

USGA/NCGA Green Section Conference

by Rich Lavine

The annual USGA/NCGA Green Section Regional Conference was held on March 16th at Castlewood CC. Those in attendance heard great presentations by USGA staff members Larry Adamson, Tim Moraghan, and Nancy Sadlon. Their topics included Tournament Administration (get those entries in on time, folks.), US Open Preparation, and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and the role it can play in a sound maintenance program. Dr. Don White from the Univ. of Minnesota separated the facts from fiction of *Poa annua* maintenance and/ or control, while Dr. Robert Green from UCR gave a very interesting talk on his research of spraying gasohol (you read it right, *gasohol*) on bentgrass turf to promote increased growth. Lectures on Green Speed by Paul Vermeulen, The Shrinking Golf Course by Larry Gilhuly, and Turf Tips by Pat rounded out the program.

As usual, this was a great event; one that should be attended by all. If you couldn't be there this year, don't miss it next year.

FYI

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application forms and handicap information to each meeting. The handicap cards are normally out on a table for you to pick up and paste to the back of your card. If you have questions, by all means, ask! You won't learn unless you ask!

It's
Spring!

Now That's a Maintenance Headache!

Floyd S. Rood tackled the biggest course on record when he played the entire United States, coast to coast, in 1963 and 1964. He teed off in the Pacific surf and finished at the Atlantic shore more than a year later. No one knows what par was, but Rood took 114,737 strokes to cover nearly 3,400 miles.

Tips from the USGA Be Gentle When Waking A Sleeping Giant

by Paul Vermeulen,
USGA Agronomist

With the arrival of Spring and the accompanying warm temperatures, bermudagrass fairways across the entire southwestern region will soon awaken. For most golfers, this is a welcome event. Through their eyes, green, actively growing turf not only looks better, it plays better, too. Actually, it only looks better. If you analyze the handicaps of most golfers, the numbers do not change very much between March and April.

Ah, what the heck, if believing that the condition of the course is better because the grass simply turned green makes golfers happy, why not accept the compliment. Maybe in some small way these compliments help balance the scales of justice. After all, how many negative comments about the condition of the course have most superintendents had to endure from avid golfers. Especially the ridiculous comment such as, "I want the greens 'hard-soft', so I can hold a 3-wood without making a ballmark."

Since not-so-green bermudagrass (that has not been destroyed by uncontrolled cart traffic, of course!) plays as well as green bermudagrass, there really isn't a good reason to turn it green a few days early with excessive applications of soluble nitrogen. Furthermore, such applications should be avoided because of the possibility of aggravating spring root decline.

Spring root decline is the natural loss of roots on warm-season turfgrasses as they are recovering from winter dormancy. This event is caused by the rapid breakdown of carbohydrates stored in the root system for the production of new leaf tissue.

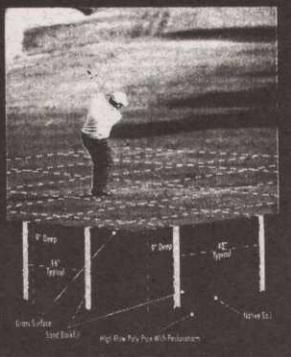
How can nitrogen applications play a role in spring root decline? If you think of a growing bermudagrass plant as

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