

NORTH FLORIDA

DIVOTS

By EDDIE SNIPES
San Jose Country Club



Have you ever gone to bed hungry? Waking up in the morning can be a real problem. It is very difficult to greet the new day when your body is running on empty.

Turfgrass in some cases can be equated biologically with the very people that take care of it. North Florida Superintendents don't like to think about going to bed hungry and they don't like their turfgrass to go into dormancy undernourished. Early spring green-up can be directly related to the type of fall fertility program that one has.

Fall fertility programs in turn can be affected by economics, temperature of region and desired effects for the course.

Low budget courses can not always take advantage of a good high nitrogen fertilizer application in the fall. With the turf going into dormancy a matter of a few weeks

away, one may think this is the time to save money. One may save money, but in the spring, the turf may prove to be lethargic in nature from lack of fertilization.

North Central Florida reached temperatures in the teens last winter. Superintendents in that region find that increased amounts of potash in their fall fertility application helps their turf to resist cold damaging temperatures and support early spring green-up.

Resort courses in the North Florida area, because of entire course overseeding programs, continue normal fertilization practices. This is easier done for courses that are near the North Florida coastline as opposed to courses more inland. Cold temperatures and frost damage are naturally not as severe and a deep dormancy turf condition does not exist where temperatures are 5 to 10 degrees warmer than inland temperatures.

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Golfers comparing courses must be made aware that the differences in color doesn't always mean the greener course is better play-wise. Problems resulting from excess feeding are too numerous and as professionals we are already aware of them. The goals and aims of the members — owners, as well as the budget, **MUST** be considered before player critique along this trend of thought can be valid or warranted. The present economical status will more than likely equalize the greenness of golf turf everywhere, all other factors being equal. ■

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Superintendents in North Florida may not be able to agree on what particular fertilizer is best for their region and circumstances, but they do agree that some form of fall fertility is essential in bringing turf out of dormancy into a healthy condition. Remember, dormancy means "inactive" not dead, and inactive turf requires nutrients in the soil for growth stimulation. ■

NORTH FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

The North Florida Golf Course Superintendents Chapter annual meeting was held July 16, 17, and 18 at the Ponce DeLeon Lodge & Country Club in beautiful St. Augustine.

Chip Powell of Deerwood Country Club handed the gavel to new president Jeff Hayden of Turkey Creek Country Club. Jeff's tenure will be aided by Vice President Robby Robbins (Gainesville G & CC); Secretary, John Perham (U. of Florida CC); Treasurer, Tom Prescott (Timuquana CC); External V.P., John Hayden (San Jose CC). Directors for the chapter are Dick Johnson (Ponce DeLeon CC), Jim Reemelin (Zaun Equipment), Frank Sharro. Past President, Chip Powell (Deerwood CC).

Three days of tournament golf, good food, and fellowship were enjoyed by North Florida members and families. A very special thanks to Golf Course Superintendent Dick Johnson and his staff. The golf course reflected Dick's hard work and effort as the course was in excellent condition.

Dick was a superior host and we again thank him. ■



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