



Demonstrating basic maintenance operations is a great way to educate golfers about the time required to complete these programs.

DEMO DAYS

BY LARRY GILHULY | AGRONOMIST, WEST REGION

It is a common annual occurrence at many golf courses across the country: golf equipment suppliers descend on a golf course to display the latest clubs that will change your game. They are often called “Demo Days” and are a staple of the golf industry. What about the same idea for golf course maintenance? Does the concept of hosting a “Demo Day” of maintenance practices at your golf course make sense? How would it be done and who would be invited? On a recent visit to the Country Club at Castle Pines in Castle Rock, Colorado, this idea proved to be a very effective way to educate golfers and decision-makers about basic putting green maintenance programs.

During this USGA Course Consulting Service visit, golf course superintendent Sean McCue staged basic putting green maintenance practices for facility decision-makers, interested golfers and staff members from other departments. Practices on display included vertical mowing, debris removal,

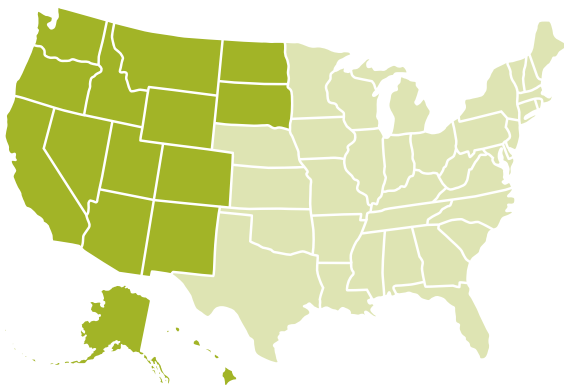


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light sand topdressing, dragging the sand into the turf canopy by hand and mowing the surface. Each of these tasks was done on a different putting green as the group toured the golf course and at each location it was explained just how important each practice is to create firm and smooth putting greens. This was a great way to educate a very large group of decision-makers that changes on an annual basis. It also helped them understand how these programs take a considerable amount of time to complete without player interference.

Another advantage of this method of educating this group of golfers and decision-makers was including it as part of the USGA Course Consulting Service visit. Having an outside source of information backing up the programs being conducted is a great use of this service. As you look to the future, make sure to contact your regional USGA agronomist and have them assist you with your own “Demo Day.”



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