

New Staple in Golf Course Construction — Vermiculite

Attention of supts. is being focused on vermiculite, a lightweight mineral soil conditioner now in widespread use after a prolonged period of research and testing.

Between vermiculite layers is entrapped moisture, which turns to steam when the ore is heat-



Vermiculite bags are opened and spread over new green areas.

processed, causing the layers to separate and form countless tiny air-cells. The cells are capable of holding substantial quantities of moisture and air when vermiculite is mixed into the soil.

Vermiculite's assets, it is claimed, include its permanence, as proved in soil plugs taken from greens several years after installation. Being all mineral, it continues to mechanically aerate soil indefinitely and doesn't change structure.

Supts. are employing vermiculite in two ways:



Vermiculite is then tilled into the soil.

(1) as a top-dressing for greens after mechanical aeration; and (2) as a basic ingredient in construction of new greens and tees, to improve soil texture, aeration, water-holding capabilities and drainage.

A fine grade of vermiculite, (No. 4, sold under trade name, Terra-Lawn), is used for topdressing. The fine particles flow readily into holes left by the aerator and by filling the holes with



Vermiculite spread and matted into green aprons at Bryn Mawr CC, Lincolnwood, Ill.

a porous, high-water-holding material, serve to prolong aeration benefits. A steel mat usually is used to help spread the fine vermiculite at the rate of two bags (8 cu. ft.) per 1,000 sq. ft. of area. Vermiculite tends to hold moisture at the surface and thus feed water to roots over a longer period of time, according to the manufacturer. As a result, watering may often be performed less frequently.

Use in Topdressing

Where fine vermiculite is used in a topdressing mix, the suggested rate of application is 9 cu. ft. per cu. yd. of topdressing mix.

In new construction a larger particle size vermiculite (No. 2, Terra-Lite) is employed. It is rotary tilled into soil to depths of 4 to 6 ins. Rate of application varies according to soil type:

Type Soil	Vermiculite
Sandy	40 cu. ft. per 1000 sq. ft.
Average	40 cu. ft. per 1000 sq. ft.
Heavy	80 cu. ft. per 1000 sq. ft.

Vermiculite is tilled into soil with other ingredients according to preferred practice.

Vermiculite is said to give better cushion, aiding root development and reducing water requirements. Edward Packer, Wyoming GC, Cincinnati, states: "Tees I rebuilt with vermiculite hold moisture better and require less attention." Norman P. Vickery, superintendent of Dublin Lake GC, Dublin, N. H., calls No. 4 vermiculite the easiest material to use to achieve proper soil texture in topdressing. At another N. H. course, Dartmouth CC in Hanover, Harry E. Sanborn credits No. 4 vermiculite with holding his greens during a severe drought which restricted watering for a 3-week period last year.

Manufacturer's Specialty Competition for Pros, Club Managers

Manufacturer's Specialty Co., St. Louis, Mo., manufacturer of Pro-Grip Non Slip is giving away, absolutely free, two \$200.00 diamond rings in appreciation of handling its product. One ring to be given to the golf pro and one to the supplier or salesman making the sale.

The competition is open to all pros or club mgrs. Entry blanks will be found in each carton of 1 doz. Pro-Grip Non Slip. There is no limit to the number of times you may enter. Awards will be made at the next PGA Meeting to be held in Dunedin, Florida.