

# DIVOTS

By EDDIE SNIPES  
San Jose Country Club



Top Dressing, "She ain't what she used to be."

The Golf Course at San Jose Country Club located in Jacksonville, Florida has a very long and rich history. The present 18 hole course was completed in 1927 by golf course architect Donald B. Ross. The semi-private course was used by guests that stayed at the San Jose Hotel. The hotel was situated one-half mile away from the clubhouse and set on a bluff overlooking the St. Johns River. The hotel now houses Bolles High School. The club was officially chartered in 1947 and went to private membership status.

What in the blue blazes does this have to do with top dressing greens one may ask? The 55 year growth of San Jose Country Club and the practice of top dressing run the same continuum. Top dressing did not begin to blossom as a potential maintenance practice until the 40's.



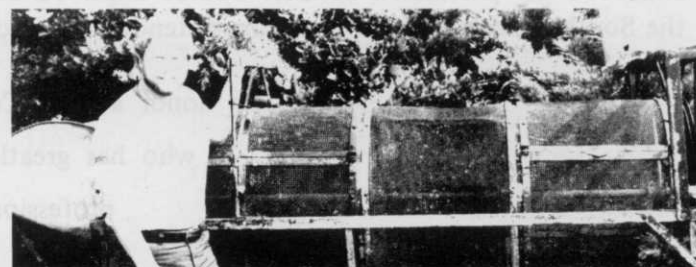
With the advent of a walking mechanized top dresser, the frequency and cost of top dressing became less and its benefits more obvious at San Jose. The greens are historical reminders of different superintendents philosophies on top dressing. Each layer of different soil in green plugs samples is evidence of their tenure at San Jose.

Today it is recommended that top dressing material be of the same consistency as the greens. This will help to prevent layering in the soil which allows for poor water and air distribution in the soil.



During this time at San Jose, top dressing was carried out with shovels and several men to distribute the top dressing material. This mode of operation was costly and time consuming. Top dressing procedures and San Jose Country Club at this time were in their infancy. One might speculate that in the 40's superintendents did not realize the full benefits of top dressing.

Today Dr. James Beard tells us that top dressing is utilized for (a) thatch control, (b) smoothing or leveling a turfgrass surface, (c) modification of the surface soil, (d) covering stolons or springs of vegetative plantings, (e) winter protection of turfs (Beard 73).

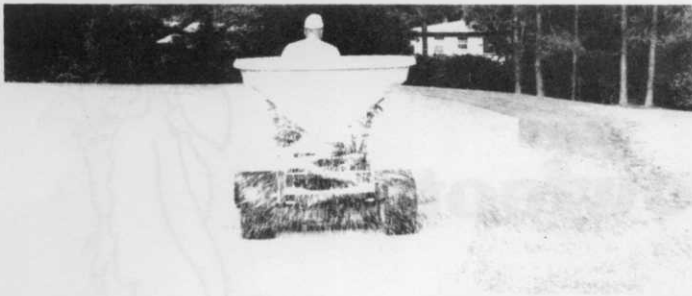


Top dressing used to be "homemade" at San Jose in a giant mixer. This mixer is now an artifact of days gone by. Today we buy treated (disease and weed free) material for our top dressing. The cost is far less to San Jose this way, in quality of material and in the man power it would take doing the operation ourselves.



(Continued on Page 66)

(Continued from Page 64)



Progress in the practice of top dressing at San Jose has now reached the state of the art. A maintenance practice that once took several men two to three days to accomplish can now be achieved in three hours by one man. The motorized riding top dresser with a 1,000 pound spreader attachment has brought greater speed, quality and efficiency to our top dressing program that will now increase in occurrence.



The present literature on top dressing points to many benefits that will help cut maintenance costs. Less disease, faster renewal of growth, less aerifying and better percolation are benefits that will save chemical, man power, and water expenses.

Top dressing practices at San Jose Country Club over the last 55 years have gone through different phases of development along with overall club development. It is progress made in our profession as in the practice of top dressing that helps us to do a better job for the members we work for and to enhance our professional capabilities.

## THE TURFGRASS INDUSTRY IN FLORIDA

The Turfgrass Industry in Florida, totaling 523 million dollars is equivalent to 24 per cent of the 1974 cash receipts from the sale of ALL farm commodities in this state.

This survey did not take into consideration the total cash receipts from Golf fees (Greens fees and golf car rentals). If these figures were added to the total effect upon the economy of the state, the Turfgrass Industry would unquestionably surpass all agricultural crops in Florida.

The Florida Turfgrass Survey reveals that our industry is only 11% smaller than the 1974 cash re-

(Continued from Page 65)

an equal amount of drive-under shelter directly across from area shown.

The large 50 x 100 metal building is used only for the Bay Hill Classic Tournament equipment, such as large scoreboards, 18 status boards, fencing to protect residential areas during the Tournament, and hospitality pavillion tents and equipment.



### A SIGN FOR EMPLOYEES TO OBSERVE

The above illustrates a sign as a reminder to all maintenance personal as they leave the maintenance facility in route to their responsibilities on the course. The sign reads: BE PROUD OF YOUR COURSE — SHOW COURTESY TO GOLFERS — POLICE FOR TRASH — SHOW PRIDE IN YOUR WORK AT ALL TIMES.

Regardless of the size of any maintenance facility, the most important factor is that it be neat, clean and organized as possible at all times, and from that you will see better attitudes and work habits throughout your entire staff. ■

cepts from all citrus, which has always been considered Florida's most important farm commodity group.

Turfgrass is 21% larger than farm income from oranges. It is 27% larger than cash receipts from all vegetables. Here is a condensation of the first Florida Turfgrass Survey.

A complete report can be obtained from:  
Florida Crop Reporting Service  
1222 Woodward Street  
Orlando, Florida 32803