



Do The Right Thing, At The Right Time



Light and frequent applications of sand are beneficial to putting surfaces. They smooth the surface, dilute organic matter and create a more resilient playing surface. This maintenance practice should not be dictated by the golf calendar.

Golf courses are living, breathing organisms. They evolve as factors like the weather and maintenance practices change. Often, the most successful golf course superintendents and golf facilities are those that adapt – i.e., they realize that focusing on course maintenance at the appropriate times yields the most consistent playing conditions.

As a golf course changes, the one constant that remains is a full golf calendar. Golf facilities rely on regular play, outings and local or regional tournaments to provide revenue. Busy golf calendars often provide little leeway for superintendents to perform basic yet critical maintenance practices such as aeration, topdressing and fertilizer applications. Routine management practices that improve playing conditions like topdressing, grooming and verticutting are often pushed aside to avoid disrupting golf events.

Understandably, disruptive maintenance practices like aeration can be frustrating. Aeration can conjure negative emotions even before a golfer plays the course. Therefore, this procedure is sometimes scheduled around the golf calendar – i.e., when it will be the least disruptive to play and not when it is of most benefit to the grass.

Regardless of anything else, properly timed maintenance practices are the only way to meet golfer expectations on a consistent basis. Golf facilities that recognize this consistently provide the most reliable playing conditions by performing important maintenance practices at the best time for the grass.



Conversely, performing maintenance practices when they are convenient for the golf calendar instead of when they are most beneficial for the grass can lead to long-term problems including slow turf recovery and weed infestations. To minimize their negative effect on playing surfaces, it only makes sense to perform disruptive maintenance practices when conditions favor rapid turf recovery.

Conditioning expectations rarely change because of a busy golf calendar, so performing all maintenance procedures when they will provide the most benefit is the best choice. Choosing to schedule maintenance around the golf calendar could cause poor results leading to reduced playing conditions and unsatisfied golfers. Remember, the most beneficial procedures are often the most disruptive.



Performing necessary and beneficial maintenance practices when the golf calendar allows instead of when they are best for the grass could result in delayed recovery.