

# Treasure Coast "Tide"ings

By JAMES P. CALLAGHAN  
Riomar Country Club

After the headaches of the past summer, superintendents along the Treasure Coast are welcoming the cooler weather with open arms. Many supers are going to execute measures to insure that their courses will pull through the upcoming cool season.

At Riomar Country Club, greens are not overseeded. Because of our proximity to the Atlantic (you can't get any closer) and average daily play of only 130 rounds during the season, the 328 greens at Riomar survive fairly well during the winter months. Cost vs. benefit really doesn't justify overseeding. If our greens were Tidwarf, there would be no question that overseeding would be a necessity.

In order to keep the bermudagrass greens in peak and appealing condition during cool weather, I carry out the following maintenance procedures that have worked with excellent results in the past:

1. Avoid excess verticutting after September. If you let your greens go into the winter with just a little thatch layer, that layer will act as a blanket resulting in a slightly higher soil temperature needed for roots to continue their functions.
2. Make sure that potassium levels are adequate in the soil. This will help to provide for a healthy root system.
3. Use nitrogen sources such as IBDU, Ammonium Sulfate, etc.. that fix nitrogen in the soil at low temperatures.
4. Keep soil moisture adequate. Moist soil will not cool as rapidly as dry soil.
5. Use of chelated iron and micronutrients will aid in retention of green color during cool periods.



## SPREAD—RITE, INC.

Custom Spreading

DOLOMITE  
FERTILIZER  
SULPHUR

P.O. BOX 25527  
Tamarac, Fla. 33320

PHONE  
(305) 482-7224

6. If frost is in the forecast, spray greens with a wetting agent. This will prevent dew formation that subsequently freezes on the turf blade. When the air temperature remains above freezing, this procedure will prevent frost damage to the grassplant. (Remember, the cooling effect of dew evaporation even when the air temperature is slightly above 32°F will lower the temperature at the ground, resulting in frost.)
7. Light topdressing every second or third week will encourage the bermudagrass as well as mask (cover) any cold damage prevailing in the crown area.

At the John's Island Club, Lee Van Valkenburg, reports that foliar applications of fertilizers in the winter months have aided in keeping the bermuda vigorous. He said that whenever colder weather is on the horizon, Ferrous Ammonium Sulfate or Potassium Nitrate is sprayed on greens, green/slopes, trap banks, and tees. He continued, "when soil temperatures become low (under 55°F) foliar application of fertilizer provides an effective means of nutrient absorption by the grassplant."

Lonnie Stubbs, superintendent of the Sandpiper Bay Resort, is well known for his unique way of sprucing up the golf course during the cool months. This winter, Lonnie will spend almost \$5,000.00 on annual flowering plants such as chrysanthimums and marigolds to catch the eye of the golfer. "If a cold snap zaps your bermuda, scattered flowering landscaping will move the eye away from the brown grass," stated Lonnie.

Further to the south, Joe Snook reports that at Riverbend, much time is spent in the winter sprucing up the entrance area and the natural undergrowth scattered throughout the golf course. He commented, "If we can provide an entrance area that's in tip-top shape, we've made a good first impression." Out on the golf course, Joe goes as far as "grooming the palmettoes" to make everything look appealing.

The Treasure Coast Chapter Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association takes this opportunity to wish everyone a joyous holiday season and a healthy, prosperous New Year! ■

**ELECT**  
**JOHN P. HAYDEN**  
**GCSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**