

Turf Management

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Not Ready for Prime Time Seedings

The prime time for spring seeding of cool season turfgrasses has past. Normally February 15th through March 30th are considered the best dates in which to spring seed turfgrasses in Maryland. The environmental conditions during these dates are usually more favorable for seed germination and seedling establishment. Later in the spring, temperature and moisture extremes may create an unfavorable environment for the seedling grasses. Therefore the chances of a successful establishment are far greater when seeding before April 1st, but by no means does this mean that a later planting won't be successful.

Many situations arise where there is a need to establish a turf cover during the late spring and summer months. In some areas, like road cuts or strip mined land, permanent stabilization of the soil can be achieved by using species which establish themselves well during hot, dry periods. Weeping lovegrass and Korean lespedeza are two which are frequently used. In other areas, like around newly constructed homes or commercial buildings or on a new tee or fairway, the establishment of turf-type grass species is more desirable. Many counties require soil stabilization around newly constructed buildings before occupancy. Generally there are three options to consider in these cases, and they include sodding, establishing a warm season grass or seeding a cool season grass and living with the consequences.

Sodding is probably the best alternative to establishing a cool season turf during the late spring and early

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Cup Placement Rules - How Important?

Rules on where to place a cup? There are none—official, that is. The USGA, Godfather of golf play and playing conditions, has wisely only offered suggestions and left good judgment to you. There is little question about the importance of proper cup placement and proficiency in chancing the location. Important it is because 54 shots in each 18-hole round are concerned with pin placement—18 to the green and 36 on the green—a mere 60 to 75% of all the strokes a golfer should need.

Here's what the USGA says:

1. If possible, have the cup at least five paces (15 feet or so) from the green's edge and further than this from any sand bunker.
 2. Place it in as near a level area as possible and level over a six foot diameter if possible. The ball, when putted should not gather speed or have excessive break. The player should be able to putt boldly for the hole.
 3. Always use good judgment to permit fairness for the golfer.
 4. Avoid tricky cup placement.
- Other things to consider:
5. Qualifications of the players.
 6. Size and condition of the green.
 7. When changing cups, avoid leaving a raised edge around the rim.
 8. Make sure the old hole surface is as low as the surrounding green surface.
 9. So you have built in problems that don't give you much choice. Just do the best you can and maybe the devil will forgive you anyway. Remember, there are plenty of others in the same boat.

Did You Know?

The rules of golf say a golfer does have a few rights while playing a round. Some of these are as follows:

- The right to remove man-made objects from bunkers before playing a stroke.
- The right to replace a club broken in the normal course of play.

- The right to bend fixed or growing things in the act of fairly taking the stance.
- The requirement to re-drop if a dropped ball rolls into a hazard or out of bounds.
- The requirement to place a ball to be placed or replaced in a similar lie of the original lie is altered while the ball is lifted.

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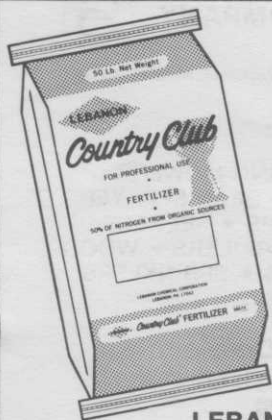
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summer. The advantages of using quality sod include: 1) immediate erosion control, 2) immediate green surface with no dust or mud problems, 3) quick use capability, 4) high probability of establishment success, 5) freedom from establishment weed problems and 6) the purchase of a product with tangible quality. As with seeding, sod is best established on thoroughly prepared (plowed, disced, firmed) soil which has been supplied with adequate fertility and lime. Another important consideration, especially in a late spring or summer planting, is adequate watering. Newly laid sod should be watered daily for a period of about two weeks to insure optimum survival. After this time, normal irrigation practices should be followed because of poor summer rooting of transplanted cool-season grasses.

The second alternative, establishing a warm season turfgrass is also a good choice. Tufcote bermudagrass and Meyer zoysiagrass are warm season grasses adapted to Maryland and best established from mid-May to August. If there is an immediate need to establish a turf and use considerations and/or personal preferences do not rule out a warm season turfgrass, then late spring to summer are the ideal times to establish these grasses.

The third alternative and the most risky is seeding a cool season turf. As seedings are attempted later in the spring the chances of success often diminish to zero. Late April or early May seedings may be moderately successful if properly mulched and careful attention is paid to irrigation practices. Using species which germinate faster than Kentucky bluegrass like tall fescue, red fescue or turf-type perennial ryegrass may also be advantageous. These seedings are usually severely thinned by summer heat and drought. They can however provide an adequate turf cover until fall, when they can be thickened by overseeding.

The use of annual ryegrass or an unimproved perennial ryegrass variety should be considered as a last resort and should be considered as a temporary measure for soil stabilization and *not* as a lawn turf. These two species produce undesirable turf under Maryland conditions. They are coarse, bunch-type grasses which continue to thin out year after year. Overseeding desirable grasses into a stand of annual or unimproved perennial ryegrass leads to a clumpy, non-uniform turf. Therefore, if these species are seeded in the summer as a "temporary" lawn they should be completely removed by using a non-selective herbicide. Two herbicides labelled for this purpose are glyphosate (Roundup) and dalapon (Dowpon M). Reseeding can begin 2 weeks after the application of glyphosate or 4 weeks after the application of dalapon. Therefore, time the application so that reseeding can begin in the August 15th to September 30th time period. Then re-establish or renovate the "temporary" lawn using recommended cool season turf varieties (Agronomy Mimeo 77 - Turfgrass Recommendations for Maryland and Virginia) at the best time of the year for cool season turf establishment—the FALL.