2001 GREEN SECTION EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Big Challenges – Unique Solutions

February 17, 2001, Dallas, Texas

FOR THE 20TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR the annual Green Section Education Conference was held in conjunction with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America International Turfgrass Conference and Show. This year more than 1,300 people attended the Green Section's program on Saturday, February 17, at the Dallas Convention Center. James T. Snow, National Director of the USGA Green Section, served as moderator for the afternoon's program of 15 speakers who addressed this year's theme, "Big Challenges – Unique Solutions."

THE BEST TURF TIPS OF 2000

One of the most popular annual features of the Education Conference is the Best Turf Tips. This year, 12 Green Section staff members reported on some of the helpful ideas and ingenious innovations they came across while visiting golf course superintendents in every part of the country during 2000. The Turf Tips appear throughout this issue.

A Map for Success

An easy tool in developing pest management strategies.

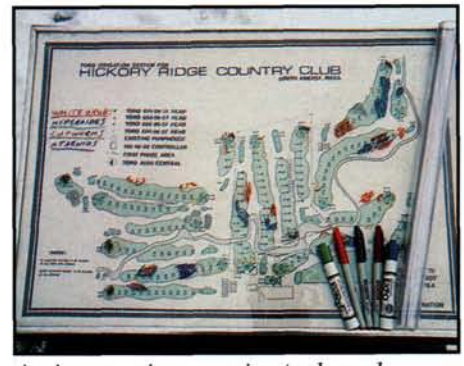
by JIM SKORULSKI

MAPS have many purposes in day-to-day golf course management. They can serve as an accurate visual reference for irrigation, drainage, communication, and electrical lines. Maps are also used for communication and documentation, inventory purposes, as a historical reference, and in pest and fertilizer management programs.

The advent of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to produce accurate computerized map images and the Global Information Systems (GIS) to incorporate or link image or map information with related databases further expands the value of mapping in turf management programs. The new computerized mapping technologies hold great promise for irrigation, pest, and fertilizer management programs, and their usefulness will only grow as our industry evolves.

Do not let the lack of a GPS-formulated map or the more sophisticated GIS computer software prevent you from generating and utilizing maps in your management programs. Bob Ruszala, of Hickory Ridge C.C. in Amherst, Massachusetts, has developed a very inexpensive and useful mapping system to aid in implementing an integrated pest management program on his golf course. An irrigation map generated in 1975 provides an outline of greens, tees, fairways, and other golf course features. Mr. Ruszala uses a sheet of transparent, 8mil-thick vinyl film sized to overlay the map. The material is available in hardware stores under the name Multipurpose Vinyl Film (Tuff Company). Non-permanent marking pens are used to designate on the overlays the soil types, water features, drainage, nesting boxes, and active disease and insect pests on the golf course. The soils, water features, and drainage remain basically unchanged, while the pest activity overlays are updated based on scouting information from daily monitoring. A key is developed for each of the items featured on a particular map.

The overlays created provide an effective means to visualize pest activity on the golf course. They can be used as a documentation tool and are helpful for formulating monitoring and control strategies, and selecting appropriate pesticides. The maps provide a historic perspective of pest activity and expose reoccurring hot spots that might correlate to a specific site characteristic. The hot spots highlighted on the overlays can then be targeted through site modification, cultural practices, or spot treatments with control agents to potentially reduce pesticide use.



An inexpensive mapping tool can be a useful aid in implementing an integrated pest management program on the golf course. The components of the mapping system include the irrigation map, vinyl film, a completed disease transparency, and nonpermanent marking pens. The maps are easy to update and are helpful for formulating pest monitoring and management programs.

The cost of the map overlays is minimal. The vinyl film can be purchased in hardware stores in 40" × 15' rolls for about $40. A wide array of non-permanent markers can be purchased at any arts and crafts or office supply store.

The overlay maps will likely be displaced by computer-generated maps in time. However, this tip provides an easy and economical means to create a very useful tool for pest management and other day-to-day operations, and it is truly a map for success.

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