

## Not Just Topdressing

**Q:** What should I use for topdressing my greens? I am new at this club and the greens are composed mostly of sand. The mixture was at least 5 buckets of sand, 1 bucket of sandy loam, 1 bale of peat moss. When I change the cup position there is no trace of loam or peat moss. The grass really grows but requires much watering and fertilization. Even now, when it should be a little dormant, I get plenty of grass clippings, almost the same as in the spring. When I topdress in the fall I would like to use more loam to form more of a base. What do you suggest? Our greens are seaside bent average size 5000 square feet. (Conn.)

**A:** It sounds as though you have achieved very nearly an ideal situation for growing bent. If you are able to obtain uniform growth of clippings throughout the season, I would not try to bring more loam into the soil. Rather, I would use somewhat less of the quickly available nitrogen fertilizer and gradually work into a program of using the insoluble, longer-lasting types of organic nitrogen. With such a program you will be able to reduce your watering somewhat and you will lose much less fertilizer through leaching.

It would help if you could submit a cup cutter core for examination. I would hesitate to suggest any change until I could see a sample of the soil in your greens. Such a sample should be sent directly to me at P. O. Box 8, College Park, Md. This will save re-shipping from GOLFDOM.

P. S. The soil core from your No. 9 green shows that your conclusions are sound. The soil is so very sandy that the cup-cutter core falls apart. You would do well to incorporate (not just topdress) additional peat and loam soil. The mixture may be 50-50, carefully worked into holes or slice marks made by an aerator or thatching machine.

By reducing the frequency of feeding a soluble fertilizer you can slow the growth to a more comfortable level. The grass in the plug which you sent seemed very healthy and there was a good penetration of roots. It would seem that the greens would hold a shot in almost any kind of weather.

## Care of Penncross

**Q:** We have five new greens of Penncross grass and would like to have a few answers on the care of them. They were seeded last fall and were mowed several times before winter. How should they be taken care of from now on? How close cut this spring and also what fertilizer program would you advise? The lime is neutral. Should they be verticut regularly for mat? We have to use dry method of fungicide. Please recommend what to use. We have been using ..... and ..... but on our old greens it doesn't control dollarspot too well. Will Chlor-dane control worms better than arsenate of lead? Could the old greens be reseeded with new Penncross over a period of a few years without digging them up? They are now mostly Colonial. Do the companies that make seed have any information on care of their products?



Trademark of Fred Grau (center), who underwent several operations last year to correct a spinal condition, is combination of putter and cane. It's checked for notches at GCSA convention by James E. Thomas (l), the turfmen's outgoing pres., and Lou Strong, the new PGA pres.

**Are there any books available that give a complete how-to-do on greens?**

**A:** Your Penncross greens should give you excellent performance under this program.

Mow daily at 3/16 ins.; never higher than ¼ in. Fertilize in early spring with 19 lbs. of solid ureaform to 1,000 sq. ft. Repeat in early fall. Apply just after aerating. During summer use 25-0-25 soluble fertilizer or similar at 2½ to 3 lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft. whenever the grass appears to be hungry and in need of nitrogen.

Verticutting or arothatching will be necessary occasionally to reduce mat and thatch. Do this only in cool weather. Topdress with a coarse sandy mix after each aerating or arothatching.

Your dry fungicides will be much more effective with the suggested fertilizer program. Continue with those you have been using. The old greens are probably so badly thatched that the fungicides cannot get to the disease. Try to get them arothatched this spring before fertilizing.

Stick to arsenate of lead for pest control. Not only does it control worms but Poa and chickweed as well. Keep phosphorus low.

Many old greens are being converted to Penncross by reseeded. This will be successful only if the thatch is removed, preferably by a machine which cultivates, aerates, and removes thatch all in one operation while leaving the green perfectly puttable. Seed Penncross at ¼ lb. per 1,000 sq. ft., no heavier! Topdress lightly after seeding. The ureaform fertilizer can be used as a "mixer" for the one-half pound of seed to make it easier to spread uniformly.

The book, "Turf Management" by Musser, is a good one to have on your shelf. A new revision is in the making. I do not know of any management guides put out by seed companies.

You will do well to have soil tests made once a year so the levels of nutrients are balanced.

Keep Penncross turf on the dry side — soak well when water is needed but let surface dry as much as possible until golfers complain.