Bipolaris

▷ Causal Agent: Bipolaris spp.

▷ Susceptible Turfgrass
  Warm season turfgrasses.

▷ Symptoms
  • Irregularly shaped brownish green to black lesions may appear.
  • Severely infected leaves begin to die back turning tan to dark brown.
  • Irregularly shaped patches of infected foliage may range from 5cm to 1m in size.
  • Chlorosis may occur in infected foliage before the leaf turns brown.
  • Extensive crown and root rot may occur in severe infections.
  • Plants may lose vigour, becoming weak and flaccid.

▷ Conditions Favouring Disease
  • Foliar blight and lesions occur during cool, wet periods from autumn to spring.
  • Crown and root rots may occur in warm humid weather throughout summer.
  • Possesses a wide temperature range of activity depending on the Bipolaris species.
  • More than 10 hours a day of leaf wetness for several consecutive days.
  • Poor air movement (high humidity in the micro-climate).
  • Excessive nitrogen fertiliser.
  • Excessive thatch and loose leaf clippings provide a source of food for the fungus.
  • Any stress situation such as drought, herbicide injury or heavy traffic can increase the severity of the disease.

▷ Management Tips
  • Maintain healthy turf through proper fertilisation. Pay particular attention to potassium and nitrogen levels.
  • Irrigate infrequently and deeply.
  • Avoid late afternoon or evening irrigations.
  • Do not allow the turf to become extremely dry during warm weather.
  • Increase air movement.

▷ General Comments
  • Bipolaris is most commonly a disease of turf growing in stressful conditions with a poorly draining surface.

▷ Distribution
  Found in all states of Australia.

• Avoid herbicide applications during critical periods of disease activity.
• Disperse traffic in high traffic areas.
• Mow turf at a height recommended for the turfgrass species.
• Improve turf drainage.