

Thistle Down . . .

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just burning off the tops and leaving the healthy root systems to sprout again later, it gets all the way down into the roots and kills from the bottom up."

The Board was impressed, but also had heard about another post-emergence herbicide they wanted Bohnke to try—dicamba.

"We figured the Dacamine probably would do it by itself," Bohnke says, "but they asked us to try the dicamba, also, so we mixed the two on some parts of the field—at a rate of about a quart and a half of Dacamine and a half-pint of dicamba. A large part of the field was sprayed with Dacamine at about a quart to the acre, though, and it did every bit as good a job as the combination.

"Even though I knew Dacamine works slowly, the first time we sprayed this field, boy was I sick!" Bohnke exclaims. "I came back in here two weeks after we had gone over the field and the thistles were coming up thicker than hair on a dog!

"I figured we'd come back again in three weeks and spray again," Bohnke goes on. "When we got back, I couldn't believe my eyes—they were all just about gone! We sprayed it with another quart to the acre, anyway, just to make sure. That shot really got them down, and by the time we went in the third and last time I don't think we had a 10% thistle crop in here anymore. The grass was in beautiful shape, filling in where the thistles were dying out."

The weather at the time of the control job was far from ideal for weed control, although it was perfect for growing thistles. "We might have gotten them with a little less material and fewer applications if we hadn't had so much wet, cool weather," Bohnke admits.

The first application was made during the second week of July. The second shot of Dacamine went on three weeks later, and the last one was applied just before the football season started in September.

The School Board certainly had no complaints about the results. You've got to go over the field with a magnifying glass to find a thistle seedling anywhere. "If we see a new one peek up anywhere now," Bohnke says, "we give the boys a little Dacamine in a hand sprayer and let them give it a shot. With that kind of continuous control, we don't expect to have any thistle problems in 'Thistle Downs' any more."



After two games, six-month-old turf is in excellent shape, even after a heavy chemical weed control program to rid it of a serious thistle problem. Bohnke, left, and Diamond Chemicals representative Steve Derrick look over the luxuriant grass.

New Golf Course Product Boosts Microbial Activity

American Bio-Turf, a bio-chemical solution which aids the biological control of microbial environment through stimulation of microbial activity, has been introduced as an aid to golf course maintenance by Farm Builders, a division of American Bio-Culture, Inc.

Jack Grover, president of Farm Builders, announced that the opening of the American Bio-Turf division brings to the golf course superintendent the experience gained through more than ten years of research and development, pioneering the practical application of soil microbiology to everyday agriculture.

American Bio-Turf's stimulation of the soil microbes results in better water retention and penetration. Microbial activity also makes more efficient use of fertilizers applied to and turf.

The aerifying action of the microbes in the soil also minimizes the need for mechanical aerification of turn areas, thereby creating another budget savings for the golf course superintendent. For more details, circle (723) on the reply card.

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