

GOLF COURSE FAIRWAY MANAGEMENT

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A new disease was recognized on golf course fairways in Michigan in 1983. The disease was characterized by patches of chlorotic, bright yellow grass, 6 inches to 2 feet in diameter. These patches became more bronze in color as the disease progressed and eventually these patches became severely thinned as the grass died. Only the annual bluegrass was affected. The disease did not appear to attack the creeping bentgrass patches in the fairways. "Runner hyphae" were observed along the axis of the root when individual plants from these patches were examined. These runner hyphae are very characteristic of Gaeumannomyces-like organisms: Gaeumannomyces, Leptosphaeria, and Phialophora. Studies are now underway to try and identify the causal organisms involved in this disease.

The fungicide studies were too inconclusive to make any solid recommendations. But if your golf course develops this disease again this summer, and you wish to apply something to try and stop the spread of the disease, the most promising fungicides were Tersan 1991 and Fungo 50 (between 2-4 oz/1000 sq ft). Again, these are not recommendations, but suggestions for you to experiment with on your golf course. Dr. Dave Roberts and Ron Detweiler, have been working diligently on this problem and hope to have some more definitive answers by Field Day.

The latest kid on the block is "collecting clippings", which has become the new Messiah. Just like calcium arsenate was supposed to rid the world of Poa annua and Tersan 1991 was going to make turfgrass diseases a thing of the past, now collecting clippings on fairways is going to solve all your problems. You are being told that all you have to do is collect the clippings and the Poa annua will turn to creeping bentgrass, all the disease will disappear, and you will live happily ever after. Just as the other Messiah didn't work, this one won't either. There are no short-cuts to growing turf. There are certain management and pest practices that must be followed if you are going to have healthy turf. Also good pest management and fertility programs will have to be followed.

Creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass have different cultural and nitrogen fertility requirements. Actually, they have similar requirements, but different timing schedules. They also have some disease and insect problems that are different, in addition to those they have in common. Tables 1 through 5 list the requirements of each grass. It should be remembered that you can't maintain creeping bentgrass under a regime that favors annual bluegrass and expect the creeping bentgrass to survive.

Table 1. Chemical Management of Annual Bluegrass Turfs.

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1. Diseases
 - a. Anthracnose
 - b. Dollar spot
 - c. Brown patch
 - d. Pythium blight
 - e. Snow molds
 2. Insects
 - a. Ataenius grubs
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Table 2. Chemical Management of Creeping Bentgrass Turfs

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1. Diseases
 - a. Dollar spot
 - b. Helminthosporium diseases
 - c. Brown patch
 - d. Pythium blight
 - e. Snow molds
 2. Insects
 - a. Grubs
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Table 3. Cultural Management of Annual Bluegrass Turfs.

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1. Deep vertical mowing after green up
 2. Coring
 - a. After green up
 - b. After seed head production
 - c. Fall
 3. 3-4 lbs N/season
 4. Collect clippings
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Table 4. Cultural Management of Creeping Bentgrass Turfs.

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1. Coring - during annual bluegrass seed head production
 2. Vertical mowing - lightly

Summer - to prevent scalping
 3. Approximately 2 lbs N/season (native and Penncross)
 4. Collect clippings
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Table 5. Nitrogen Fertility Schedule for Annual Bluegrass Turfs.

Months	June	July	August	September	November
lbs/1000 sq ft	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1

Table 6. Nitrogen Fertility Schedule for Creeping Bentgrass Turfs.

Months	May-June	July	August	November-December
lbs/1000 sq ft	1		1/2	1
