



The Mountain State Greenletter

Volume 9, Issue 8
August 2017

WEST VIRGINIA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Good Morning

Let me start out by saying what a summer it has been. As for me here at Oglebay Resort, it has been one of the wettest summers that I can remember. This year is the least that I had to water in a long time. I have not heard how other parts of the state have been but hope that all of you have fared well.

I just want to remind everyone of our fall Meeting coming up in October at Berry Hills Country Club. We will be playing for the Century Cup and the Corporate Cup. Let's all get out for a day and enjoy a round of golf.

Also coming up will be our Annual Conference and education. This year we will be once again be at Lakeview Resort. Come out and get most of the credits that you will need to renew your pesticide license.

Thank you,
Tony Coppa, President
Billy Casper Golf
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So Far, So Good

By Paul Jacobs, agronomist, Northeast Region

At USGA headquarters in Far Hills, New Jersey, there have been as many days with rain as without since mid-July. Much of the Northeast has experienced similar conditions. This type of weather often causes soft and slow playing conditions, especially when it comes with high heat and humidity. The recent stretch of hot and wet weather led many facilities to implement defensive management practices such as mowing or rolling less frequently than normal. Although recent cooler temperatures were refreshing and alleviated turfgrass stress, now is not the time to let your guard down as we head into August.

June and July are in the rearview mirror and most facilities have had a good season in regards to playing conditions. Minor issues such as weed control, mechanical injury and algae have been observed, but the majority of the challenges created by wet weather seem to be in bunkers and naturalized roughs.

The playability of bunkers is largely influenced by how much moisture is in the sand. Given the frequency of rain this season, controlling playability in bunkers has been challenging. In addition, wet weather exposes weaknesses in bunker infrastructure. If bunkers experience frequent washouts, standing water or have significant soil contamination then some level of renovation should be considered. Repairing washouts is labor intensive and the frequency of washouts can be greatly reduced by a successful renovation.

Naturalized rough areas have been healthy and dense this season. Unfortunately, when these areas are too dense golf balls become hard to find, recovery shots become more difficult and pace of play can suffer. Plentiful rain has promoted lush growth in naturalized roughs, but few options to reduce density are available. Mowing is the best option for improving playability midseason, but removing seedheads will have an aesthetic impact. Seasonal maintenance practices to improve the playability of naturalized areas include:

- ~Eliminating irrigation and fertility
- ~Mowing, scalping or verticutting depending upon current density
- ~Sand capping
- ~Applying growth regulators

A break from the rain would be welcomed by most in the Northeast, especially with August aeration approaching. If weather trends shift and we begin to experience prolonged periods of dry weather, particularly with low relative humidity, be prepared for stress to develop from issues such as Pythium root rot, nematodes, take-all patch and summer patch. All of these pathogens compromise the root system, which elevates the importance of water management if dry conditions develop. Aeration can exacerbate the impact of pathogens as well, so setting a backup date for aeration is recommended. Aeration rain dates should also be used if the weather is too hot, just as they would if it were raining.

Fortunately, conditions this season have not been as challenging as last summer. However, remember that it is important to implement defensive management practices when weather is unfavorable. By doing so, course conditions will be much better for golf throughout late summer and fall.



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Plentiful rain has caused naturalized rough areas to be dense. Mowing will improve playability, but will also impact aesthetics by removing seedheads.



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August Is Time For Vacation... And Putting Green Aeration

By David Oatis, regional director, Northeast Region

Many golf courses in the Northeast Region have experienced overabundant rainfall for most of the 2017 golf season. There have been problems, but turf throughout much of the region has performed reasonably well this year despite the above-average rainfall. Now is not the time to lose focus because, while putting green aeration in August provides many benefits, it also entails some risk and turf can still be lost.

This year has not been a great year for creeping bentgrass. With a cool spring and overabundant rainfall, bentgrass has not received enough sunlight to achieve its typical seasonal growth. Furthermore, wet conditions have left newly established bentgrass greens, tees and fairways especially prone to wear injury.

Mechanical damage also has been common, especially where rainfall has been heaviest. Continual mowing and rolling under wet conditions has been a contributing factor in some cases. Aggressive golf shoes can also cause damage. Some golf courses mow putting greens seven or more times per week, roll regularly, topdress weekly or biweekly and frequently spray plant protectants. That is a lot of traffic for turf that is cut to a height of one-eighth of an inch or lower, so maintenance traffic can be a big contributor to wear.

The incidence of anthracnose and summer patch has increased in recent weeks. Outbreaks have popped up after stretches of heat and humidity, but some look to be the result of low nitrogen fertility or over regulation.

As the Aerators Warm Up:

1. Make sure your turf is healthy enough for aeration. Scaling back an aeration treatment by using smaller or solid tines, applying less topdressing sand or brushing less aggressively can help avoid damage that could take weeks to recover.
2. Always have a backup aeration date in case the weather doesn't cooperate. Rain or hot, dry weather can reduce the benefits of aeration and increase the risk of turfgrass injury.
3. Aeration can encourage outbreaks of summer patch and anthracnose. These diseases may progress unnoticed on greens that have been aerated and topdressed, so be sure fungicide application intervals are on target. If either disease gets a three- to five-day head start on control efforts, the damage can be significant.
4. Fertilize before and after aeration to encourage rapid healing.
5. Using kiln-dried sand makes it much easier to fill aeration holes, but it can be hot. Allow time for kiln-dried sand to cool before applying it to putting greens.
6. Precisely apply topdressing sand to avoid building new collar dams or adding to existing ones.

Many putting greens are suffering from compaction and wear injury, issues that have been exacerbated by the overabundant rainfall. Consequently, many greens will benefit tremendously from aeration this August. However, severely weakened greens must be treated differently. Don't be afraid to scale back a cultivation treatment if you're not certain that your turfgrass is strong enough to handle it. Getting turf healthy now and being more aggressive with cultivation later is sometimes the best approach.



Shade and frequent rainfall have made some bentgrass putting greens vulnerable to damage from maintenance traffic and aggressive golf shoes.



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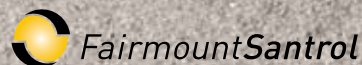
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GCSAA Happenings

Summer is a busy time for our members for obvious reasons. During this busy time, gcsaa.org is a great website to keep up to date with current news and initiatives around the industry. For example, we have our Advocacy Hub, that keeps you current on issues affecting our industry, and issues that we need you to engage in. Our “Take Action” tool is great for raising your voice, and takes you through necessary steps to send a note to your Congressman or Congresswoman, and all you need to do is click a couple buttons and fill in some pertinent information.

Our refurbished mobile app is littered with resources, all at the tip of your fingers. Included in the app is current news, job postings, twitter and Facebook feeds, the GCSAA directory, GCM Magazine, and the GCSAA Calculator. With the calculator, members can perform cost calculations such as cost of mowing, cost per nutrient, cost of topdressing, and more. It also has other great features that help determine and calculate seeding and sprigging rates, compare products on a cost per active ingredient or cost per nutrient basis, and much more. The app can be downloaded from the app store by searching “GCSAA+.”

The Can Am Cup is coming to Baltusrol and Canoe Brook Country Club on October 23 and 24. Registration is limited, and will include great education and networking opportunities, as well as competitive golf at world-class venues. Sign up to help U.S. superintendents take the crown against our Canadian friends at this inaugural event.

If you are a Class A or B GCSAA member and have not been to GIS in 5 years or more, consider applying for the Melrose Leadership Academy this fall. This a great program that supports the professional development of GCSAA members by providing individuals the opportunity to attend the Golf Industry Show. The program is set up to provide up to 20 scholarships every year. While at the education conference, class members will attend sessions hosted by golf’s industry leaders. Attendees will also have extensive networking opportunities at various receptions and events. I’ve heard nothing but positive remarks from those who have attended, so look for the application process to open later this year.

Details to be released soon

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WVGCSA 29th Annual Turf Conference
October 30 - November 1, 2017
Lakeview Resort, Morgantown



Official Registration Form

2017 WVGCSA/WPGA Turf Conference

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How many will attend Tuesday, October 31st Banquet

Please return to: WVGCSA

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Registration Breakdown

Advance Registration:

Members: Number attending entire conference

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Non -Members: Number attending entire conference

_____ @ \$200 = \$_____ (Includes banquet)

Banquet Only _____ @ \$25 = \$_____

Daily Fees: Member Price-\$80 Non-Member Price-\$100

Tuesday Only _____

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Make checks payable to WVGCSA Turf Conference

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If you have any questions feel free to contact
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Deerfield Country Club in Weston is looking to either lease or borrow a sod cutter in mid-September. Please contact Greg Phillips at gregphil22@yahoo.com if you can help.