

Crabgrass Protection From The Sky

SUPERINTENDENT, Roger Schmitt, was on the phone for the second time in a morning that was still only 5:45 a.m. "old."

In the dark hours of the night, he had made a critical management decision. His Crawford Country Club must get the services of a helicopter. Not in a few days, but immediately, he nodded. If his course was to survive the onslaught of the poorest spring on record in mid-America, something had to be done.

It was raining in Robinson, Illinois, and had been for weeks. The swollen Wabash River, just a few miles to the east, was feeding an already flooded Mississippi, attesting to the water-soaked problems facing mid-west golf superintendents this year.

For Schmitt, the constant rain had prevented him from getting equipment out on the course. His spring weed control program, normally initiated weeks before this day of April 26th, had scarcely been started. Moreover, the course had a history of severe crabgrass problems. Fairways were drenched with water, and greens and trees were super soaked. Just try pulling a tractor out on the course and it would mire

down in the soft ground.

Increasing the pressure on Schmitt was the PGA Shrine-Robinson Open Golf Classic slated for Crawford County CC on July 9th. With this event little more than two months away, he couldn't chance a crabgrass infestation.

On the other end of the phone line was the Ueding Flying Service, about 30 miles away in Vincennes, Indiana. Schmitt wanted them to apply Dacthal W-75 herbicide to his fairways by helicopter. Ueding had applied Dacthal by air before so they knew there would be no problem with the chemical; however, there was a problem with the weather.

Yesterday, it had rained hard and they couldn't fly. This morning, high winds were adding to the flying problem.

"What about this afternoon?" pleaded Schmitt.

"It's just about impossible," responded the voice on the other end. "It looks like Sunday will be the first available day."

Sunday, April 29, came and Schmitt's anxiety increased. There were already definite signs of crabgrass germination and a few more

days of delay could make it too late for preemergent control.

Another call to Ueding assured Schmitt that a chopper would be there to start spraying the Dacthal by noon.

"Once Jim Decker landed the helicopter, I was sure everything would go well," recalled Schmitt. They were using a Bell 47D1 with a simplex low profile spray system. The boom was a toe mounted 18 ft. boom covering a spray pattern of 35 to 40 ft. The nozzles were 10S and 40S with a total of 40 nozzles on the boom. The Dacthal was applied at a rate of 16 lbs. per acre using 16 gallons of water per acre.

"I used Dacthal because I know it gives excellent control," reported Schmitt. "We've used it on this course for the last four years and changed the looks from 50 percent crabgrass to about 10 percent."

MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

All that is history now. It only took about an hour and a half spray all the fairways with Dacthal. And, aside from problems brought on by a continuing wet spring, the course was in excellent condition by
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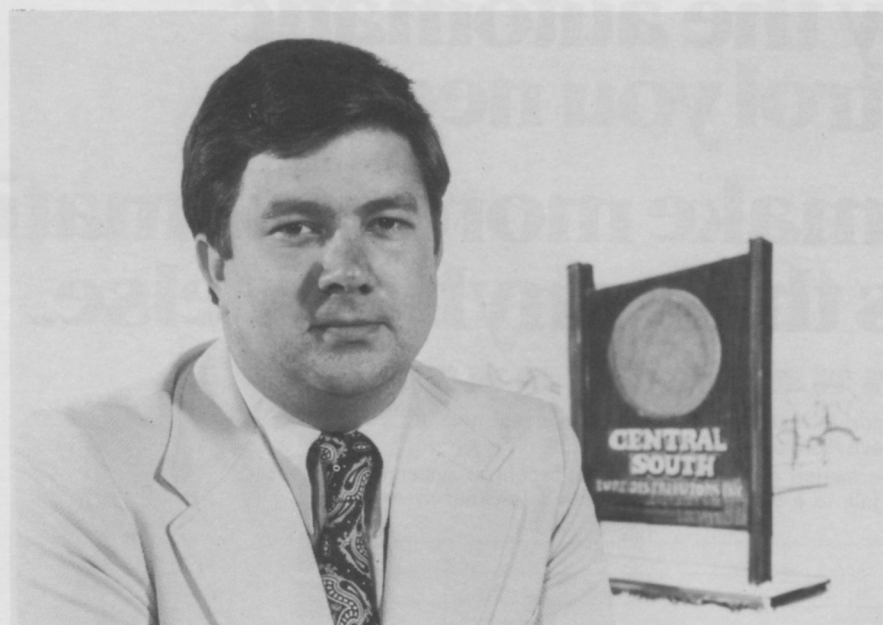
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New Toro Distributor Located in Nashville, Tenn.

Central South Turf Distributors, Inc., a new, independent franchised distributor for the full Toro line of powered equipment for lawn and turf maintenance and irrigation, will be established in the Nashville,



CRABGRASS PROTECTION

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tournament time.

Schmitt went into a high maintenance program two weeks before the tournament. "We normally mow the fairways once a day, at a height of 1¼ inch," he said. "As the tourney approaches, we cut twice a day at a cut of ¾ of an inch."

The greens were also under special care. During this same period, a top-dressing program was initiated with a 1:1:1 ratio of peat, soil and sand. It takes approximately 50 yards of material to top-dress all the greens.

As Schmitt explained it, "Once the greens are top-dressed, we mow at normal heights for a week—this gives us time to get the greens cleaned up. We then start mowing at the tournament height of 3/16 inch twice a day.

"Spraying the Dacthal by helicopter was definitely more expensive than putting it on through a ground sprayer."

"But we had no other choice. It was either the chopper or the crabgrass. However, with as much rain as we had, I would never have been able to apply the material in time by

Tenn. area this month. The firm will serve the marketing area of Kentucky, central Tennessee and southern Indiana.

Stephen C. Asbury, president of the new firm, will make his headquarters in a new building (2837 Logan Street) in Nashville that has 14,000 square feet of space available for offices, service facilities, a depot for parts and irrigation supplies, as



Chopper quickly sprays this course with Dacthal to prevent germination of crabgrass. Rate of application was 16 pounds per acre.

any other method. It was a lifesaver and I'll use it again whenever the conditions merit," he concludes. □

well as for a full inventory of Toro machines and allied lines. Asbury said his company will also establish a distribution outlet in Louisville.

According to David T. McLaughlin, president of The Toro Company, of Minneapolis, the new distributorship encompasses a territory formerly served by three separate distributors: The Bill Voorhees Company, of Nashville (consumer products only); Ernest Hardison Seed Company, also of Nashville (for turf and irrigation products); and Bunton Seed Company, of Louisville (turf and irrigation products).

Asbury, who is 32, comes from Toro headquarters in Minneapolis where he has been government sales and product manager for the turf products division. He joined the company in 1965 as district marketing representative on the east coast and had since held increasingly responsible posts.

He is a native of St. Paul, Minn., and a graduate of Northwestern University where he received a bachelor of science degree in business administration in 1963. The following year he attended the University of Minnesota where he did graduate work in marketing.

Asbury is married to the former Barbara E. Scott, of Chicago.