



## In The Final Analysis

By David Oatis, director, Northeast Region

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Agronomists and golf course superintendents frequently (sometimes incessantly) talk about the weather, but that is because the weather has such a profound effect on turfgrass performance and playing conditions. “Extreme” once again is the word that best characterizes the weather we have experienced this year, and as expected, its effect on turfgrass performance, playability and maintenance budgets has been huge. Some courses have had very successful years while others have struggled, and this raises questions and causes confusion among golfers and course officials. How can one course struggle and another one perform well? There literally are hundreds if not thousands of reasons, and regardless of how your course fared this year, now is a good time to start taking stock. Don’t wait until this year’s struggles are a distant memory. Extreme weather conditions frequently expose the strengths and weakness of your course and now is the time to start the campaign to fix fundamental problems that will forever limit the performance of your turfgrass. For more information on this subject, read [Factors Affecting Success](#).

For many courses, this year’s weather once again highlighted the effects of poor grass growing environments, insufficient drainage, and inadequate irrigation. Document these problems now, because memories fade as turf health rebounds.

- Recent rains are easing drought concerns in many areas of the region, and for some, drainage is becoming an issue. However depleted water sources, water quality, and salt water intrusion issues are still a concern.
- Annual bluegrass weevils continue to confound. Yet another wave of damage has been experienced at many courses, and one has to suspect that a final wave will yet occur in late September and October.

- Recognize that aeration and topdressing can temporarily mask the onset of all kinds of turf damage (i.e., anthracnose, summer patch, weevil damage, etc...)
- For most golfers there is no good time to aerate, but a sound and effectively timed cultivation program is the foundation for good turf. Resist the urge to scale back cultivation programs; doing so will cause much more disruption in the long run.
- If you don't have a tree management program, you should. Fall is the perfect time to evaluate the trees on your property and to determine where work is needed. Read, [Man's Friend or Golf's Enemy?](#), for more information on this subject.

As the fall and winter seasons approach, reflect on the goals of your maintenance program and assess whether they are realistic. A reasonable blend of good playability and good reliability is the goal most should pursue, but it means different things in different locations, in different climates, and under extreme weather conditions.

While the Northeast agronomists have been extremely busy we are never too busy to hear from you. Give us a call if we can help and best of luck for a successful season.

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