



GREEN SECTION RECORD

VOLUME 51, NUMBER 15 | JULY 26, 2013

Optimizing Bermudagrass Putting
Green Health & PlayabilityTodd Lowe, senior agronomist, Florida Region
USGA Green Section
June 10, 2013

WEBCAST SERIES

A USGA Green Section Webcast By Todd Lowe. If you experience an error when loading, please return to the mailing and try the link again.

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA

BUT CAN THE COST BE ABSORBED?



Superintendents are required to present cost estimates that are high on efficiency. There is little to no wiggle room for unexpected requests, which means it is not realistic to expect that added costs can be absorbed once the budget is approved. .

All too often assumptions are made about the completion of projects, course adjustments, or improvements without full consideration of the established maintenance budget. Adding, moving, or removing bunkers, building new tees, making the course more playable, or even trying to enhance the first impression of the facility by landscaping the grounds are just a few ideas frequently posed by committees or course officials during Turf Advisory Service visits. In most instances, these ideas are great and worth considering.

However, it is important to ask, "Can the

change in maintenance or cost of a project be absorbed by the current budget, or will additional capital funds be necessary?"

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ALL THINGS CONSIDERED – A USGA STAFF OPINION

INTERMEDIATE ROUGH: A WASTE OF TIME AND RESOURCES



Eliminate the intermediate rough and maintain the primary rough at a height of 2.0 to 2.25 inches and definition between fairway and rough becomes more visible, pace of play improves, and resources can be saved.

It was just a few years ago that the superintendents of nearly all the golf facilities I visited were looking to take their courses "to the next level." Then the economy changed. Those same facilities are now watching their bottom lines very closely, and many are desperately seeking ways to cut their maintenance budgets.

Interested in an easy way to save money? Eliminate the intermediate rough.

The intermediate rough increases cost, increases potential for turf problems,

provides negligible benefits, and adversely affects definition, or contrast, between fairways and roughs. Sounds like an easy decision, doesn't it? Not so fast. Golfers see intermediate roughs on television and are under the impression they are important to have at their courses. A close review of the facts will prove otherwise, in most cases.

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GETTING KIDS ON THE COURSE

GCBAA RAISES OVER \$50,000 FOR STICKS FOR KIDS



Many organizations in golf are engaged in efforts to bring young people to the game. This week, one organization stepped up in a big way. The Golf Course Builder's Association of America (GCBAA) completed their summer meeting in Monterey, California. At this meeting, their membership and corporate sponsors

contributed more than \$50,000 to a program that puts golf clubs in the hands of young people. Sticks for Kids, a junior golf outreach program for youth aged 5-18, provides each Sticks for Kids location with clubs, bags, teaching and marketing materials, and instructors for participating courses. To learn more about this program and the GCBAA, visit www.gcbaa.org. The USGA Green Section congratulates the GCBAA and its membership for their support of the game.

FORE THE GOLFER

USGA Green Section educational content and resources developed specifically with the golfer in mind.

GOLF CART ETIQUETTE

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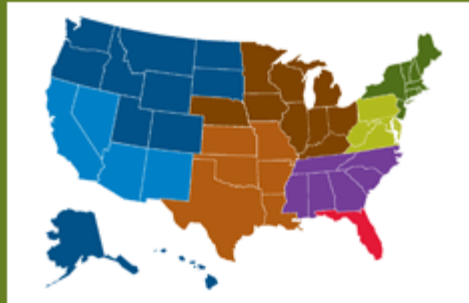


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REGIONAL UPDATES



MID-ATLANTIC

Record-setting rainfall totals in June and early July combined with extreme summer heat spells trouble for putting greens already compromised by poor growing environments, insufficient drainage or thatch problems. Turf decline and wet wilt are difficult to prevent when problems are already present, so begin making plans to improve growing environments and get aeration and sand topdressing programs back on track this fall.

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SOUTHEAST

Two highly qualified students had the opportunity to travel with USGA Southeast Region agronomists for a week.

Highlighting the weeklong road trip includes on-site visits to golf facilities to discuss bermudagrass management during hot, rainy weather, divot recovery on small tees, converting bentgrass to ultradwarf bermudagrass, and a pre-championship visit to Pinehurst Resort (Course No. 2).

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NORTH-CENTRAL

As putting greens mature and organic matter dynamics in the soil profile change, so too must aeration procedures designed to target thatch and organic layers in the rootzone. Learn how one golf facility must switch aeration strategies on their bentgrass greens after falling behind on aeration and topdressing programs in the past.

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NORTHEAST

Most of us are familiar with the sports adage that "offense sells tickets, but defense wins championships." See how this applies to golf facilities when turfgrass survival is on the line because of extreme heat and oppressive humidity currently being experienced in the Northeast.

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FLORIDA

The USGA is again partnering with the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) to establish a new putting green trial for warm-season grasses at 11 research sites throughout the South, Southwest and transition zone. There will be 15 bermudagrass, 11 zoysiagrass and two seashore paspalum entries in the field tests. A multitude of factors and characteristics are of interest, including winter hardiness, but the primary goal is to achieve Stimpmeter readings of 8 to 9 feet while reducing inputs.

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SOUTHWEST

By analyzing existing irrigation coverage in fairways and roughs, Half Moon Bay Golf Links in California has found a practical and inexpensive method to convert out-of-play areas of the rough into naturalized grass that requires less irrigation and maintenance.

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NORTHWEST

A "playlist" of instructions mounted to greens mowers at Fargo Country Club (N.D.) eliminates confusion by ensuring that crew members mow putting greens in the correct order and in the right direction every day of the week.

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MID-CONTINENT

For many golf facilities in the Mid-Continent Region, severe drought conditions continue to persist. Golfers should be interested to know that less water will result in less turf color but not necessarily a reduction in playing quality.

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FORWARD TO
A FRIEND

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The *USGA Green Section Record* (ISSN 2156-5813) is published biweekly via electronic mail by the United States Golf Association®

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