

Superintendents, other agronomists level with roller expertise

The following is a list of practical recommendations for roller use, gathered from a survey of U.S. Golf Association agronomists, roller manufacturers and golf course superintendents. The list was presented by Scott Niven, CGCS, at Stanwich Country Club, Greenwich, Conn., at the 1994 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America show.

- The majority of damage caused from rolling is not over-use but operator error. Good training is imperative and operators

must be very conscientious.

- There are limits to how much rolling can be tolerated on heavy, high-clay-content soils. Sand-based greens can tolerate regular rolling, but still may show wear effects.

- If your greens weaken in the presence of extra stress, be very careful adding rolling to your greens maintenance program. This added stress could be very detrimental.

- All rollers are not created equal. There are significant differ-

ences from one roller to the next. Take the time to study and test a few rollers to assure you purchase the right one for your style of greens and surrounding areas.

- Double-cutting can be eliminated with rolling. But if you cut and roll at the same time, that equals about the same wear and compaction as double-cutting. However, rolling gives you a higher quality finish and more speed than double mowing will or virtually any other practice.

- If you cut (.140-inch height)

and roll daily for a special event, it is common to hold speeds of 11 and 12 on the Stimpmeter for each day. However, after four or five days, greens will show some significant wear and discoloration. Give them a rest.

- There are added labor costs if you cut and roll each time out. To save on extra costs, some superintendents have eliminated cutting on days they roll. This also reduces wear that rolling can create when you mow and roll the same day.

- The most common scenario shows that one day after rolling, 50 percent of the speed gained has been lost. One the second day, 75 percent of the speed is lost. Greens return to normal by day three.

- Superintendents with sand-based greens who roll five or six days per week have invariably raised their heights of cut to some degree. Some wear and yellowing can still be a problem, however.

- The preferred rolling schedules for those with bentgrass greens is either Wednesday/Saturday or Tuesday/Friday.

- Expect to lose cup placements due to a fairly large increase in speed. This can be a real problem on severely undulating greens or small greens where pin placements are already limited.

- No matter what type of roller program you're on, if the turf becomes weak from drought stress, heat or too much rainfall, you must be willing to discontinue rolling until the turf returns to a healthy condition.

- Top-dressing frequency can be reduced with roller use. Smoothing the surface is taken care of by the roller. This reduces bedknife wear from top dressing as well. Rolling after top dressing also presses the material into the turf and reduces bedknife wear for the next few cuts.

- Grooming, Verti-cutting and brushing can be reduced. These processes only need to be done to help eliminate grain as needed, which also helps reduce spike marks from golf shoes.

- Rolling greens after core aeration or Verti-draining improves can improve putting and speed up recovery time. Rolling newly sodded greens or tees also speeds establishment and improves the finish quality.

- After the greens have dried out in the spring, rolling can do a good job of smoothing the surface prior to the first mowings.

Cape Cod town appoints Passios

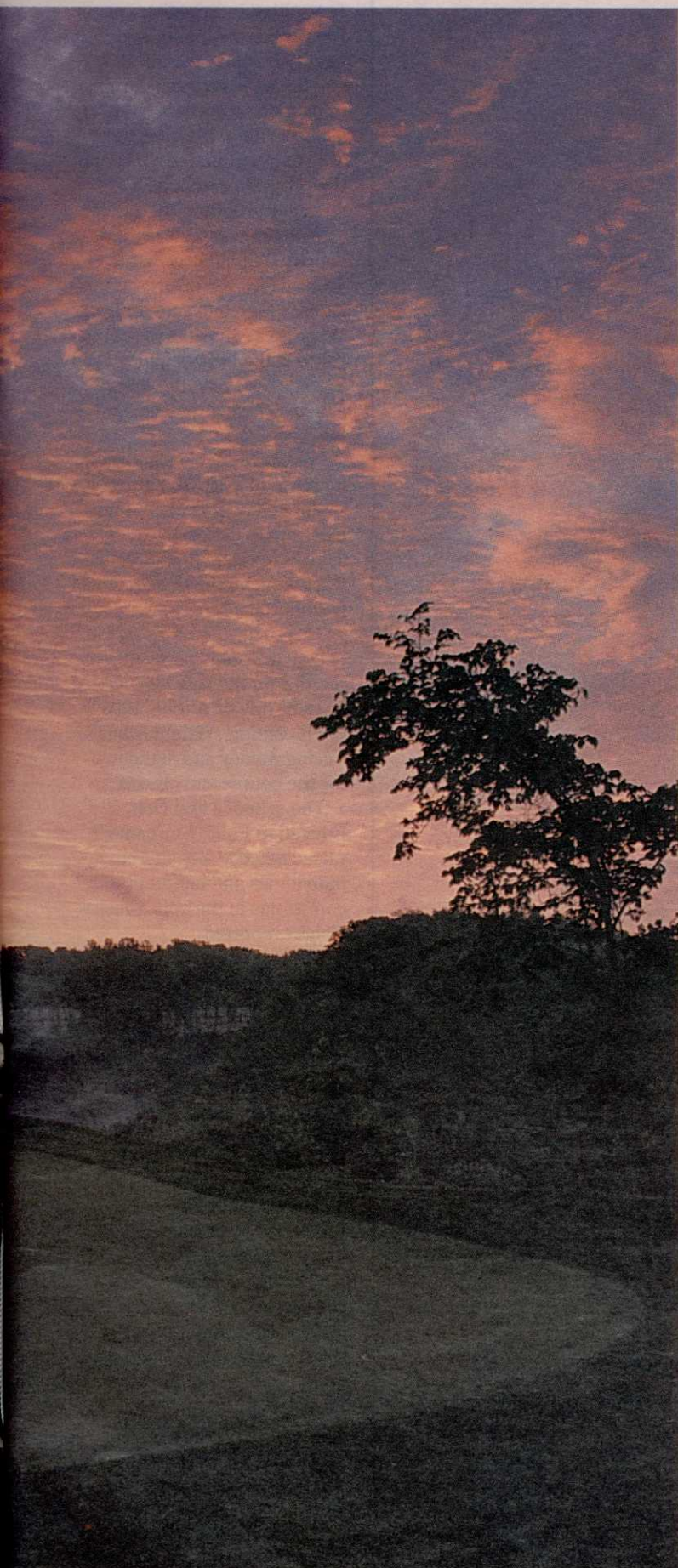
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Association of Cape Cod and past vice president of the New England GCSA.

He was a director of the GCSAA for three years, two of which he served as government liaison representing the organization in Washington, D.C.

His appointment by the Town Council came about, he said, because of his scientific background and work, which recently included obtaining BCC approval for the restoration master plan for his club, which contains a lot of coastal salt marshes.

He also parlayed a perpetual maintenance agreement for his club with BCC.



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