and well being of our organization. The challenge is there for all of us.

PYTHIUM AND SAND TOPDRESSING (Continued from page 2)

has been possible to infect roots in greenhouse studies and in some cases reduce the rate of growth of infected plants. We have not been able to kill inoculated plants. Our present observations suggest that the *Pythiums* in question may infect the roots and co-exist with the plant with minimal damage under mild growing conditions. It may necessitate some form of environmental or cultural stress before death occurs. There are two outstanding problems for the superintendent relative to this disease. These are diagnosis and control. The rapid death of infected plants appears to be due to a foliar pathogen. However, examination of dying leaves usually fails to yield any pathogens and often times even saprophytic organisms are not present. When the root systems are examined they usually appear normal in size and color. Because of this it is assumed that root pathogens are not present. These normal appearing roots can, however, be severely infected by *Pythium*. The *Pythiums* associated with this problem do not cause a rot, and the degree of discoloration may not be detectable with the naked eye. We have found that when we properly incubate what appears to be a healthy root from these diseased plants, *Pythium* will grow from the root within six hours. We are suspicious that these *Pythiums* damage plants by interfering with water relations, not by rotting.

Control of this problem in the field remains elusive. Intense aeration followed by application of *Pythium* specific fungicides into the aerifier holes may slow the disease. There is some indication that wetting agents used in conjunction with the fungicides may be beneficial. It also appears that following renovation of a green, the first time the disease strikes it is most severe; each subsequent year it becomes less severe.

Our primary research objectives for the next 2-3 years will be as follows: (1) Continue to collect and identify *Pythium* species associated with roots; (2) Determine pathogenicity of the *Pythium* species and the conditions necessary for injury or death to occur; (3) Determine the nature of the pathogenicity; i.e., in that the roots are not rotted, how are the plants ultimately killed; and (4) Examine approaches to control.

From *Hole Notes*, Minnesota Golf Course Superintendent's Association