

New Fairy Ring Discovery Providing Results

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Fairy rings at putting greens have long been a nemesis for superintendents. Varying degrees of success have occurred over the years with fungicides, wetting agents, and cultivation programs. No wonder as up to 60 different fungi can be associated with the symptoms. These fungi not only impact the turfgrass tissue and root systems but can change the soil physical and chemical properties as well, including making the soils hydro phobic (water repellent).

Dr. Lane Tredway at North Carolina State University recently made a discovery with his research that only three fungi have been associated with the fairy rings at putting greens. Just as important, his latest research has demonstrated that once the fairy rings are observed, curative fungicide treatments will suppress the fungi, but have little impact on helping the soils return back to normal and the symptoms persist. Most research done in the past focused on curative strategies and most fungicides specify treatment once symptoms are observed. No preventative strategy has ever been researched or tried before.

Dr. Tredway set up a research experiment in both 2006 and 2007 to hopefully discover the first ever preventative fairy ring control program. Field trials indicated that two spring applications of Bayleton at 21 to 28 day intervals effectively prevented fairy ring symptoms at putting greens when applied once soil temperatures reached 55 degrees (5 day average) at the two inch depth. Irrigation of the product to a depth of 1¼ inch is a plus to deliver into the thatch and soil. No benefits were observed by adding a surfactant.

Our observations from over 50 courses following this strategy were that it was highly effective at both bermudagrass and bentgrass putting greens during the 2008 season.



Fairy rings have been a common nuisance for superintendents over the years. New research discovery will make a big impact on reducing this problem in the future.

Dr. Tredway has made a remarkable discovery with this century old issue. If you would like to study more about this topic, read the web update by Dr. Tredway and Lee Miller on *TurfFiles: NCSU Web Site*. March 27. p. 1-4.

(http://www.turf-files.ncsu.edu/PDFFiles/004051/Fairy_Ring.pdf.)

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