

Dialed In


By Robert Vavrek, Senior Agronomist USGA Green Section

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I was in a rut. It seemed like every course I visited was having issues with excessive organic matter accumulation in the upper soil profile of 5- to 8-year-old greens. Some were new, some were completely rebuilt, some were fumigated then regrassed, but all were seeded to an improved, ultra-dense cultivar of bentgrass. Spongy, pitted ball marks, black layer, moss, algae...you name it, they had it. The problem was easy to diagnose and the cause was always some combination of too much water, too much nitrogen, not enough cultivation and not enough topdressing.

You begin to wonder if thatch problems on new greens are inevitable until you finally

visit a course where the superintendent "gets it." They have the topdressing, cultivation, fertility and irrigation practices dialed in from day one. The greens provide golfers a superior putting surface with a minimal buildup of organic matter. In fact, you can't even find the grow-in layer that occurs during establishment. Those visits always energize me and I can make unpopular recommendations of aggressive cultivation and topdressing to other courses with more confidence.

Need proof? Check out the soil profile of this over 5-year-old bentgrass green...great surface and no thatch. With the office being located in Milwaukee, there was only one last statement to make at the conclusion of this enjoyable visit; "It's Miller time, and I'm buying!" 



This is a great example of how to manage an ultra-dense cultivar of creeping bentgrass on a new sand-based green. The putting surface has been open to play for almost six years, but timely inputs of cultivation and sand make it difficult to distinguish the original construction mix from the topdressing accumulation.

Coming Events!

Tuesday August 20th, Joint meeting w/NGL, Stevens Point CC, St. Point, Host - John Femal

Monday September 16th, Wee One, Pine Hills CC, Sheboygan, Host - Rod Johnson

Monday September 23rd, WTA Golf Fundraiser, Maple Bluff CC, Host - Josh Lepine CGCS

Monday October 1, NGLGCSA Crew Outing - The Woods Golf Course, Ed Hoover

Saturday October 5th, Couples Outing/Party, Wild Rock GC, WI Dells, Host Michael Blazich

Tues and Wed Dec 10th-11th, Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium, American Club, Kohler

Tuesday January 14th, WTA Turfgrass Research Day, Pyle Center, Madison

Feb 2-7, Golf Industry Show, GCSAA Conference, Orlando FL

Monday March 3rd, WGCSA Spring Business Meeting, Fond du Lac