

Chicagoland News around Town:

There is no correct way to water turf and many variations that work within different growing conditions at golf courses.

Dave Ward, Golf Course Superintendent at Coyote Run in Homewood interviewed three seasoned veterans to find out their practices. I know one of them is not watering anything at this point in time with the renovation that is occurring.

CHICAGOLAND NEWS AROUND TOWN

SUMMER IRRIGATION PRACTICES

| Question | Brian Bossert Bryn Mawr Country Club | Dan Charlton Evanston Golf Club | Tony Kalina Prairie Landing Golf Club |
|---|--|---|---|
| Type and age of system | Rainbird Cirrus, 3 row, 7 years old | Toro Osmac, 3 row, 11 years old, will replace lateral pipes and heads with current renovation | Toro Network 8000 Site Pro, 14 years old |
| Water source, treatment | city water, acid injection spent \$85,000 last year on water | well, acid injection, wetting agent injection, (Dispatch) | well, acid injection |
| Use of precipitation amount applied or time per head | precipitation amount | head times converted in mind to precipitation amount | uses both but tends to think in amount of time per head |
| Typical non-stress water practices | .25" every 2 or 3 days | alternates every other night center fairway row with outside fairway row, Poa greens nightly | once a week heavy on Sunday or Monday. Greens 49 to 59 minutes, tees 35 to 50 minutes, fairways 18 to 40 minutes |
| Changes to water practices during stress times | stays the same but might shorten interval, more adjust- ment to wet and dry spots, ties water use to economics (can cost up to \$1800 per night) | stays the same on fairways, more hand watering, backs off if humid, water as late in the morning as possible | waters greens with roller bases all night and then lets dry for a week, turns off all of the low areas on fairways |
| One water practice that allows success in stress times | water applied as late as possible to keep plants dry | using Dispatch | use of soil probe and scouting and adjusting the system accordingly |
| Most common mistake superin- tendents make with irrigation | light frequent water all of the time, (Dan admits to being guilty last year) | keeping things too wet | keeping things too wet |
| What tools are used to make irrigation decisions | ET rate, soil temp probe, soil moisture probe, | soil probe, soil thermometer | soil probe to constantly check the roots, ET rates |
| Hypothetical Question of the month: Rainbird or Toro? | Rainbird because of local support | only worked with Toro but would consider Rainbird because of reliability and local support. | only worked with Toro so Toro is the best and the worst |

Summer Woes

Coming off the recent stretch of unseasonably warm and humid weather, I am sure there are many of us that were challenged by heat, disease, play and equipment stress. I for one am counting the days until September.

One topic of discussion that kept coming up at the July CAGCS meeting at Cress Creek was the problem with fairy ring on greens. Following are some comments and descriptions of the antagonistic organism that plagues many throughout the summer.

There are many species of fungi that fall into the fairy ring group of diseases so it would be difficult to say if organic fertilizers stimulate all of the different fairy ring fungi. However, I have seen significant fairy ring problems on greens constructed using sphagnum peat as the organic matter source and at the same course; greens constructed using composted redwood bark having no fairy ring problems. The organic matter source can influence fairy ring symptoms.

In addition to there being a plethora of fairy ring fungi, the term "organic fertilizer" does not have a single definition. If the organic fertilizer contained some poorly composted wood products that contained one of the many fairy ring fungi that naturally decompose cellulose, I suspect that you could introduce fairy ring fungi into a turf system. A well composted product should not have this problem. We know very little about where fairy ring fungi come from – speculation ranges from old tree stumps ground up during construction to the peat sources mentioned above. *Larry Stowell, Pace – PTRI*

Figuring out fairy rings

How does fairy ring damage or kill turf? Plant pathologists agree that turf injury occurs as an indirect result of the mycelium colonizing the thatch and soil. Large amounts of mycelium can accumulate and will eventually coat sand and soil particles. As a result, the soil becomes hydrophobic, or water-repellent. Further, turfgrass roots are less able to acquire water and nutrients due to physical competition with the mycelium in the soil. For these reasons, turfgrass plants are injured or killed due to drought and moisture stress. Keep in mind that localized dry spots and hydrophobic soil conditions are commonly attributed to many other factors besides fairy ring fungi.

In addition, some fairy ring fungi produce hydrogen cyanide that is toxic to plant roots. Therefore, fairy ring fungi can injure or kill turfgrass from a complex combination of hydrophobic thatch or soil, the release of compounds toxic to turfgrass roots, and competition for available water, nitrogen and other nutrients needed for plant growth.

Fairy ring is further categorized as either edaphic and lectophilic. Edaphic fairy rings are produced by fungi that primarily colonize the soil, while lectophilic fairy rings are produced by fungi that primarily colonize the thatch and leaf litter. Fungi that cause edaphic fairy rings can extend mycelium growth to a depth of 2 to 3 feet in the soil profile. Edaphic fairy rings are more common on lawns and pastures, while lectophilic fairy rings are more likely to develop on golf course putting greens and other closely mowed, high-maintenance turf. Visible circles and arcs in turf areas, whether caused by edaphic or lectophilic fungi, can range in size from a few inches to several feet in diameter.

Any decision regarding a fairy ring control strategy depends on whether the fungus is edaphic (soil-inhabiting) or lectophilic (thatch-inhabiting), the level of turf maintenance (lawn, park, putting green or fairway) and the degree to which the symptoms (Type I, II or III) are expressed. Fairy ring fungi are nearly impossible to actually eliminate because of their soil- or thatch-inhabiting nature. However, their symptoms can be alleviated.

Could application of organic fertilizers stimulate fairy ring fungi that are already colonizing the soil and thatch? Possibly. If fairy rings appear in all of the areas that you apply an organic fertilizer and no fairy rings appear in areas that were not treated with the fertilizer and all other management factors were the same, I would look pretty hard at the organic fertilizer to see if it contained any wood products and if it was fully composted.

Mike Fidanza, The Pennsylvania State University

After last year's onset of killer Fairy Ring on a couple of greens we tried something new this spring. It was recommended to spray Endorse along with a wetting agent once a week for one month. The first application went down on April 3rd. The rate of Endorse was 3 ozs/M and we used Respond wetting agent at 3 ozs/M. This was then watered in. As of today I have two small spots of Fairy Ring on the back of one green. None of the areas that appeared last year have reemerged. I don't know if there is a lot of research backing up this observation but it will definitely be a part of program from now on. This year, we applied Bayleton @ 2oz per/M with 8 oz/M of 1690 wetting agent about April 15 and May 1st. We have had very hot, dry weather which has usually accelerated fairy ring in years past. Not a sign of the rings at all. They continue to heal from last year and have almost completely recovered. We will continue to work on our thatch issue as well with aerification and verticutting as time and staffing allow. *Turfnet, July 2006*

I personally have been plagued with Type I fairy ring in the past. To combat it we, have been spraying greens preventatively for the last 4 years. We apply a combination of Prostar @ 2.2 oz. /m and Revolution wetting agent @ 6 oz./m watered in immediately for 12 minutes in the early morning. It has been helpful to have the green surface wet or primed prior to spraying. For that we will run the sprinklers on the green for 3 minutes ahead of the spray application. Our first spray is in early June followed up 30 days later with another. For the past two years, we have managed to get by with two applications.

As Weather Heats Up, So Will the Long Drivers

Twelve players, led by [Bubba Watson](#) at 318.5 yards, average 300 yards on their drives, but that's not even close to the record 26 who ended 2005 as 300 hitters.

Just wait, however, says Dick Rugge, the senior technical director for the U.S. Golf Association. They're on their way. "It's a natural year-to-year variation," says Rugge, who notes that there were 11 players at 300-plus last year at this time. Wet conditions in the winter made for soggy courses that held down distances. As the hot summer progresses, fairways will harden and golf balls will roll. And tournaments coming up in high-altitude areas, where drives carry farther, such as The International in Colorado and the Reno-Tahoe Open in Nevada, should increase the totals. "My expectations are that the number of 300-yard drivers this year will be pretty much the same as last year," says Rugge, who points out that there are 14 players between 298 yards and 300.

That in itself is a bit of an upset, however: The number has been steadily climbing in recent years — one in '02, nine in '03, 15 in '04 and 26 in '05. The overall average also might have hit a high. The average distance has been relatively stable in recent years after a jump from 273.2 yards in 2000 to 279.4 yards in 2001. The average climbed again from 278.8 in '02 to 286.3 in '03. Advancements in driver technology and club fitting are credited for those changes, but the USGA's recent restrictions on drivers have helped level off that average. Since '04, the number has been about the same: 287.3, 288.9 and 288.0. This stability might mean Rugge and his staff have caught up to changing technology.

"The train has not pulled out of the station," he says. "We're in about the same place we were three years ago. We have time to be careful with our research and thorough with our investigation." **By Jerry Potter, USA TODAY, (7/12/06)**

Host a CAGCS Meeting

We have been fortunate to have been provided with some fantastic venues to hold our meetings the last couple of years. It does not take a lot of effort to host a meeting and is very rewarding. Please consider hosting a monthly meeting at your facility. The meetings consist of cocktails, dinner and valuable roundtable discussions. If you are interested in hosting a meeting or would like to obtain further information, please contact Dan Marco, CGCS either by telephone, (630)986-4476 or via email ruthlakecc@aol.com . Dan has a few remaining spots to fill for the year.

Web Site

The Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents has a new web site. Launched March 14, 2006, the web site is in its preliminary stage of introduction and growth. You will be able to check upcoming monthly meeting venues and see all the new information for the Association. Please visit www.cagcs.org . If you would like to add something to the web site or have a suggestion, please email Jon Jennings chicagogolfclub@aol.com . The web site was created to assist members obtain useful information.

e-Verdure

If you would like to contribute to the Verdure or have some information you feel others would gain benefit, please contact Jon Jennings, chicagogolfclub@aol.com . The Verdure is another great way to disseminate information to our membership. By sending it electronically, the information is very current. The deadline for submitting information for the upcoming issue is the second Monday of each month.

Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Shirts

The 2006 edition CAGCS golf shirts are in. Be sure to pick up one of these handsome short sleeved shirts. The CAGCS logo is embroidered on the left chest. The price of these good looking shirts is \$45.00. You have the option of being billed for the shirt(s) or paying upon receipt. They are available in red, black, blue, yellow and white. You may obtain one at a monthly meeting or contact Dan Charlton,