

## AFTERWORDS

**“There is no season such delight can bring, as summer, autumn, winter, and the spring.”**

- William Browne

# Reflections on the Autumn equinox

**T**he hot, rainy summer of '91 with its warm humid mornings giving way to scorching mid-day heat followed by purple-gray thunderstorms rolling across the late afternoon

skies has been a reminder of what summers are traditionally like in Florida. June's summer solstice was but an exclamation point in a wet spring and summer.

The tropical bermudagrass covering our southern golf courses loved every minute of it. Unchecked by mowers unable

to negotiate the rain-soaked fairways and roughs, the turf challenged the perseverance of those who try to maintain it and those who try to play golf on it.

Maintenance schedules became erratic. Renovation projects were delayed. Golf courses under construction faced setbacks as finely shaped contours were washed out of proportion. Golf carts were banned from courses without tee-to-green cart paths. Playing conditions got a little ragged. Revenues decreased. We got those mean old summertime blues.

Relief is in sight! It started sometime in September. Imperceptibly at first, just the slightest decrease in night time tempera-

tures. The autumnal equinox marked the sun's passage into the Southern Hemisphere. Fall is on its way!

Soon you'll be donning that light sweater or windbreaker for those first few chilly hours before the day warms up. You'll be savoring that hot cup of coffee as you watch daybreak light up the clear, crisp autumn sky and plan the day's routine with your staff. *It must be time to overseed!*

Overseeding is that process which was invented to turn autumn's slower paced days of southern turf management into the stressful hectic days of summer. Just as the vigorous bermudagrass growth is slowing down and the turf is being manicured to optimum playing conditions, we spread cool-season grass seed over our courses so we will have something grow in the winter.

While the weather is more agreeable in the fall for both work and play on our courses, we still have our concerns. Storms accompanying cold fronts can wash the new seed off the greens and tees. Warm weather in November and December can dehydrate the tender cool-season grasses we are trying to cultivate. Increased golf rounds can wear out the new winter grass before it can get established. Lingering overcast skies give rise to disease conditions. Complaints of slow green speeds echo from the pro shop as cutting heights are eased up to give the new grass a chance to root.

Take heart! Don't despair! Once your overseeding is established you can sit back and relax and wait for winter with its ten zillion golfers and frost and freeze warnings.



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