

SAND TOPDRESSING FORUM COMMENTS

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HISTORY OF WALNUT HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

- 18 hole private golf course built in 1920's with push up greens
- 2 greens rebuilt in 1960's using some sand rototilled on site.
- 4 greens rebuilt in late 1970's as part of an expansion program.
- 12 greens are original construction.
- All greens have various amounts of sand.

ORIGINAL DESIGNER

- Joe Roseman, son of the founder of Roseman Mower Company, who built 12 courses in his career.
- Assistance provided during construction by a MSU soil scientist.
- Average green size is 5,000 sq. ft.

GRASS SPECIES ON GREENS

- Annual Bluegrass, Washington Bentgrass, German Bentgrass and Creeping Bentgrass.

DRAINAGE

- Both surface and internal is reasonably good.

HEIGHT OF CUT

- Down to .125 of an inch. Mowing 7 x per week.

TOPDRESSING

- Converted to 100% sand in late 1970's, based on work of Madison & Davis, University of California.
- Problems associated with obtaining a quality topsoil and time available to apply and process material.
- Aerated aggressively.
- Topdressed at a heavy rate during the coring period. We are on a three week schedule of light topdressing.
- Vertical mow and brush weekly. Presently have a 3" sand buildup.

REDUCTION OF CORE CULTIVATION

--Backed off on core cultivation in 1980. In the summer of 1982 a number of golf courses were experiencing problems with Black Layer.

SUMMER OF 1982--BLACK LAYER

- Black layer appeared in September
- Core cultivated with 3/8" tines to address black layer problem
- Greens have not been aerated since.

CRITERIA FOR CORE CULTIVATION

- Fine textured soils which may lead to compaction. Restricted root growth.
- Layering problems. Could lead to poor water infiltration.
- No resiliency or shot holding ability.
- Thinning of turf.
- Excessive thatch.
- Other: poor aeration/incorporation of fertilizers, etc.

NEGATIVE OF CORE CULTIVATION

- Disruption of the putting surface.
- Creates seedbed for weeds (Poa annua).
- Labor intensive.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

--Four greens constructed in the late 70's have a high percentage of Poa. The greens were hard and therefore we aerated frequently to soften the surface. It took about five years to reach the level of resilience that the older greens had. I believe that the frequent coring contributed to the high level of Poa.

CURRENTLY

- No unusual problems with the green.
- Localized dry spots are a problem as well as disease and insect outbreaks.

IN CONCLUSION

- No core cultivation since 1982 has worked for us.
- We have not sold our aerators.
- Each golf course is unique when it comes to the makeup of soil in the greens mix.
- This fall we plan to rebuild a green. We will attempt to develop a soil mix similar to the mix in our older greens.
- With many more greens constructed with sand today, no core cultivation may be an option to consider.