TALK TURF

Official publication of the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 2 | SUMMER 2019

WISCONSIN SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY

Pete Bemis, Chapter Manager





A number of our members attended the 2019 Field Days at the OJ Noer Turfgrass Research Center, UW-Madison, in Verona, WI on July 23rd.

The Field Day is always an interesting event because the research staff and students get to show off their turfgrass research work for the year. Some of that research will be reprinted in subsequent issues of this newsletter. There are also a large number of vendors, equipment displays, and a great lunch. Currently our President, Mike Krupke, and several of our Board of Directors are planning on meeting with the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association to coordinate some of the efforts of both associations.

Sports Turf Managers association

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE —



Greetings Everyone!

I hope everyone survived the insanity of this Spring and early summer. Whether it was the challenge of managing turf under ridiculous weather conditions or getting games in when the field was soaked, it's been an experience. I learned a long time ago, growing up on a farm, that we have no control over Mother Nature and as turf managers the same holds true, we just adapt. Many say that's the joy of our industry, but some years, snow would be a welcome sight by July 4th.

That brings me to a sad subject that has come about due to the extreme weather we've had the last couple years. The Village of Coon Valley WI was devastated by a 100 year flood last summer which destroyed their beloved, and as I soon came to understand, their very well-known Baseball Field. To keep a very long story short, the WSTMA had stepped up, along with amazing support from our Commercial Partners to help rebuild the field. Preliminary work was to be done by our Field/Rebuild Day on August 6th with Infield work (mound/batter's box rebuild), final grade, outfield seeding and grow in start to take place on that day.

On Friday, July 17th, I got a call from a Board member, who's family lives near there, that it had happened again, 6" of rain and 7 feet of water on the field. Back to square one...

So, obviously the project has been cancelled with the people of Coon Valley reassessing their options. What I would like to stress is, that this isn't about Baseball fields anymore. The flooding has threatened the homes, safety and livelihoods of the people of that area. Please keep them in your thoughts and send positive energy (whatever that looks like to you). I'm sure anything you can do would be appreciated.

I'd like to also say how proud I am of the WSTMA and our Commercial Partners for stepping up and setting the intention to help those in need. To me, that's what it's all about. To those who put a great deal of preliminary work into this, kudos...you know who you are.

So... on a brighter note, I hope to see you all soon! We have the Fall Conference coming up and it's setting up to be a great event. As always, please invite other turf managers to join us and attend.

Hoping all of your roots are heathy...

Michael Krupke



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INVEST IN YOUR CAREER AND JOIN THE SPORTS TURF MANAGERS ASSOC.

One of the most positive steps you can take in your career is to commit to being better tomorrow at your job than you were today. STMA has the information and the resources to help you do that. And, we have a special offer to make this very affordable. New members (those who haven't been STMA members since the year 2000) receive a full membership at half price through the remainder of 2019. That means practitioners pay \$65 and commercial members join for \$170.

The benefits are many. Current members cite STMA as the key to their job security (enhancing their value to their employers); career success (education and information to help take that next career step); and professionalism (STMA's PR efforts are resulting in increased recognition and respect for members and the profession).

Another added benefit: *FREE Conference Registration for all new members, a \$375 value. The upcoming 31st STMA Conference and Exposition is in West Palm Beach, Fla., Jan. 13-16, 2020.

For those who are already enjoying the benefits of STMA membership, don't forget that during this pro-rated promotion, you receive a financial credit of \$50 per person referred towards your membership renewal, conference registration or certification/recertification fees — whichever you choose.

Tap into a huge network of peers. Join STMA today!

COON VALLEY PROJECT UPDATE

Flooding in the Village of Coon Valley has been a result of heavy rains and at least two earthen dams, upstream from the park, have failed and are damaged. The dams were not adequately maintained to control the water the way they intended. As a result the park will receive future flooding until the dams are repaired and properly maintained. The Village of Coon Valley is working on this, but at this point does not have a secure plan or secure funding.



HOW LATE IS TOO LATE TO CONTROL DANDELIONS AND OTHER WEEDS THIS FALL?

We're at the peak of summer, but it's never too early to start thinking about fall herbicides. Get ahead of the game with this insightful article originally published at stma.org.



We are now in the prime season for broadleaf weed control starting about September 15, but there is plenty of time in the fall for good, if not even improved, control over earlier applications. Furthermore, applications made now have very little chance of affecting near dormant trees and ornamentals, unlike with spring applications made around non-target species that are leafing out and/ or blooming. Nebraska research in agricultural fields reported in 2003 showed 2,4-D and/or dicamba were more effective in controlling dandelions and Canada thistle when applied 1 to 10 days after the first fall frost than when applied 5 to 11 days before the frost (Wilson and Michaels, 2003). Earlier work by Bruce Branham at Michigan State showed that even though early September applications were effective in controlling broadleaves yet that same fall, September applications were less effective long-term than applications made in October and November (Figure 1).

More recent work on ground ivy at Purdue shows that herbicides like triclopyr (Turflon) that are very effective on ground ivy, retain their effectiveness when applied regardless of the first frost and as late as early-to mid-November in Indiana (Figure 2) (Reicher and Weisenberger, 2007). However, herbicides with lower activity on ground ivy were most effective from Oct 1 through Nov 1, and efficacy decreased outside of this window. This study showed that broadleaf applications should be effective when made into the first week or two of November, but control may not be seen until spring. However, herbicides that contain carfentrazone (FMC's Quicksilver, PBI Gordons' Powerzone and Speedzone)

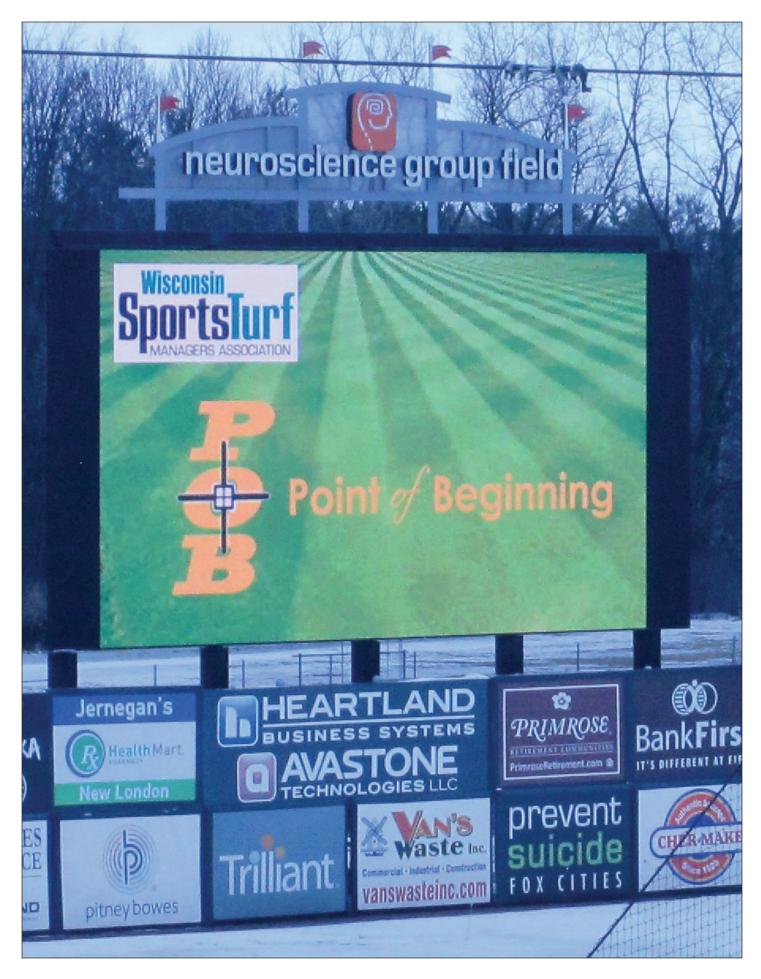
will still give a response in 7 to 14 days even when applied in late October or early November.

More recent studies at Purdue were applied in Fall of 2007 used two highly effective herbicides on ground, triclopyr (Turflon) and fluroxypyr (Spotlight), and applied them with and without carfentrazone (QuickSilver) on Sep 15, Oct 15, and Nov 15. QuickSilver had similar effects on both herbicides, dramatically improving short-term control from November applications (Figure 3). Though one might suspect that QuickSilver would decrease long-term control because the quick burndown could limit herbicide translocation, QuickSilver did not decrease long-term control from these herbicides as rated the following May (Figure 4). Similar to our previous work, Turflon applied as late as Nov 15 provided over 90% control by the following May of the very difficultto-control ground ivy . We repeated this research at UNL in fall of 2010 with the then popular herbicide Imprelis, which is now off the market. The same trends occurred, even on the extremely difficult-to-control Nebraska ground ivy (Kohler et al., 2004) (Figure 5 and 6).

The take home message is that broadleaf herbicides can be very effective when applied well into the fall and applications this late will control perennials as well as winter annuals that have already germinated. If quick

knockdown is required for immediate customer satisfaction in applications later in the fall, using products or tank mixes that contain carfentrazone will give a rapid burndown while not decreasing long-term control. Zac Reicher, Professor. Turfgrass Science, zreicher2@unl.edu





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A LOOK INSIDE: BALL DIAMOND FINE SPORTS TURF

Craig Schlender has owned and operated Ball Diamond Fine Sports Turf since 2002. He founded the full service company because he saw a demand for custom lawn fertilization for homeowners in his community using sports turf management techniques. More importantly he saw the need for sport field renovation, maintenance, and consultation to local clubs, schools, and municipalities.

Craig has been involved in either playing, coaching, or taking care of the fields for over 5,000 ball games throughout his life giving him the opportunity to see the good, the bad, and ugly of ball fields. In his professional career, he was the parks director for the City of Baraboo and the head groundskeeper for the Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin Dells. These jobs solidified his attention to detail. He has been the head groundskeeper for several regional tournaments, state tournaments, WIAC tournaments, and NCAA regional tournaments. He and his son Eric also assisted the grounds crew during the All-Star week at Miller Park in 2002. Currently Ball Diamond Fine has done renovations, maintenance, or new construction on over 225 ball fields, has 300+ homeowner fertilizer accounts, and has 5 large school and complex fertilizer accounts that he completes with GPS guided equipment.

Five fields Craig has managed have won WSTMA field of the year and 1 of those fields won the National STMA field of the year in the parks and schools category.

Craig can't do all of this alone. He has partnered with his son Eric and his company sharing employees for projects and accounts. Their employees are top notch and pay very close attention to details.

Eric Schlender brings over 15 years of experience with all levels of equipment. He owns and operates EC3 Environmental Consulting Group Inc. Eric played college baseball for four years and has been coaching teams for over 15 years.

Randy Brandt is an expert in skid loader and equipment operation. He has a keen eye for detail and well over 20,000 hours operating equipment.

Jodi Guthrie has lead the fertilization and field maintenance team for the last 5 years. She heralds from Colorado where she was active in softball.

Adair Ebright joined the crew last year and had previously worked 2 seasons with the Brewers at their Fox River Stadium facility as a member of the grounds crew. Adair played college football for four years.

Shelby Gerken is the newest addition to the team assisting with fertilization and field renovations. Shelby previously worked full time as a member of the grounds crew for the Minnesota Twins at Target Field. Shelby also played college softball for four years.

Ball Diamond Fine is not the largest company but their attention to detail and dedication to customer service is second to none.













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How much fertilizer are you removing from your turf?

We fertilizer turf to replace nutrients as they become unavailable to the plant. That can occur when nutrients are taken up by other organisms, bound tightly to the soil, or are lost to the environment. Another major source of nutrient loss is from direct removal while mowing and hollow-tine aerating.

Many turf text books state nitrogen fertilizer application rates can be reduced by as much as 50% when clippings are returned. This is supported in numerous research studies that have been summarized in Frank and Guertal (2013). But how much actual fertilizer is being removed during mowing and aeration? It's a simple calculation. Just multiply the dry clipping weight by the amount of nutrient in the clippings (tissue testing). The following are a few examples from our research data.

- We measured the total clipping yield on a tall fescue lawn plot in Nebraska. The plot was fertilized with 4.0 lbs of nitrogen (46-0-0) annually and mowed normally or scalped all season long. At the end of the year, the normally mowed plots produced 70 lbs of dry clippings per 1000 square feet and 115 lbs of clippings when scalped. Assuming the leaves averaged 3% nitrogen by weight, we removed between 2.0 and 3.5 lbs of N per 1000 square feet by collecting clippings during mowing. If we assume the leaves averaged 0.5% phosphorus and only 2% potassium, between 0.8 and 1.3 lbs of P2O5 and 1.7 and 2.7 lbs of K2O fertilizer were removed per 1000 square feet annually. Those nutrients needed to come from the soil because a 100% nitrogen source fertilizer was used. This slowly depletes the soil nutrient levels.
- Many golf courses are beginning to monitor clipping volume on putting greens in 2018.
 They are doing it for many reasons, but one is to estimate how much nutrient is being removed

during mowing. A course provided me their 2017 clipping volumes for some quick estimates of nutrient removal. Assuming 3% tissue nitrogen again, that course removed approximately 2.3 lbs of nitrogen per 1000 square feet during mowing. The weekly estimated nitrogen removal varied between 0.08 and 0.19 lbs per 1000 square feet, depending on growth rate. Interestingly, this estimated removal was significantly greater than the amount of nitrogen fertilizer they had applied. That difference came from mineralization of soil organic matter by soil microbes.

- Another way to remove fertilizer from a turf system is through aeration. Soil is heavy. Seemingly small amounts of soil organic matter (by weight) can be a lot of fertilizer. The top 3 to 4 inches of soil (tine depth) weighs approximately 23,000 lbs. If that soil averages 1 to 3% organic matter, that equates to 2,300 to 6,900 lbs of organic matter. Assuming roughly 5% of the soil organic matter is made up of nitrogen, there is between 110 and 350 lbs of nitrogen locked in the soil organic matter. Remove 5% of the surface with hollow-tine aeration and you've now removed between 6 and 17 lbs of nitrogen per 1000 square feet, part of which could have mineralized back to plant available nitrogen forms in the future.
- Removing clippings and aeration cores can significantly impact fertility requirements.
 Clippings should be returned whenever possible to improve nutrient cycling. Remember they don't cause thatch.

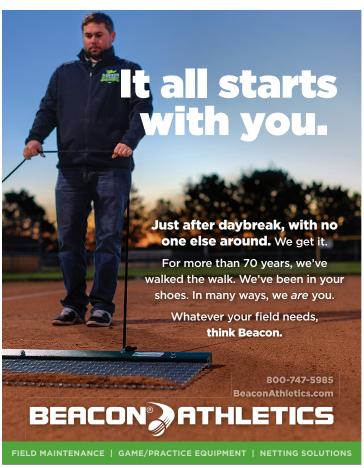
Bill Kreuser, Assistant Professor and Turfgrass Extension Specialist, wkreuser2@unl.edu.

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SHARE WITH US!

The WSTMA is always seeking input from our members on topics to present. Name the topic, such as fall fertilization, how to buy fertilizer, soil testing, etc. and we can find a speaker or write an article for the newsletter. Send you ideas to Chapter Manager Pete Bemis at pbemis@wstma.org.









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DOG DAYS AND COOL-SEASON GRASS

Cool-season lawn struggling to grow in shallow soil on a south-facing slope during dog days.

According to Merriam-Webster, dog days is the period between early July and early September when the hot sultry weather of summer usually occurs in the northern hemisphere; a period of stagnation or inactivity.

The dog is actually the Dog Star – also called Sirius – which rises simultaneously with the sun during the hottest days of summer in the northern hemisphere. Plutarch (Greek writer, 46-120 AD) referred to the hot days of summer as hēmerai kynades (literally, "dog days"); the Latin translation dies caniculares is the source of our English phrase. But I digress...

You most likely have noticed that cool-season grasses have recently entered a period of stagnation or inactivity (dog days) and, in some cases, are spent. The hot summer days have steadily increased soil temperatures to the point that the soil is now warmer than air temperature for much of the daylight hours and all of the night. During the last 10 days at Hort Farm No. 2, soil temperature at 3-inches has oscillated between 76 and 90 °F and at 2-inches 78 and 92 °F. These soil temperatures are well above the optimum temperatures for root growth and clearly explain why cool-season grasses are lethargic at this time.

What to do? Be patient and do not "push" the grass. This

is not the time of year to stress out turf

— the grass has very little resiliency and
will not tolerate much abuse or recovery
quickly. I recently witnessed utility
vehicle traffic on subtly drought stressed
turf during the hottest part of the day
result in classic tire-track damage. Root
systems of cool-season grasses are
weakest and shallowest at this time of
year. Thus, localized drought stress can
develop rapidly — within a couple hot,
sunny days — during the dog days.

These cultural practices can be helpful in getting high value turf to survive

dog days. Once the turf has drained after drenching thunderstorms (2-3 days), program daily, very-light (50-65% of reference ET), deficit irrigation using a rainhold setting (such as 0.2-inch rain) to stop irrigation from adding to over-wetting from storms. Deficit irrigation assures that thunderstorms will be the reason for excess wetness, not the irrigation schedule. This irrigation plan should encourage the turf the dry without overdrying between irrigations (or thunderstorms). If excess drying does occur with this irrigation plan, it probably will start in highly localized (small) areas, which can be effectively managed with well-timed syringing to re-hydrate dry leaves and prevent crispy thatch during the heat of the day. Crispy thatch means that surface adventitious roots either are or will soon be crispy as well. Moist to dry thatch is good, whereas crispy and crunchy thatch in the heat is bad. Weekly, low-rate fertilization (N and possibly P, K and micronutrients) is crucial on sand-topdressed and sand-based rootzones commonly found on golf course putting greens and some sports turfs. These rootzones have very little mineralization capacity to supply essential nutrients during dog days. Weekly low-rate fertilization provides a steady, consistent slow-growth and avoids the "surgecrash" cycle of growth that results from less-frequent and higher application rates. Typically, low-rate N is no more than a 0.1-lbs. per 1,000-sq. ft.

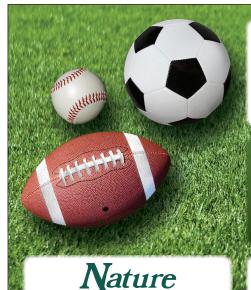
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