



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

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USGA Update - Mid Atlantic Section

Why Do We Always Aerate When The Greens Are Perfect?

By Elliott L. Dowling, Agronomist, Mid-Atlantic Region

August 20, 2014

Many golf courses throughout the Mid-Atlantic region consider mid-August an indicator that aeration is upon us. Depending on location, desired turf species and golf calendar, core and solid-tine aeration may already be taking place.

One question we often receive is: “Why does our superintendent aerate when course conditions and weather are perfect?” This question is very perceptive, and explains why aeration is performed when the weather and course are best. Weather plays a large role in turf recovery. Thus, performing aeration when the weather favors turf growth leads to quicker recovery. Additionally, aeration is stressful on plants. Performing aeration on healthy, “perfect” turf is critical. If aeration is conducted on already stressed turf, the result could be disastrous.

The range of ideal weather varies depending on the desired turf species. In other words, if your course is promoting bentgrass, mid-August to early September is a good time to aerate. The warm days and cool nights of early fall favor bentgrass growth, placing the competitive advantage on bentgrass over *Poa annua*. Conversely, if the desired turf is *Poa annua*, core aeration can be performed later in the fall. There is less chance for stress on *Poa annua* in late summer and early fall. Unfortunately, the golf schedule often dictates aeration timing more than the weather which could compromise proper aeration timing.

Another question we often receive is: “Why is so much sand applied?” Superintendents realize aeration is never popular. However, the benefits of aeration far outweigh the potential problems if nothing is done. Superintendents also understand that playability is a concern. Following aeration, especially on greens, filling each of the aeration holes with sand will promote quicker recovery and improve ball roll. There is no denying that surface disruption occurs during aeration and that greens will play differently following aeration. However, effects on playability as a result of aeration can be minimized if aeration channels are completely filled with sand. Ultimately, applying enough topdressing sand to fill aeration holes will result in a smoother post-aeration surface that recovers quicker than a surface with open aeration holes.

Aeration is performed every year to improve turf health and playing conditions. Core and deep-tine aeration are critical for the health of highly maintained grass. Keep in mind that every time you comment on the exceptional conditions during the golf season, a large part of maintaining those conditions is routine core aeration. Do not lose sight of the long-term goal because of the short-term inconvenience.



Core aeration is critical to long-term health and performance of turf. Timing core aeration is also critical. Performing aeration when grass is at peak health will encourage quick recovery and minimize playing surface disruption.

Source Elliott Dowling edowling@usga.org
USGA Regional Updates, www.usga.org
Information on the USGA's [Course Consulting Service](#)
Contact the [Green Section Staff](#)
August 20, 2014

President's Message

Greetings!

I hope everyone had a great Labor Day; it's hard to believe I'm already writing that, but to echo the theme of my earlier messages, the weather this year has been fantastic making the summer really fly by.

I'm sure most of you are in the middle of aeration season now, whether you have just finished it or are preparing to start. It's good to know the worst of the stressful weather is behind us as we go into my (and I'm guessing most of you) favorite time of the year.

The next meeting is CPGCSA Golf Championship at Outdoor Country Club on September 29th; even if you don't want to play competitively you should attend, have fun and make the most of the fact that it's that time of the year where we can enjoy some time away from the course and not worry about something dying!

Lastly mark your calendars for the 75th Anniversary Celebration, where we are also awarding Faron Stoops the Distinguished Service Award. Greg Borzok and Rebecca Clark have been working hard on this event and it is shaping up to be a great event. It is on October 3rd at Colonial Country Club (the site of the first meeting) and we are looking forward to a big attendance to celebrate Faron, the association's anniversary and enjoy a night with like-minded people!

I look forward to seeing everyone at Outdoor and Colonial.

Enjoy the weather and have a great aeration!

Alan

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From the Archives....2004 CPGCSA Board and Past President Meeting

1st Row: John Dougherty, Kenny Dietrich, Corky Knoll

2nd Row: Tony Goodley, Dan Achenbach, Steve Ludwig, John Colo, Thom Mahute, Dan Brickley

3rd Row : Faron Stoops, Dan Kury, Terry Wueschinski, Fred Heinlen, Tom Ocepek

4th Row: Pete Ramsey, Bill Brooks, Bob Beyer, Greg Borzok, Chuck Cadiz, Greg Fantuzzi, Jeff Fry

Membership News

The following individual has applied for membership into our association. If there are no written objections within the next seven days, he will be accepted into CPGCSA at the next meeting.

Lawrence J. Hart..... Class FM
Superintendent, Lykens Valley Golf Course

We would like to welcome the following individuals into our association

Christopher Gray Class AF
Lebanon Turf, Marketing Manager

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368.

Membership information is also available on the Central Penn website at:
www.cpgcsa.org



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Blast from the Past...

Newsletter Editorial from August 1987

“The Hang In There Guys Speech #1”

In early June my wife told me that our cat was in heat. She, the cat (not my wife), howled and moaned for about a week and then it ended. Ironically, I went into heat about the same time and now it is the beginning of August and I’m still howling and moaning. It is so hot and dry here that I was considering trading my Yamaha in for a camel, but after further consideration I realized that camel fumes are worse than Yamaha fumes. The humidity is so high that the other day we had fog so thick that the birds were walking.

The past 2 months have been a real treat for those of us trying to grow grass in this area. I can’t remember when I’ve been at a July meeting and heard so many people talking about all the grass they have already lost. Some are having problems with disease and lack of rain, others with disease and too much rain. I talked with one Superintendent who had rain 16 of the first 20 days of July with a total accumulation of 8.5 inches. It seems that the Philly area is getting an excess of rain while others are getting none. I talked with Jack Harper yesterday and his advice was to do as little as possible, but as much as necessary to maintain our weak grass. His statement sounded like that of a politician, but his meaning was don’t do anything to further weaken your grass if you can avoid it.

I hope that this newsletter doesn’t sound as depressing as the writing of it was. I feel that I am writing an obituary for the grass we lost. To all of you that felt that you are alone with your problems — I’m saying CHEER UP because you have a lot of company. In closing I would like to add two more comments. First, be prepared for fall insects, because we have seen signs of everything under the sun and lastly remember there are less than 150 days till Christmas.

Kenny D



Can you identify anyone else?



Mark Your Calendars.....

On October 3, 2014 we are going to celebrate this milestone at a special “Central Penn Night! In honor of this special occasion, this event will be held at Colonial Country Club, where it all began!

Please plan to join us to celebrate this event as well as to celebrate and honor Faron Stoops, 2014 Recipient of the Rafferty DSL Award.

We are looking for pieces of our past: pictures, minutes, newspaper articles, etc. If you have anything that you would like to contribute or share with us, please contact Wanda at cpgcsa@hotmail.com or Greg Borzok, Chairman at zok1@aol.com or 717-652-8409.



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August 2014

Dear Member:

The Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association supports research, scholarships and networking for its members. By enhancing the qualifications and skills of our members, we provide your clubs with superintendents who are the best at what they do. On October 3, 2014 the Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association will celebrate two significant events.

The first is the presentation of the Dave Rafferty Distinguished Service Award to Waynesboro Country Club Superintendent Faron Stoops. Faron, a dedicated husband and father, is a strong leader and mentor in our golf community. It will be an honor to celebrate his achievements with his family and friends.

We will also celebrate the CPGCSA's 75th year. Our professional association began at Colonial Country Club. One of our founding fathers was George Morris, Pro/Superintendent of Colonial and a relative of the most famous "Old Tom Morris". It is appropriate that our anniversary celebration will take place in the same place that we began.

We would appreciate any financial contributions your club/business may choose to give us to make our celebration a success.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

All sponsors will be recognized. The following are suggested levels of support:

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\$750 - 3 tickets, event title, name on all literature, verbal recognition during the night, place/table cards
- _____ **Eagle**
\$500 - 2 tickets, name on all literature, verbal recognition during the night, place/table cards
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\$100 - place/table cards
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Checks Payable To: **CPGCSA**
Mail To: **Wanda S. Fry, 1314 Porter Avenue, Scranton, PA 18504**

Payments can also be made on the website www.cpgcsa.org

Thank you so much for your support of this event and your continued support throughout our 75 years!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan FitzGerald".

Alan FitzGerald, CPGCSA President

New Faculty Member to Join Penn State Turf Science Team



Dr. Benjamin McGraw will be joining the Penn State Turfgrass Science program as the new turfgrass entomologist, a position with a joint appointment between the Plant Science and Entomology departments. Ben's responsibilities will be to conduct research on the ecology and management of turfgrass insect pests and to teach in Penn State's 2- and 4-year programs. Ben is looking forward to working with Pennsylvania and regional turf industry stakeholders, and teaching and mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students.

Prior to joining the Turf Science program at Penn State, Ben spent five years as an associate professor in the Golf & Plant Sciences department at the State University of New York (SUNY) – Delhi. At Delhi, Ben was responsible for directing the Golf & Sports Turf Management program and teaching classes supporting the 2- and 4-yr programs. Outside of these duties, Ben maintained an active research program and ran a consulting company developing ecologically-based solutions for turfgrass insect pest problems.

Ben grew up in coastal Maine, and developed a passion for turfgrass management like many did: by playing golf and mowing lawns. Ben was exposed to entomology while attending the University of Maine, where he obtained a Bachelors of Science degree. After college, Ben worked as a research entomologist for Mycogen Seeds, Dow AgroSciences, and AgraQuest. He decided to enter a graduate program to combine his passion for entomology and turf management. Ben obtained a MS in Entomology from the University of Massachusetts –Amherst working in Dr. Pat Vittum's lab, and a Ph.D. in Entomology from Rutgers University, under the guidance of Dr. Albrecht Koppenhöfer. During his graduate and post-graduate years, he worked on a variety of projects including cultural and biological control of turf pests, insect and pathogen ecology, and insecticide resistance management. A main focus of his research has been the annual bluegrass weevil (ABW), a severe pest of golf course turf in the eastern United States and Canada. His work on ABW ecology and biology has led to a greater understanding of the insect's behavior and population development, and has improved cultural and chemical management.

At Penn State, Dr. McGraw's research will focus on understanding insect ecology and behavior to develop sustainable turf pest management practices. He will continue to work closely with turf managers to better understand pest issues, provide practical solutions, and generate much needed information on emerging pest issues. Additionally, he is looking forward to working with a diverse team of turfgrass scientists and entomologists, and developing partnerships within and outside of the University to improve our understanding of managing pests in an ecologically sound manner.



Rich Gdovin
Sales Consultant

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2014 CPGCSA Meeting Schedule

September 29
Golf Championship
Outdoor Country Club

October 21
Oktoberfest Open
LedgeRock Golf Club



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