

# CHEMICAL LOG

## Slit Injection Effective for Mole Cricket Control

**W**ith its heavily wooded fairways, finely manicured greens, and multitude of lily pad-covered water hazards, Windance Country Club, near Gulfport, MS, offers far more than a simple round of golf. Playing through its 18 holes is like taking a walk through a nature preserve.

Windance is a challenging to maintain as it is to play. "Our biggest obstacle is that we are built on a flood plain," explains superintendent Jim Kwasinski. "In 1993 we had to close the course 17 times due to flooding."

The unpredictable, often heavy rainfall that annually inundates the Gulf Coast is difficult enough for Kwasinski, but all that water further challenges his insect control strategy. "Because Windance is a low-lying course surrounded by wetlands and residential areas, we have to be especially cautious when applying pesticides," he says. "Safety is our primary concern."

Forever fine-tuning his insecticide treatments, last year Kwasinski slit-applied Mocap® 10G to control mole crickets. Relatively new to Mississippi, slit application uses a modified slit overseeder to place granular insecticides below the soil surface.

"The treatment creates a barrier that mole crickets have to pass through while tunneling," says Kwasinski. "This ensures that the pests come into contact with the product."

Because slit application places the insecticide below the surface, the risk of exposure to people and wildlife is reduced. In addition, slit application may lower the potential for off-target movement during heavy rains.

Kwasinski first heard about slit application from colleagues in Florida who have used the technique to control mole crickets for several years. "Mole crickets aren't as bad here as they are in Florida, but they are capable of causing considerable damage," he says. "They're our number one pest in southern Mississippi."

Using soap flushes, Kwasinski determined that peak nymphal activity at Windance occurred during late June last year. "It's very important to use the soap flushes to time your application," he asserts. "You want to hit them when they are young because that's when they're most vulnerable."

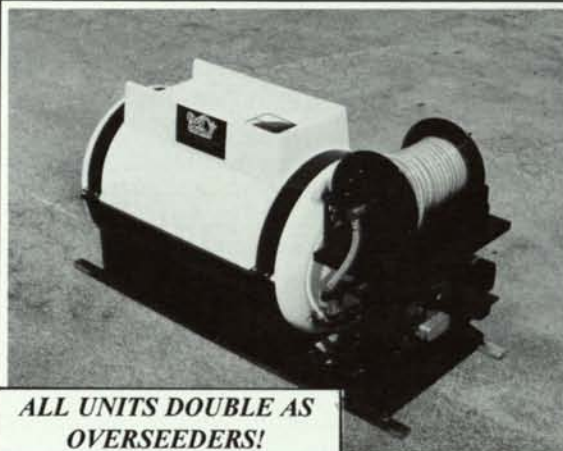
Before application, Kwasinski irrigated the course. Moist soil is easier to penetrate, he explains, and the moisture helps activate the material.

In all, Kwasinski treated 55 acres of fairways and roughs, and almost six acres of greens and tees. The results were impressive. "We found very little mole cricket activity on the fairways for four weeks after treatment, and we experienced no problems with lateral movement of the product from the slit-applied areas, despite heavy rains," he says. □

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