



Decisions Are Made Every Day—What You Decide Not To Do Can Make A Difference

By Keith Happ, regional director, Central Region

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Managing turfgrass in the North-Central region can be a challenging task. Every winter a game plan for turf care and course presentation is developed. This game plan is based first and foremost on growing healthy grass. There are, however, a number of variables that are very difficult to factor into the final equation for success. This season, much of the North-Central region has been experiencing wet and dry cycles, high and low humidity, and temperature fluctuations that dictate how turf care programs can be implemented. We frequently hear the question, “Don’t you think there is too much grass on the greens?” This is a great problem to have, right?

There are times when greens will play differently and pushing too hard at the wrong time of the year could result in catastrophic results. Vertical mowing when greens are too wet, too dry, or under heat stress can result in rapid, self-inflicted turf decline. When conditions are harsh it is what you choose not to do sometimes that makes all the difference. “Live to fight another day” as they saying goes. In so doing, at least there will be grass on golf’s most important playing areas: the greens.



We cannot control the weather but we can control how turf care programs are implemented during difficult weather conditions. Trust your instincts to not push for unsustainable greens speeds during periods of soil saturation.

The late Stan Zontek was well-known for telling golf course superintendents to, “Trust your gut. If you don’t feel good about what you are about to do, or asked to

do, to the grass, don't do it." These words still hold true. Rely on your instincts about growing grass under stressful conditions. Do not hesitate to call our offices to ask for an opinion to help make decisions based on the long-term performance of the grass. All too often we see grass that is bruised and weakened because there was a request for a special course setup despite the fact that soils were saturated and nighttime temperatures remained high. We cannot control the weather but we can control what we choose not to do when the grass is under stress. Trust your instincts.

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