

Rebuilding Greens (Cont.)

surrounds, install a wicking barrier. A wicking barrier also serves a second purpose of keeping warm season grasses rhizomes from invading the rootzone.

Daylight the main drain tube at a high point behind the green in a valve box. This allows easy access to clear any future blockages. Also run the drain through a catch basin or valve box on the downstream end as an observations point to inspect flow after heavy rains or leaching. Placing a wire in each trench and stub it into the valve box where the drain is daylighted. This allows you to find exact locations with tracing equipment in the future. Also, placing a wire at perimeter of the green cavity will allow you to maintain the exact shape in years to come as mow lines

move or warm season grasses encroach.

If using a wheel tractor or skid steer loader to place the gravel, fill drain line trenches first and then place 3/4" plywood over them to protect tubing from being crushed. It is not advised to place or spread rootzone mix with a wheel tractor, it is too easy to spin the tires and mix the sand and gravel.

Finally, continue to sample and test topdressing materials regularly. In reality each delivery of topdressing purchased should be tested! If you budget can't afford lab tests then get a set of sieves, a good scale, and a calculator monitor particle size distribution. It does no good to go through all the pain, agony and hard work of constructing greens properly if

you just screw it up with bad topdressing. (You certainly wouldn't use contaminated motor oil in a brand new engine now would you?)

As mentioned earlier, be sure you are receiving what you specify and don't be afraid to let suppliers know when you are not happy with their product. Don't be bullied, don't accept any materials that are not within the guidelines. If you don't monitor the standards for your course, why would your supplier? If suppliers know you are testing on a regular basis, they will be forced to deliver a quality product. If you would like a more extensive quality control checklist, give our office a call, we have an excellent article written by Jim Moore on this subject. ♦

Golf Writers Encourage Communication

By Bob Costa

A panel discussion among three local golf writers and a golf course superintendent triggered a lively debate at the June meeting held at Adobe Creek. Ralph Chatoian - Marin Independent Journal, Bruce Meadows - Santa Rosa Press Democrat, Doug Saunders - Independent and Rick Hansen - Windsor Golf Club maintained a captive audience during the hour long discussion. The group of writers encouraged golf course superintendents to get to know their local writers. Developing a relationship with local writers and other members of the media, they felt, provides a conduit for communicating with golf course staff. As a result, future stories

involving the golf course are likely to appear more accurate and technically correct.

Hansen, who's course plays host to a Nike event spoke first hand about how his relationship with a local writer resulted in a fair and accurate story regarding course conditions. He felt because of the relationship he had established, every effort was made to obtain the facts before the article went to press. And when it did, the story was more forgiving than he expected.

Doug Saunders, who has written several articles for Golf Course Management Magazine, emphasized how golfers awareness and curiosity about course conditions has grown,

increasing the exposure of the superintendent. As a result, he believes there is a need to educate golfers about the nuances of course maintenance. Saunders went on to say that superintendents need to be recognized by members of the media as the spokesperson for course conditions. "All too often," he said, "the General Manager, and Head Professional are quick to accept this role." Meadows, brought laughter to the group when he likened the superintendent to the crazed uncle who lives out back. "It's time for superintendents to step forward and be recognized," he said.

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