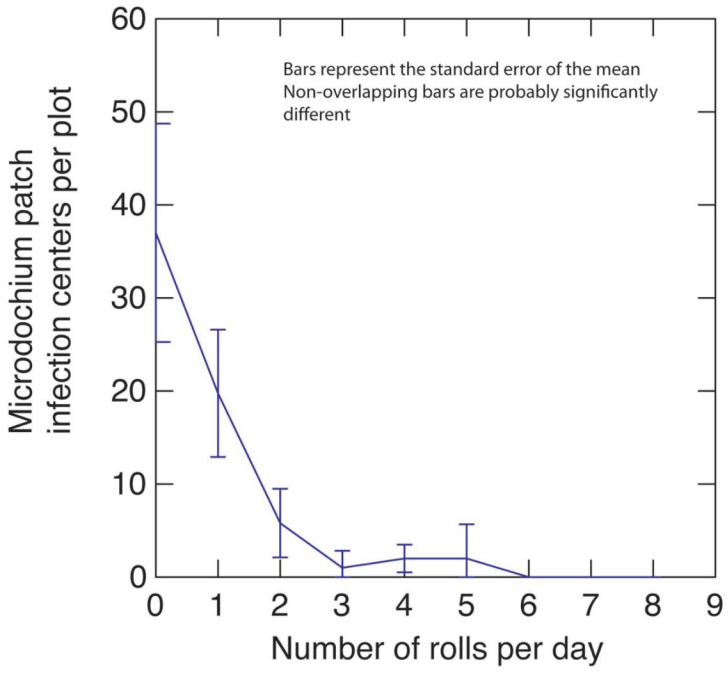
TURF HACKER

Ideas about growing grass

WEDNESDAY, 30 MAY 2012

Fusarium, Rolling Results

The results are in for my accidental discovery last week. I collected the data and Larry from PACE Turf analyzed it for me.



Now it would be easy to jump to conclusion that rolling more is better but hold on just a second. This study is far from scientific and was designed for a completely different purpose. Any superintendent will tell you that no two sites are the same and what I am seeing might not be repeatable on other sites....maybe. This study was not set up to study turfgrass disease and therefore some of the results could be augmented due to disease spread from mowers. Further study is definitely needed to really get to the bottom of this discovery.

I hypothesize that the reason rolling is having an effect on fusarium is the same reason that rolling has an effect on Dollar Spot. Researches are working to see if it is the increased microbial populations in

Golf Tees show the Fusarium Patches on the Control Plot (never rolled ever)

soils that are rolled that are having an effect on the fusarium patch fungus. I also agree with Dr. Vargas and Paul Giordano's research with respect to dew removal. In my experience we rarely have dew on this turf during periods of high fusarium pressure due to constant rain.

This plot is rolled 1x/day. The cluster of disease suggests that the disease could be spread by a mower from a nearby control plot located to the top right of this plot.

Making this discovery has left me with a ton of questions. Can this be used to control fusarium in the winter? Does soil fertility have an effect? Do different rolling frequencies have different effects at different times of the year? Can rolling be used curatively to combat already active fusarium (a long-shot but what the hell)?

This is a pretty cool discovery but I do not recommend that everyone go out and start rolling like that fool in Pender Harbour. What I do recommend is that you set aside a small part of your nursery or practice green and do a test for yourself. Leave a spot untreated with pesticides and try a few different rolling frequencies to see if it has an effect on your site. I would recommend you start with rolling frequencies of 1, 2, and 3 times daily.

I have rolled daily since 2010 on my Poa annua greens with no ill effects. I have now upped the rolling to 2x daily to see what will happen. I haven't seen any ill effects from rolling as much as 4x daily on my trial green so I am very confident that it will not harm my putting greens. For me, rolling an extra time each day costs the club $20. It potentially will reduce the amount of pesticides we need to use and the greens are that much nicer! Win win? We'll see.

This plot is rolled 4x daily

What really excites me about this discovery is the potential it holds. Fusarium is my biggest threat and the only pest that I cannot control at my location without pesticides. The only respite West Coast turf managers get from this pest is the summer heat and dry weather. I am seeing these results in spring during cool wet conditions on a putting green grown in almost complete shade (2 hours of sun per day tops). If fusarium patch can be controlled in cool wet conditions culturally this could be big. Cultural control independent of the weather. If anything this could mean that turf managers could have another tool in their toolbox for fighting or preventing Microdochium nivale in putting green turf.

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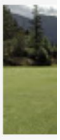

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Tru-Turf should really sponsor me. This machine kicks ass!

Poa annua rolled 8x daily with a HOC of 0.090" during full seed head flush with only 2 hrs of sunlight/day. Whoa! do you see what I see? Where's the seedhead? Oh snap!

Posted by Jason Haines

Labels: Fusarium Patch, IPM, Microdochium nivale, Poa annua, Turf disease

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STIMP (3)
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technology (2)
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urea (5)
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