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Grau's Answers

(Continued from page 65)

applications be harmful to these areas? I made one application of 10-6-4 in Feb. I would like to make another application before going into a regular summer feeding of long-lasting organic nitrogen.

Our weather here is adverse this spring. For example, today it is snowing and the temperature is 28 degrees. It certainly is not the kind of weather we need for the recovery of desiccated areas. (Illinois)

A.: Desiccated areas on greens that show growth should be given every chance to recover with a minimum of disturbance. It would be inadvisable to apply topdressing with arsenate of lead added since this might retard the new, weak growth. Later, when recovery is complete, the leaded topdressing may be used.

If some of the areas appear very slow, or dead, you would do well to re-turf with sod from the nursery. This is one of the valid reasons for having a nursery.

Do not seed bent ahead of a lead-topdressing mixture. The lead will retard germination of the bent seed.

You do not state the rate of 10-6-4 that you applied. Assuming that you used it at a rate to supply ½ to 1 lb. of N, you may repeat the application now prior to your regular summer program of using slow-release N.

With temperatures below those needed for growth and recovery, re-sodding damaged areas should be of first consideration.

How About Top Dressing?

Q.: We have heard that topdressing greens is not as important as previously thought. Is this true? Is it a common trend to eliminate topdressing?

As to aerating or vertical mowing, could you tell us which is most necessary, or if both are required? How soon after new greens are planted should these machines be used? We have Pennecross greens which were planted in July, 1959. The soil mixture of our greens is one part black dirt, one part peat, and two parts sand. (Minnesota)

A.: There seems to be a slight shift toward topdressing but many clubs continue to maintain perfect greens with little or no topdressing. The time when this is done for the most part is immediately after thatch removal and soil cultiva-



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tion to help cover over the surface disturbance. If the topdressing material isn't sterilized, it may be best to learn to get along without it. There is no sense in reseeding greens to weeds every time you topdress.

In maintaining greens these considerations are important: (1) The soil must be loosened (aerated and cultivated) occasionally to get water, air, and nutrients to the rootzone; (2) thatch (accumulation of undecayed plant material) must be removed to such a degree that continuous firm healthy growth may result.

Machines that punch holes in the turf do limited cultivating and loosening but they aid in letting water, air and nutrients into the rootzone. The operation of vertical mowing equipment following aerating removes some of the thatch from the surface but cannot get at troublesome, deep-seated thatch.

None of these machines should be used on new Pennncross greens until you begin to experience difficulty in getting water into the soil. Allow at least a full year to elapse before starting soil treatments unless trouble shows up sooner.

A better mixture for topdressing may be four sand, two soil, one peat. Too much peat may cause serious difficulty by retaining too much water.

Eliminating Clover

Q: We have a problem of clover on our nine greens. It is coming in more and more each year but up to last summer there was not too

much. One green was just full of it.

A supply company salesman told me that some supts. are using 2,4,5-T to eliminate the clover condition on greens and said this would not harm the bent grass. Our grass is Seaside bent. (Illinois)

A. You may use 2,4,5-T on greens to control clover but use it at only about one-quarter recommended rate. Repeat as needed. Be sure to maintain a good feeding program. Clover can be reduced, and even eliminated, by a good nitrogen feeding program balanced with low P and medium K.

To Prevent Erosion

Q: On our course we have a very steep hill with a fairway at the bottom. The side of the hill is covered with rock to prevent erosion. We plan to cover it with dirt and plant over the rocks. Can you tell me what you recommend for this situation? (Wisconsin)

A: I suggest use of Penngift crownvetch. It will grow in unbelievably low fertility conditions and do a good job of preventing erosion while, at the same time, create a very attractive appearance. It needs no maintenance on a rocky hillside.

With crownvetch there is no need whatsoever to cover the rocks with dirt. If you use seed it lodges in the pockets and crannies and crags and will spread very nicely to cover the rocks.



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