

Energize Your Fungicide

Managing Windy Conditions With Lower Spray Volumes

A Case Study at The Club at Strawberry Creek

Course Overview

- Private club
- Matt Kregel, Golf Course Superintendent
- Located in Kenosha, WI
- 18 holes
- Designed by Rick Jacobson
- Opened spring of 2006
- Links style course

Regional Climate and Soil Conditions

- Full sun, very warm summers
- Changing, very windy conditions
- Heavy, clay soil

Course Profile

As a links style golf course, The Club at Strawberry Creek, in Kenosha, WI, is unique to southern Wisconsin, and features rolling mounds and berms of fescue grasses and few trees. Once a completely flat, 150-acre strawberry farm, a million and a half yards of dirt were moved to construct the rolling, but very playable, golf course.

With expansive landing areas, members find that the new course plays generous off the tee, but the challenge comes with 128 bunkers, the need for a short game, and greens with quite a bit of undulation.

Being only about eight miles from Lake Michigan, constantly changing winds affect play on the golf course. “It’s amazing what the wind can do,” says Superintendent Matt Kregel. “Certain days your hard holes play a little more easy, and then other days the hard holes play that much harder.”

(continued on reverse)





Challenge

Being such an open course, it can get very warm and windy throughout the day with average wind speeds ranging from 15 to 20 miles per hour most days of the year. This gives Matt and his crew limited time very early in the morning to do spray applications on the course's 50 acres of new bentgrass. "I currently have just one 300-gallon sprayer," says Matt, "and the one thing that has constantly been against me is the wind conditions. I never imagined in my wildest dreams how windy it could be out here. It leaves us with a very small window to get that application down."

Higher spray volumes of water are often recommended to maximize fungicide efficacy. For Matt, this would mean doubling the number of spray tanks and adding more labor, which the windy conditions at Strawberry Creek just wouldn't allow. Matt wanted to get the same, if not better performance from his fungicides, but at lower spray volumes.

Product Used and Benefits

According to Matt, about the same time that the new bentgrass was growing in, Precision Laboratories introduced its new SYNC™ Fungicide Activator. After learning more from his distributor and Precision sales reps, as well as talking with Dr. Randy Kane from the Chicago District Golf Association who conducted research on the product, Matt felt that SYNC would fit into his program.

Matt added SYNC into his tank mix, and sprayed at about 50 gallons of water per acre, about half of the recommended spray volume for most fungicides. "We are getting full control at lower spray volumes," says Matt. "The turf is staying disease free, it's thriving. SYNC is doing everything you expect and want it to do."

The research behind SYNC also made an impression on Matt, particularly how it prolongs the activity of the fungicide. He sticks to a three-week spray schedule, mixing fungicides with his growth regulator, and has not had to spray in between. This, even under the extreme disease pressure of the last two years in which other superintendents in the area have seen reduced fungicide control.

"SYNC is a necessity in my program," says Matt. "And it's very economical too. I figure it adds less than \$9 per acre. In my opinion, adding SYNC to your spray program is a no-brainer."



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