



To keep from creating a cup changing nightmare after aerification, fill the old cup hole with top-dressing mix. Photo by Darren Davis.

It's In The Hole

Aerification... "A necessity, a customary cultural practice, a tool to improve putting greens."

Unfortunately, no matter what terms we use to define, defend or explain the process of aerification to golfers, it will most likely always fall on deaf ears. Aerification is, and will remain, an unpopular and often despised practice by the golfing public. What you may not know is that aerification can be equally as unpopular to the individual who has to change the hole placement on the day after the greens are aerified. If you have performed the task you know exactly what I mean!

The biggest problem that I have seen encountered by the crew member on "the morning after" is installing the new plug into the old hole that has been crushed or caved in by the aerification equipment. With the aerification process, core removal and topdressing, it is impossible to avoid crushing the void where the previous day's hole had been placed.

Leaving the old cup in, which would help stabilize the hole, is not usually the answer as the aerification tines would inevitably bang

into the metal or plastic hole-liner. There is, however, a very simple solution that you may have overlooked in your operation.

Once the cup has been removed in preparation for the aerification, the existing hole can be filled with soil. By filling the hole, the turf surrounding the void is held in place and the area does not collapse when a tire runs over it. As some of the soil mixture may remain in the hole the following day when a new plug is placed in the void, it would be prudent to fill the hole with a soil mixture compatible to your existing subsurface.

Simple, common sense you say. Yes. Maybe, but I guess having changed many a pin after aerification when the hole was not filled in, I know that I am not the only one out there facing this scenario.

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