

A change of season

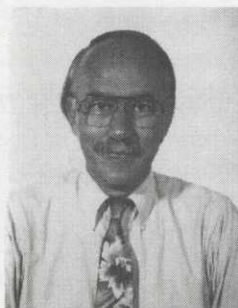
by Juergen Haber

Summer will arrive officially this month. But in some parts of the country we've already had our taste of summer; here in Washington, DC, air conditioners are humming everywhere as the humidity exaggerates the temperature.

These are ideal conditions for *Rhizoctonia* diseases as our Field Editor Chris Sann reminds us. Speaking of this disease, Chris' second story this month: "Brown patch — a different perspective," serves to introduce the work of Dr. Gary Yuen of the University of Nebraska.

On that note I'd also like to introduce our newest contributor, Richard Bator. Until now *Turf Grass Trends* has focused on turf diseases and pests and government regulation. Dick launches us into a new world of practical problems.

In this issue he begins the first of a two-part series of his experience of converting a golf course from poa to bentgrass. Now, some readers who are not golf course superintendents might say, "How does this help me?" Dick's golf course conversion program has applicability not only to golf



courses but any turf grass stand. Dick's perspective, though, is that of a golf course turf manager. And he's got pretty impressive credentials, too.

Before he became an independent golf course turf grass advisor, he was the superintendent at the world-ranked Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pennsylvania. He also held similar positions at the Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, New York, and Pine Valley Golf Club in Clementon, New Jersey. He prepared Oak Hill for the 1980 P.G.A. Championship and Pine Valley for the 1985 Walker Cup. He then returned to Rochester to design and build the championship Blue Heron Hills Country Club as well as the Gypsum Mills Golf Club, a nine-hole executive course.

In 1992, he left the Merion Golf Club to start his new endeavor, that of an independent golf course turfgrass advisor.

Dick's second article in the series, complete with manpower and equipment tables, will appear in the July issue.

Speaking of contributors, we've got another change this month. Science Advisor Eric Nelson has, sadly, announced he will resign his post. In his resignation letter, Eric cites the workload at Cornell University as his reason for not being able to continue. But all is not lost. He will continue to be a contributor. We value Eric's contributions highly and we'll be looking forward eagerly for his manuscripts here at *Turf Grass Trends*. ■

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density of the turf was nearly 75% of what it was just prior to the start of the procedure. By the 14th day, it was barely evident that such an extensive renovation program had been undertaken and was completed.

Choice of bentgrass

If one starts such a program in July or August, one can expect germination in three and one-half to four days. With the new pre-germinated seed on the market now, this can be cut down to two days.

As far as the choice of bentgrass, it will be up to the superintendent, especially considering that, during the last three to five years new and vastly improved varieties have appeared.

To properly evaluate the choice, I would recommend a visit to the turf plots at the turfgrass universities in the area and adjoining areas. Talk to the researchers in detail about their results. Secondly, I would contact any superintendent in the country who has been experimenting in his nursery with new varieties. Two outstanding superintendents that have an excellent and abundant field experiment with these new varieties are Doug Peterson of the Baltimore Country Club in Baltimore, Maryland, and David Stone of the Honors Club in Tennessee.

Seed producers and their distributors can also be of help, but remember their evaluations and observations may be biased.

How to treat roughs and collar areas

Because the six- to twelve-foot intermediate roughs of the course will normally be infested with poa and bents, it would be advisable to treat these at the same time as the fairways. I prefer to apply RoundUp to intermediate roughs, scalp mow them and seed them with a mixture of improved ryegrasses.

If there is a need to re-contour the fairways, this would be the ideal time frame to accomplish this most important aesthetic improvement. It would also be wise to treat the collars in the same manner as the fairways, as poa and thatch are normally a serious problem in these difficult-to-maintain areas.

Don't forget Murphy's law

Remember though, no matter how well you have researched the program, planned, organized, educated the staff and even completed one fairway, intermediate rough and collar, something will usually go wrong. But, if you have planned well, these problems should be minor in nature and easy to overcome. ■