



August 26, 2011 Scouting Report – August Was Great! One More 90° Day, Summer Patch, Dollar Spot, University of Illinois Turfgrass Research Field Day, and Tim says Kingpin

Chicago/Northern Illinois Update: Derek Settle - e DSettle@cdga.org Blog www.cdgaturf.org
So now are we happy? Happy? At the end of this week, I can honestly say it has been a good month – August. Although we hit 93° in Chicago on Wednesday that will be the last hot day we'll see this month. For the month it was only our third day above 90° on Sunshine Course in Lemont. Was it a hot summer? Yes, very. However, all the action was compressed into the single month of July. On average, it sounds like an 'average summer' because Midway scored 24 days above 90° and the 144 year average is 23 days. When you realize most of those days occurred in one month you can begin to understand why so many golf courses were unanimous in one issue –turfgrass loss occurred somewhere on fairways and/or greens. If you were unable to adjust



Our research efforts continue to grow. Sunshine Course helps disadvantages golfers and provides a platform for turf investigations that help golf course superintendents Lemont, IL. *Settle 8-26-11* cultural practices during July you were in big trouble. Worst case scenario was aggressive cultural practices to produce fast greens stayed in place for that Big Tournament and that Big Tournament fell during the third week of July. Well then, hang on for THAT ride. The ride goes beyond the expectations of golfers and is the reality of accepting the fact that we are never in complete control when it comes to the weather. It is understanding that each season we must watch turf health suffer whenever a volatile summer weather pattern (heat + humidity) gets stuck above our heads at (Insert Name) Country Club. All I can say is that I really appreciated the final summer ride that simply said “August, 2011”. I'll gladly wait in a long line for that ride.

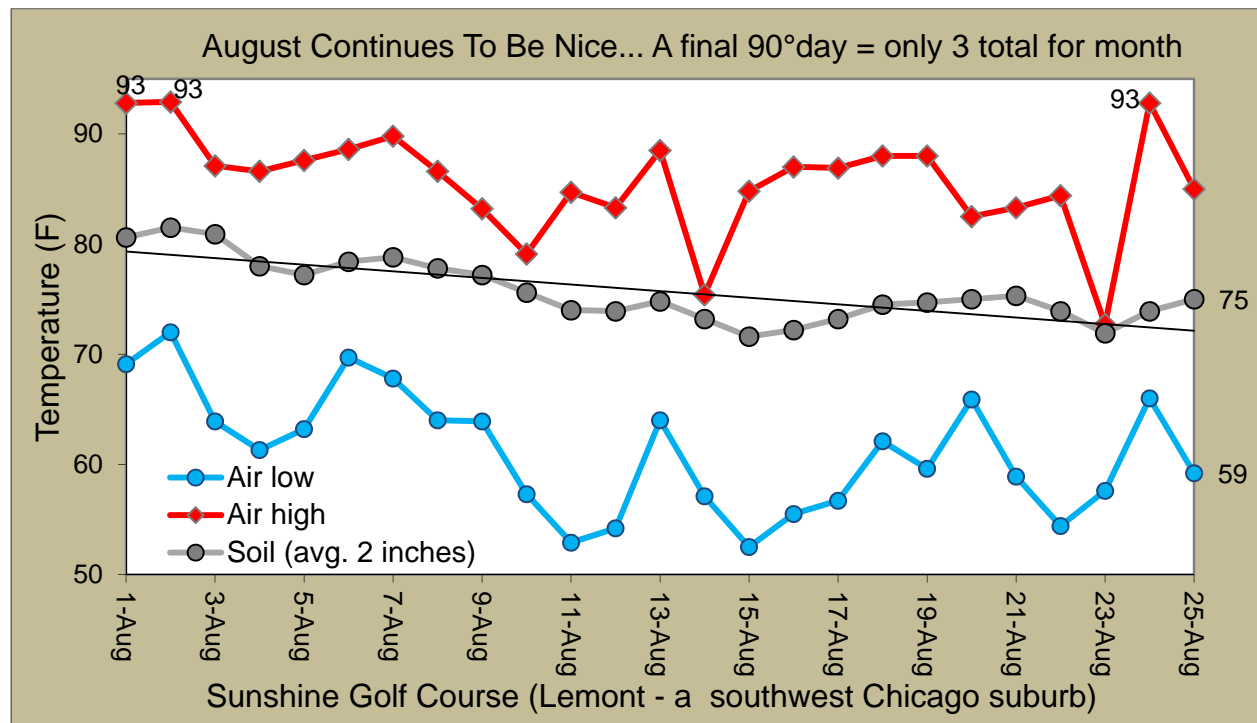
Weather, Memories of July

It delivered floods not to mention significant wind damage. That's a heck of a ride and if you wanted to go to a theme park and get scared to pieces just get in line. I will give you a small clue and tell you the big white sign with black letters will simply say "July, 2011". It's a popular ride because it's so scary and the kids really like that. But wait, it's not just kids in this line. If you look closely the line is full of grown men and they all happen to look like they spend a lot of time outdoors. Each will have one or more similar characteristic, a nice tan, a ballcap and a fine pair of sunglasses – best money can buy. Yep they're golf course superintendents. I can say that I really appreciated the other ride that simply said "August, 2011".

Weather, Notes 8-26-11 Fri Settle/Sunshine

85/59, rain 0.0, soil 75.0. From a day that hit 93 to a low of 50s the next day. For Sunshine it was the 3rd day in the 90s for the month. The first two days were like the others and all were exactly 93. The soil temps should now begin to drop. The forecast is cool from here on out with highs in the 70s by the end of Aug. No new knews on diagnostics other than we saw summer patch erupt on greens. Again fallout from July – supe had to keep greens wet because no-roots-Poa required it so. Therefore, it also meant the first few weeks of August saw lots of bentgrass physiological decline and summer patch of *Poa annua*. This would have been the second case recently where a sand-based green was with a lot of summer patch throughout the surface. It acts as a crown rot on Poa greens.

Meanwhile Biltmore Country Club is reporting excellent conditions with complete fairway turnaround and great 'catches' of bentgrass seed and new roots. Two Golden Rules to live by as a superintendent: 1) location, location, location (before you take the job the greens better have had a sensible architect). 2) communication, communication, communication (self explanatory).



I Liked Central IL This Week - I Saw Different 'Issues'

Thursday, Aug 25, 2011 Diagnostic Blog <http://cdgaturf.org/blogs.asp?blogid=3&id=29&pid=4>

I thought it would be neat to share what I saw while attending a turfgrass field day on Tuesday this week in central Illinois. Dr. Bruce Branham was kind enough to invite the entire CDGA Turfgrass Program to attend.

Central Illinois: We traveled 2 1/2 hours south to the University of Illinois and the environment is more different than you might imagine. For example, while we were experiencing flooding in July, Champaign-Urbana was experiencing little to no rain. You see, Illinois is one of those really long states. It represents many different environments and from north to south and you will span three different USDA zones from tip to tip. In Chicago, you will see an almost exclusive use of cool-season turfgrasses (e.g., Kentucky bluegrass, creeping bentgrass, and tall fescue). Chicago is USDA zone 5 where the average annual low is -10 F to -20 F. In far southern Illinois you will see intensive use of warm-season turfgrasses in places like Carbondale (e.g., bermudagrass, buffalograss, and zoysiagrass). Far southern Illinois is USDA zone 7 where the average annual low is 0 F to 10 F.

Central Illinois is in the middle and so they can use both cool- and warm-season turfgrass species. Most of Illinois falls into USDA zone 6 where the average annual low is 0 F to -10 F. To have flexibility is a good thing, but sometimes it is not. In turf we call that a transition zone and it can be heck to grow cool-season turf well AND it can be heck to grow warm-season turf. It all depends on the weather and in 2011 the ability to grow cool-season turf has been challenging? But then there is my world where I scout for issues with my head down. Here's what I saw in central Illinois and I liked it! Needless to say the issues were different than what Chicago turfgrass managers had faced this season – namely flooding (us) versus drought (them).



Dr. Tom Voigt shows field day attendees an NTEP bentgrass variety trial, Urbana. *Settle 8-26-11*

Tim Sibicky, MS – TSibicky@cdga.org Manager of Turfgrass Research

Fairway Creeping Bentgrass Cultivar Trial Update – Reduced Fungicide Inputs

Objective: Determine susceptibility and performance of creeping bentgrass cultivars in the North Central Region using a reduced fungicide input program to control dollar spot disease on fairways.

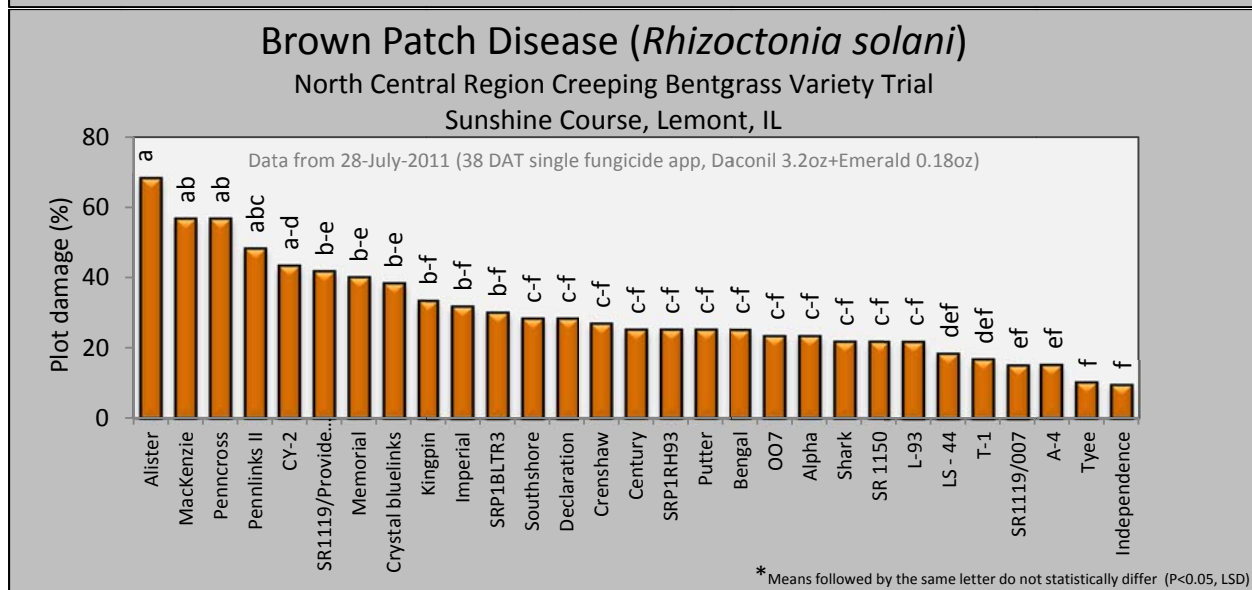
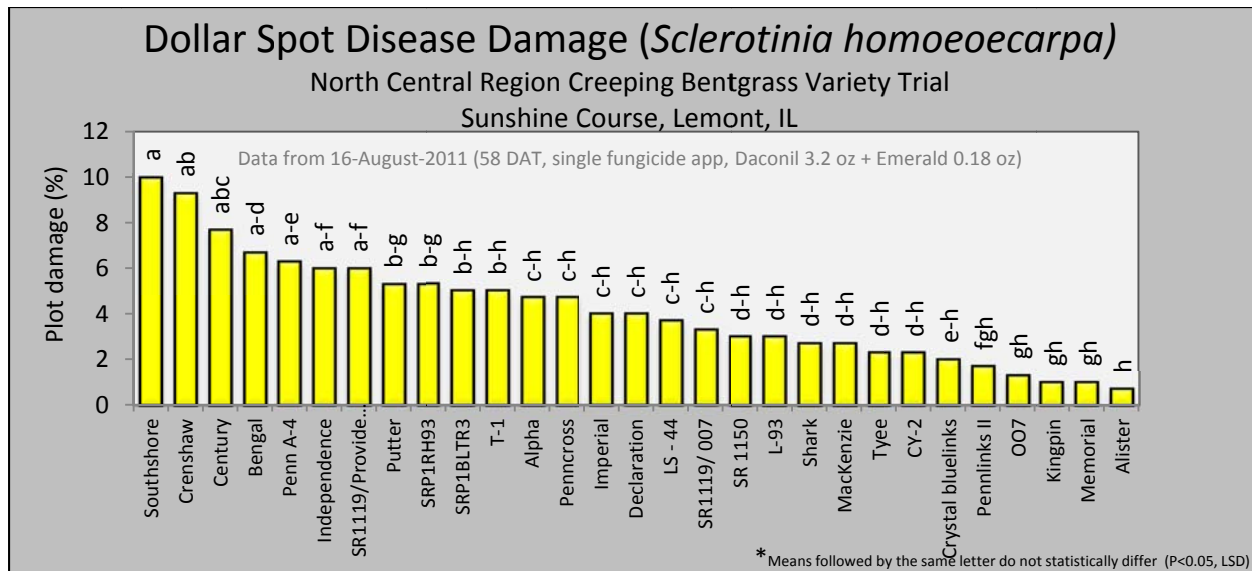
NCERA Collaborating Investigators: Eleven universities and the CDGA Turfgrass Program

Background: Creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*) is used extensively on golf course fairways throughout the cool-season regions of the United States. It is typical for variety trials all throughout the country to use management practices where all diseases are controlled for comparison. Until recently, there is limited available research in cultivar testing for reduced fungicide input programs. Today, many golf course superintendents are looking to cut costs and reduce inputs to their largest acreages of highly managed turf, the fairways.

Materials and Methods: Twenty-four different varieties of creeping bentgrass and one colonial bentgrass are being evaluated. Two Blends are also being tested under the names Dominant X-treme7 (SR1119 plus OO7) and Dominant X-treme (SR1119 plus Providence). The CDGA Sunshine Course serves as the Chicago location and plots were established during the fall of 2008 into the spring of 2009. Beginning on August 2, 2010, plots were split, leaving half untreated while the other half received fungicide input (Daconil Ultrex 3.2 oz + Emerald 0.18 oz) based on a 5% dollar spot damage threshold for the cultivar Declaration. In 2010, two fungicide treatments were made, June 1st and August 2nd. In 2011, dollar spot disease in the Declaration plots reached the 5% threshold on June 29th prompting the first fungicide application and the second application followed on August 16th, or approximately 58 days after the initial application.



Carl Hopphan sees the NCR bentgrass variety trial with signs, Lemont, IL. *Settle 7-16-11*



Results: Three seasons of data have indicated several varieties of creeping bentgrass that stand out under reduced management inputs. We have found the top performers for 2009-2011 visual quality to be Kingpin, Crystal Blueinks, Memorial, Declaration, OO7, Pennlinks II, CY-2, and Penncross. Those that have struggled include Imperial, Century, Crenshaw, Independence, Bengal, and Penn A-4, and much of their downfall is related to the unacceptable levels of dollar spot damage that developed. Alister, the only colonial bentgrass variety, has also struggled in the test, but not due to damage from dollar spot disease. Colonial bentgrass is a species notorious for its susceptibility to brown patch disease caused by the pathogen *Rhizoctonia solani*. For example, at the peak disease nearly 70% area in Alister plots was affected by brown patch.

Future: Take-home message – plant breeders have made great improvements to not only visual characteristics of the plant (i.e., texture and color), but also genetic improvements for disease resistance. If we can reduce the need or dependence on the chemical fungicides, using natural genetic resistance, environmental risks can be lowered and money can be saved. It makes sense when 80-90% of a golf club’s fungicide program is geared to control a disease called dollar spot.

Final Images – Flowers



Thanks. Univeristy of Illinois put on a really nice Turfgrass Research Field Day. *Settle 8-23-11*



Dr. Bruce Branham currently has three graduate students working on projects. *Settle 8-23-11*

Website weekly blogs: Weather, Research, Diagnostics – www.cdgaturf.org
Derek, Tim, and Nick plus Chris and Niki, The CDGA Turfgrass Program