



Green Section Record

REGIONAL UPDATE

July 3, 2020



Golf courses are in great condition and the weather has been ideal for golf.

STOP READING THIS UPDATE AND GO PLAY GOLF

BY PAUL JACOBS | AGRONOMIST, NORTHEAST REGION

The golf seasons of 2018 and 2019 were largely characterized by frequent rain events and the challenges that come with them – disease, weeds and soft playing conditions, to name a few. After the last two seasons, soft and saturated conditions started to seem like the norm. Who would have thought that most of the cart restrictions we would see up to this point in the year would have nothing to do with rain at all?

It goes without saying that 2020 has been a unique and challenging year. However, the last few weeks have offered some of the best golf conditions one could ask for. Most of the Northeast has seen very little rain, which puts maintenance teams in control of course conditioning as long as the irrigation system is reliable. Minimal rain doesn't always equate to great golf conditions, but it is certainly better than too much rain.

Are some courses dealing with excessive cart traffic due to single-rider cart mandates? Absolutely. However, most of the impact from this traffic is in out-of-play areas and at least golfers are out playing. Furthermore, keep in mind that cart traffic is usually more damaging to wet or saturated turf than it is under dry conditions.

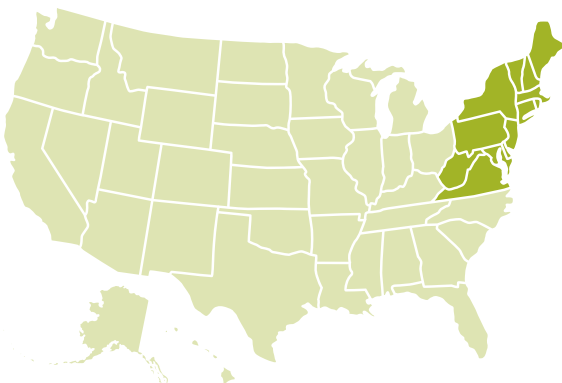
Are some courses seeing non-irrigated areas, such as primary rough, start to go dormant? Absolutely. But don't forget, dry rough and fairways offer the opportunity to hit long drives and different types of approach shots. These are all good things from a golfer's perspective. Additionally, the dry conditions that are causing the primary rough to go dormant are also creating great aesthetics and playability in high rough fine fescue areas.

Managing turf in the summer months will always be challenging for one reason or another and dry conditions are sure to highlight any inadequacies in the irrigation system. But, all things considered, the past few weeks have been great for golf and most courses are holding up very well.



For information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

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