



GREEN SECTION RECORD

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PLAYING DEFENSE IS A STRENGTH, NOT A WEAKNESS

SOMETIMES KNOWING WHAT NOT TO DO IS MOST IMPORTANT.

Keith A. Happ, senior agronomist, Mid-Atlantic Region



Weather is, by nature, unpredictable and many times one must react to how turf responds to adverse conditions.

Golf course superintendents try to prepare for every possible scenario when conditioning turf for play. However, the weather is unpredictable and we often find ourselves reacting to how the turf responds to adverse environmental conditions. It is impossible to prepare for all potential weather factors. Dealing with the unexpected and reacting to turfgrass response is a big part of golf course maintenance. Playing defense is essential at times to successfully maintain the course in a consistent manner.

For the golf course superintendent, playing defense begins with a good offense. Implementing that offense means having the time and resources to strengthen turf health and prepare it for play. Doing the right thing at the right time, or backing off and not doing something when environmental conditions warrant, can make all the difference in turf performance as the season unfolds. Written golf course maintenance standards should define the criteria for turf performance. The scheduling of aeration, mowing frequency, and where and when water is applied to each playing area are examples of important practices included in written maintenance standards. It may seem like an oversimplification, but aeration stimulates root growth, timely irrigation allows roots to be maintained and well defined, and reasonable course maintenance standards help ensure that turf health is not compromised by an irrational conditioning request or demand.

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BUDDY UP - REDUCE SINGLE RIDER GOLF CART USE TO IMPROVE TURF HEALTH AND QUALITY

Bud White, director, Mid-Continent Region



A fivesome using five individual carts is an example of unnecessary wear damage to the turf and soil compaction that often requires additional resources to correct.

There is no doubt golf carts have been a major component of the golf industry in the U.S. for many years and probably always will be. In fact, many golf facilities today could not survive without revenue generated from golf cart rentals. However, we know there is a detrimental side to golf cart traffic, predominantly increased turf wear and soil compaction. And it is not just routine traffic patterns that are the problem because players today seem to be so much more liberal in where they drive carts. I have observed instances where golfers will drive a golf cart where they typically would not venture with a four-wheel drive Jeep! With all this said, there is a relatively new issue with golf carts that needs to be addressed.

In the last four or five years, there seems to have been a significant increase in golfers using carts as singles. During Turf Advisory

Service visits to golf facilities, I frequently see a foursome of players using four carts, or even fivesomes with five carts. I have even observed married couples playing together using four private golf carts. When I asked each group why they chose to do this, the common response is "it is too difficult to move my stuff to another cart."

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CAN'T STOP YOUR BALL ON THE GREEN?

ARE THE GREENS TO BLAME OR IS IT YOUR GAME?

Brian Whitlark, agronomist, Southwest Region and **Matt Pringle**, Ph.D, manager of research and development, USGA Technical Department



A modified baseball pitching machine was used to fire golf balls into the turf with a range of speeds, spins and angles.

In preparation for any USGA national championship, especially the U.S. Open, Senior Open, Women's Open and U.S. Amateur, putting greens are managed to provide firm and fast conditions. Firm surfaces encourage players to approach greens from strategic angles based on the shape of the green, hole location and surrounding topography and hazards. Firm putting surfaces emphasize the skills of players hitting well-executed golf shots, and rewards them accordingly. In other words, firm putting surfaces help distinguish golfers playing the best amongst their peers. Soft greens, on the other hand, allow players to "throw darts" and such conditions negate much of the intended course strategy and setup. Daily play golf is much different.

Whether at a municipal golf course, a high end daily fee facility, resort course or an elite private club, most golfers prefer soft greens. Why? Because softer conditions make golf easier. Soft putting greens allow

inaccurate and loose approach play to suddenly become acceptable or even well-played golf shots. But when golfers cannot stop their ball, suddenly the greens themselves are the scapegoat.

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REGIONAL UPDATES



Northeast Region

Prelude To The Season - Superintendents are busy with late-season topdressing, fungicide applications and installing putting green covers. Sub-freezing nighttime temperatures combined with dry weather this fall have been favorable for readying turf for the upcoming winter. [Read More](#)



Mid-Atlantic Region

Snow Mold Weather is Near - Superintendents will soon decide if and when to apply snow mold fungicides. Darin Bevard provides some tips on when is the right time to to apply snow mold fungicides. [Read More](#)



Southeast Region

The Eagle Cam at Harrison Bay Soars Again - The Harrison Bay eagle project is back on and better than ever! [Read More](#)



Florida Region

Leaf Spot Disease on Greens - Recommendations on how to best deal with leaf spot disease during this time of the season. [Read More](#)



North-Central Region

The Dreaded Donut - What to do if you found the dreaded dry donut around fairway sprinklers during this summer's severe drought. [Read More](#)



Mid-Continent Region

Fall Management Suggestions - The arrival of cool weather in the region allows superintendents to turn their focus to projects and planning for 2013. [Read More](#)



Northwest Region

The U.S. Open - It is Coming in like a Freight Train -Take a tour of Chambers Bay (host of 2015 U.S. Open) and learn about the various changes made to ready the course to challenge the best golfers in the world. [Read More](#)



Southwest Region

Take a Breath of Fresh Air This Winter - Regardless of turf species, it is important to vent greens during the winter. [Read More](#)

GREEN SECTION NEWS NOTES

>> BEVARD NAMED DIRECTOR OF MID-ATLANTIC REGION

>> GREEN SECTION INTERNSHIP DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 14, 2012

>> ZONTEK HONORED WITH ENDOWMENT FROM PENN STATE

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