

golferus no repairus diviticus

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Schaumburg G.C.

Right after the Midwest Clinic last November, Kevin DeRoo called me. He asked me if I wanted to help on the Education Committee this year. I said OK. At our first meeting, he asked if I (we) had ideas for any speakers for this year's meetings. I said OK, I would look for someone. Then he asked for all of us to write an article for the "Ask the Expert" column. I said OK. Kevin is starting to bug me. So here is my article.

Our course is a public course; and since we are, we get more than our share of turf abuse. Since we rebuilt the course in the

early '90s, we have waged an endless battle with the terrible turf menace called the *golferus no repairus diviticus*. Since replacing a divot is not a popular or glamorous job, our players don't do it. They never see a pro player on TV repair one; their caddies do. So they assume they jump back on their own. In fact, I had one golfer tell me that's what the grounds crew is for. Now don't get me wrong, I know this is the "Ask the Expert" column, but I am no expert on divot control. I do know what is working for us, and that is what I will share with you.

When we rebuilt SGC, we went with Penncross seed on our tees on a USGA soil mix. I thought that divot recovery

would not be much of a problem. I was wrong. In the spring of 1996, we began the battle of the divot. After calls to other superintendents in researching what they use for mix and how they go about repairing the divots, we developed our own seed and soil repair mix and program.

Our mix is definitely a home-brewed recipe. We mix all of our stuff in a small electric cement mixer that is normally used by masons to mix up mortar. First, we buy sand that is dyed green. In 1996, we did not use green sand, and the golfers did not use plain sand as much as they use the green sand we started using in 1997. We have been getting it in 50-lb. bags

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The April golf event will be a four-man scramble. Olds scramble format. Prizes for net and gross scores. The net score will be figured by points assigned for handicap ranges. Only two players per team may have negative

handicaps. Maximum handicap for a team is 12+ and the minimum is 0. Each player's drive must be used at least two times during the round.
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Scott Speiden, superintendent of Itasca C.C., sent the following pictures of how he and his friends relax during the off-season. They have gone on a few upland game hunting trips and have been very successful, as the pictures can attest.
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Scott Speiden and Jordan.



Sean Creed, Oak Brook G.C., with his retriever.



Gunther and Charlie Bruglar.

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from Greensmix. This helps us in storing the sand, but is very expensive. We have plans on purchasing the sand in bulk this season to save money. Remember, the following products are what have worked for us. I am sure there are other ways and products to use, but this is what has done well here at SGC.

First, we pretreat the seed using Germinex: 4 oz. by weight to 25 lbs. of seed. We do this in our cement mixer with a plastic bag tied over the opening (it is a little bit dusty). Mix this for at least 45 minutes. Dump out the treated seed, and set it aside for later. Then mix in the empty mixer: two 10 qt. buckets of green sand, 64 oz. of pretreated seed, 96

oz. of Sustane 5-2-4 fine fertilizer, and 128 oz. of Greenschoice soil Amendment. Mix this for 15 minutes, dump the mixture out, and start the process over.

Now for the program. We have the everpopular seed/soil bottles on every tee box. We have the buckets on all par 3s (thanks, Jim Burdett). Every morning, we have two employees on each nine holes set up the course. Part of their job is to repair and replace the divots. They take with them 2- to 5-gallon buckets of the seed mix. They refill the bottles and then fill in the previous day's divots. We also have two bottles on each golf cart and tell the players to fill in their divots in the fairways. This has worked very well for us. In fact, we used almost 21 tons of the green sand last year.

The next level is to keep informing the golfers to replace their divots or to use the seed/sand mix. Education seems to be the key to really get this off the ground. In fact, last summer a golfer stopped me while he was on a tee and asked me why our ash trays were so hard to use. I asked him to explain this to me; and he said the bottles with sand in them have a curved top, and it was hard to get his cigar butt in them. Duh. It is time we explain what we want them to do.

I know that we all need to keep on our divot problems, but I thought I would share what we have done here and see if it can help you in your fight. Now I can tell Kevin that I am done, and he can stop bugging me. ■