FINE SAND A CAUSE OF GREENS TROUBLE

Tropical Turf Tips from the Everglades Experiment Station, Belle Glade, Fla., says: "On most courses we have visited some of the greens must be watered lightly or they become soggy, with the result that they scald under a hot sun and are readily attacked by fungus diseases. A core of sod from such greens will usually show good root growth only in the upper 2 inches and no roots at all below 4. A really healthy green should have fine roots down to 12 inches.

"Slow absorption of water by the soil is a measure of poor soil structure, improper aeration and adverse conditions for healthy root growth. 'Over-watering is virtually impossible where adequate drainage is built into a green,' according to Fred V. Grau, Director of the USGA Green Section.

"Too often fine sand has been used in the construction and topdressing of greens. Later as organic matter decomposes in the sod, organic acids are formed which cement the fine particles of sand to form a tight layer which neither water nor roots can penetrate. Air space between the soil particles is very important for grass roots. Unless air is present in the soil in about equal proportions with water, the roots fail

to absorb nutrients, even in fertile soil, and root growth is stopped. Even on a properly constructed green the drainage can be ruined by a topdressing of marl, which forms a water-tight layer at once."

"Use coarse sand!" Timely Turf Topics for November, 1946, suggests that Builders' sand (used in cement) has been found to have the desirable characteristics for golf course construction and maintenance.

Grau says the small proportion of fine sand in Builders' sand is not objectionable but that material larger than .185" should be removed by screening.

WET EARLY SEASON HAS COMPACTED SOILS

There is an extreme possibility that serious trouble will develop this year on many fairways throughout the country due to the heavy rainfall that has been prevalent. The superintendent has been unable to mow as frequently as has been necessary and, when mowing has been accomplished, serious soil compaction has resulted.

There is a likelihood because of this increased soil compaction that Poa annua will increase on these fairways due to its habit of growth and of being able to thrive on heavy soils.

