

**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP,  
MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION**

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Robert Sommers, Managing Editor

rationing water when availability became minimal, and adjusted to the limited water supply by instituting such programs as increased potash applications, raising cutting heights slightly, and reducing frequencies of cut.

A side benefit of the drought was increased awareness of the importance of proper irrigation and water supply. In many cases, boards approved funds for upgrading irrigation systems and water supply sources. Unfortunately, it often takes such extremes to obtain capital improvement funds for golf courses, but at least for some, there was a silver lining inside their dark cloud.



## Mid-Continent Region

by JAMES F. MOORE, Director

**T**URF MANAGERS in the Mid-Continent Region would like to forget 1986. Difficult may be the best word to describe the season, although others would choose harsher adjectives.

Although the causes of the difficulties varied widely, a common foe was the very early play on dormant or nearly dormant turf. Most clubs experienced between 8,000 and 12,000 rounds of golf above their yearly average. Although the increased revenue was welcome, the extra traffic amplified limitations such as poor greens construction, improperly sized or heavily shaded tees, and fairway soils that quickly compacted with the additional cart usage. Weakened turf became more disease susceptible, and as the summer progressed, many courses lost large amounts of turf.

**A**NUMBER of trends (some good and some not so good) in turf maintenance were noticed across the 10 states that make up this region.

**Aerification** — Everyone seems to be climbing on the bandwagon, and courses are responding with better turf and improved playing conditions.

**Fertilization** — Although lower phosphorous levels discourage *Poa annua*, some are carrying this reduction to an extreme, resulting in severely weakened turf.

**Chemicals** — Many excellent new chemicals are available. Unfortunately, a tremendous amount of experimenting

is going on — on the greens. Good superintendents should experiment, but on the nursery or practice green.

On the other hand, southern Florida was inundated with rain this summer. One course in southwestern Florida reported 15 inches in 21 days, while most of the Southeast fell 12 to 15 inches behind in rainfall this year. Courses that were well drained had a relatively good summer. Poorly drained courses had a significant amount of disease and other problems associated with saturated soils.

The southeastern United States had weather extremes in 1986 that challenged the golf course superintendent to use all his skills, and each one became a better manager in the process.

**Construction** — Too many clubs were trying to provide championship putting quality every day on greens whose construction more closely met the specifications of the highway department than those of the Green Section. Poorly constructed greens must be maintained to less demanding standards (especially when it comes to speed) than a green that is built properly. Many clubs are also building new greens and, unfortunately, yielding to the temptation to cut corners to save a few dollars. It is part of the superintendent's responsibility to protect the interests of his club by insisting on proper construction techniques.

**Wetting Agents** — It's too bad these products don't deliver all the promises made for them. Although they can be helpful to a limited degree, they cannot substitute for good construction and good cultivation practices. When applied heavily and followed by high temperatures, problems can sometimes result.

The year 1987 will no doubt offer its own challenges to turf managers in the Mid-Continent Region. You should be realistic about what can be produced, given the set of circumstances (budget, construction, climate, etc.) present at your club. It is our goal as USGA Agronomists to help you achieve the most from your course within the bounds of solid agronomics.