



Sunday, 2 December 2018

Worst Disease Ever ! The circle of decline



This is what part of the first green here looked like when I returned from my 6 day trip to meet with greenkeepers in Denmark and the Netherlands. While I prefer to only share success stories, I can also learn a lot about failures such as this.

While this green is a war zone, the rest of the greens are essentially disease free despite receiving 1/3 the number of fungicide sprays over the past year.



All but one green look like this with hardly any disease and no fungicide applications in almost 2 months

This is by far the worst disease I have seen on my greens in probably ever. What happened?

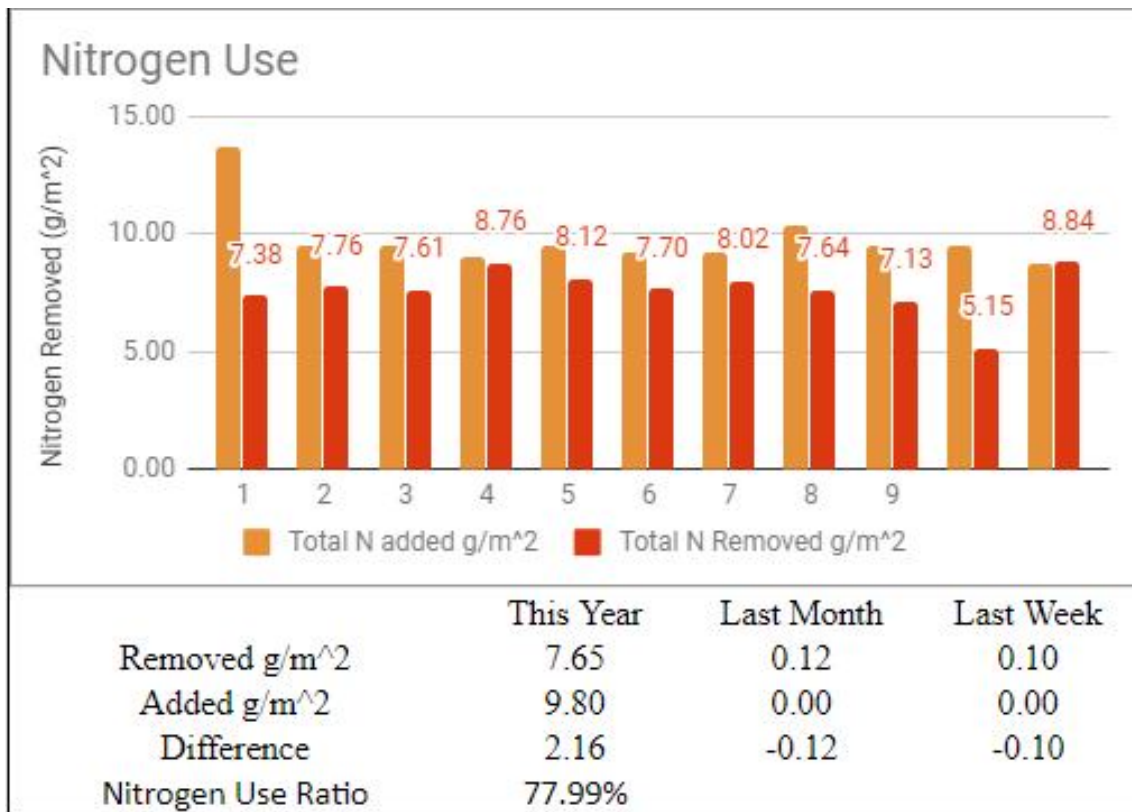
Pretty much everything that has been done to this problem green is exactly what you don't want to do when it comes to IPM and management of fusarium patch. This green is essentially stuck in the "circle of decline." I have been forced to chase my tail and treat symptoms instead of dealing with the real issues pertaining to this green which in the short term, are difficult and costly to fix.

The first green has been a constant struggle this year and pretty much every year. I haven't totally

figured out why but I think most of the issues pertain to poor drainage.

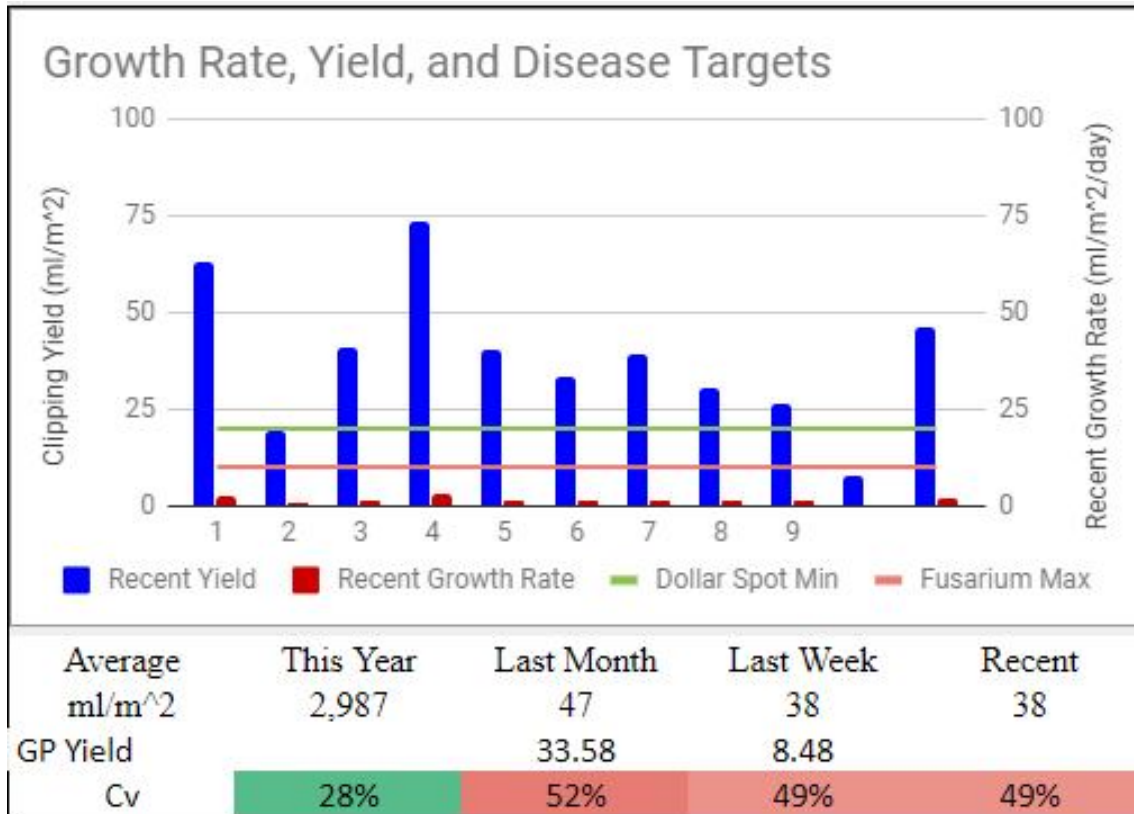
While most of my greens have a healthy stand of bentgrass on them, the first green here is 99% poa. In the Netherlands (where they are facing a complete pesticide ban in 2020 as part of the [Green Deal](#)) they have a target poa percentage of less than 10% as this is what is probably required to provide quality playing surfaces without the use of pesticides. This has become extremely obvious over the course of this past year. From fusarium in the Spring and Fall, to Anthracnose in the Summer, this green is constantly trying to die. I've added more bentgrass seed to this green than any other, but for some reason it just won't establish! (probably due to the poor drainage on this green) ARGGGHHHHHHH!!!

So this highly susceptible grass has suffered almost constant damage compared to my other greens. This has resulted in the need to apply more fertilizer to recover from this damage. As can be seen on the nitrogen use approximation below, the first green required much more nitrogen fertilizer to achieve a constant growth rate with the other greens. Poa really is a fertilizer HOG!



At the end of October I applied a half gram of nitrogen per square meter on all my greens except the first green. I had lots of fusarium scars and I needed to push growth so I applied 1 gram or double what all the other greens got. One of the most interesting things I have observed over the

years was how [higher amounts of nitrogen, and more importantly, higher clipping yields result in worse fusarium patch on my course](#). As expected, the clipping yield was high on the first green as well.



Because this green has such poor drainage, I decided to try core aerifying to see if that would improve things. Spoiler alert, it didn't make a damn difference.



First core on greens in over 4 years

Many people have noticed that disease is usually made worse by core aerifying. I have no clue why but I [speculated earlier this year why it might make things worse](#). Not surprisingly, the disease absolutely exploded on this green!



Earlier this year I decided to stop applying as much phosphite to try and reduce the ever-increasing phosphorus levels in my soil as a way to maybe combat poa. Bad idea.

We also didn't roll it even once in November due to us putting all our efforts into installing our new irrigation system. No dew removal, no disease suppression from the roller. Regardless, all the greens didn't get rolled and only 1 of the greens has bad disease.

As poa seems to be impacted more by low pH and low levels of potassium especially in the winter, this green has received more of those nutrients through fertilizer than all my other greens combined. We have all seen the impacts that excess fertilizer can have on disease. Why am I surprised here?

So this green is stuck in the circle of decline. It is constantly diseased which requires more pesticides. It has the worst playing condition by far on any of our greens. It requires more fertilizer to recover from the damage with only makes the poa happier and disease more prevalent. The cycle starts over.

It is clear what needs to be done here. The first green has a infiltration rate of only 13 mm/hr where the course average is about 100mm/hr. Success of any kind will not be possible on this green until this issue is dealt with. Until then I am lucky I still have the tools to keep this green

on life support although even then, they aren't quite enough. As restrictions continue to tighten, golf courses will be forced to stop treating symptoms and deal with the real issues they face.

One of the biggest take home points I learned while in Europe was how they are really focusing on measuring green performance data such as drainage, turf species composition and organic matter levels. They know that in order to find success, they need to be aware of, and manage these things to reduce their reliance on pesticides and provide good consistent playing conditions.

I started doing this last year and now have a clear plan of what needs to be done. I can take this data to my membership and make a plan to fix this green once and for all.



The Royal Copenhagen Golf Club was pure and disease free despite only being allowed 1 fungicide application per year

NORAHG Response

LUNATЖC MAINTENANCE DOCTRINES LEAD TO DEAD & DAMAGED TURF !

Worst disease ever !

The circle of decline !

This is the predictable result of a so-called « *activist-superintendent* » who has adopted failed, unproven, and bogus lunatЖc-doctrines.

Conventional turf maintenance practices have been rejected, and the result is dead grass and useless putting surfaces.

Unbelievably, the decline of turf occurred while this « *activist-superintendent* » was overseas bragging about the success of his lunatЖc-doctrines. (Incredibly, he could not have been bothered to apply a preventive fungicide application before jet-setting in Europe.)

Universally, « *normal and main-stream* » golf course superintendents are professionals who are paid to take care of golf courses — they manage the budgets, man-power, materials, and schedules needed to properly maintain high-quality playing conditions and aesthetics for paying golfers. Superintendents constantly monitor the health of turfgrasses through careful observation, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, insects, weeds, and abiotic disorders. Their skilled management of turfgrass pests is accomplished by the proper use of conventional pest control products.

Unfortunately, some golf facilities are infested with so-called « *activist-superintendents* ». They reject conventional turf maintenance practices in favour of failed, unproven, and bogus lunatЖc-doctrines, such as ...

- Go Brown — **FAILURE !**
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) — **FAILURE !**
- Minimal Levels for Sustainable Nutrition — **FAILURE !**
- Organic Maintenance — **FAILURE !**

- Pace Turf's Climate Appraisal — FAILURE !
- Self-Imposed Prohibition of Pesticides and Fertilizers — FAILURES !
- Spot Spray or Spot Treatment — FAILURE !
- Zero Cultivation — FAILURE !

By adopting the lunatic-doctrines, observers question the « *activist-superintendents* » ability and competence to provide what playing customers demand ... high-quality playing conditions and aesthetics.

Do « *activist-superintendents* » understand that they are not employed to experiment with doctrines that do not work !?! Why do they chose to ignore the overwhelming science-based and time-tested practices of conventional turf maintenance !?! What possible benefit can be touted by « *activist-superintendents* » for unilaterally and arbitrarily adopting failed lunatic-doctrines !?! Especially when the alternative is dead grass and useless playing surfaces.

Those golf courses where these lunatic-doctrines have been adopted can expect to have poor turf and lower-quality playing conditions. Should the adoption of these doctrines become grounds for termination !?! In order to deter « *activist-superintendents* », perhaps a Master Plan For Conventional Turf Maintenance Practices should be written into their contracts.

« *Activist-superintendents* » represent the greatest threats to the golf industry today. These activists simply do not deserve to work in the golf industry that they betray. They are not paid to be activists — they are paid to satisfy paying golfers with high-quality playing conditions and aesthetics. Do paying golfers really want to tolerate the #@!%! nonsense of lunatic maintenance doctrines !?!

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Explore the following links ...

✓ -- Espousing Politically-Correct Rubbish -- LINK

<http://pesticidetruths.com/2018/02/20/municipal-prohibition-failures-in-saanich-politically-correct-rubbish-multiple-false-pretexs-inconsistent-unfair-exception-statuses-2018-02-20/>

✓ -- Betraying The Golf Industry -- [LINK](#)

<http://pesticidetruths.com/2018/03/09/lying-sacks-of-cr%20%26p-who-betray-the-golf-industry-lunatic%20%26c-activist-superintendents-managers-on-the-sunshine-coast-in-british-columbia-2018-02-22/>

✓ -- The Entire Media Library Of Attacks Against The Golf Industry -- [LINK](#)

<http://pesticidetruths.com/toc/attacks-against-the-golf-industry/>