

## SAND TOPDRESSING RIVER FALLS STYLE

by SCOTT AINSWORTH  
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT  
RIVER FALLS GOLF COURSE

Over the past several years I have read many articles and talked with countless superintendents about sand topdressing. I would like to take the opportunity to tell you how I have handled sanding greens. I established a sand topdressing program in 1977. My objective was to improve water infiltration and create a smoother, more puttalbe surface.

The procedure for aerification is much the same but the thought of creating a layer on top of a soil green is different. I aerify twice yearly, once in spring and again in the fall, using a Terra 200 roll type aerator. By going over each green twice (three and four times in bad areas) I can raise about the same number of cores as a Ryan Punch type aerator. I allow the cores to dry on the surface and add Par-Ex (20-0-16) at the rate of two to two and a half pounds Nitrogen per 1000 square feet. I overseed with Penncross where and when needed. Then comes the sand.

I chose a local mortar sand from Roberts, WI. It is a sharp sand but has a good partical distribution. Approximately 76% falls between course and medium. It has a P.H. of 7.6.

In the first years of the program, when the cores were 100% original profile, I topdressed heavily with pure sand, 1/4 inch or more. As the years went by and the sand layer began to build I put on less. My thinking is that more soil in the cores should be offset by more sand. I topdress only when I care to eliminate any chance of creating pure sand - dirty sand layers. I mix the cores, sand and fertilizer together with a verticutter in two different directions and drag it back into the holes with a small drag mat. Brushing the greens is the final step.

After eight years I have built up a layer of "dirty sand" one and one-half to two inches thick. The sand layer is fairly uniform; pure mason sand mixed with cores form the original profile. It has worked!

The greens putt better, accept water faster and compact less between aerifications.

There are drawbacks, however. The sand layer dries out too fast and it becomes hard and crusty. I have had to increase irrigation amounts two to four times. Each year that goes by I see more and more local dry spot. It has become my number one problem. The only successful treatment is wetting agents and they are short-lived.

I have another problem...what to do in the future. Now that I have a two inch layer, the cores have less and less original profile. I am faced with adding something, either soil, peat or both, to the sand before topdressing. This will keep the pure sand "dirty".

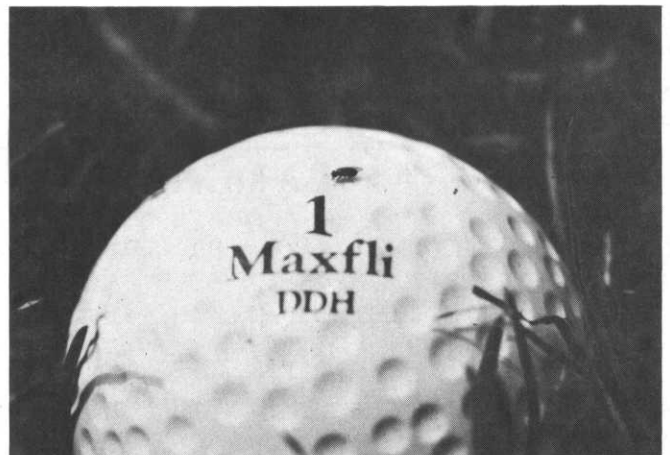
The questions I have yet to answer are: 1) What to use? 2) How to mix it? 3) Can I keep the new profile uniform as the years go by?

Topdressing greens with sand has its pros and cons. Many of us are doing it and as you are all aware, it is an on-going program we must all face. I wish us all well!

## INSECT PEST OF GOLF GREENS TO BE STUDIED IN OHIO

by HARRY NIEMCZYK, Ph.D.  
PROFESSOR OF TURFGRASS ENTOMOLOGY  
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The frit fly, *Oscinella frit* (L.), is a small black fly often present in large numbers on golf courses and seen by golfers when it lands on white clothing or golf balls.



FRIT FLY ADULT ON GOLF BALL  
continued on Page 5

Recognized as a nuisance to golfers, the frit fly larvae can and do cause damage to turfgrass, especially greens, collars and aprons. Adults lay eggs that hatch into small maggots which tunnel into grass stems to feed on growing tissues. Little is known about the insect; in fact, it has never been studied on turfgrasses in the U.S. Research is currently underway to study the biology, seasonal life history and distribution of this pest on golf course turf. The work is being conducted by Mike Tolley, Ohio State University Ph.D. graduate student, under the guidance of Dr. Harry D. Niemczyk, Professor of Turfgrass Entomology at OSU's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster. The project is being supported, in part, by the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation.



**FRIT FLY DAMAGE TO GREEN**

## **ANNUAL CONFERENCE SLATED FOR WASHINGTON D. C.**

"The early bird gets the worm". This old adage takes on new dimension when used by James W. Timmerman, CGCS, President Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America (GCSAA) in discussing "Early Bird" plans for GCSAA's International Golf Course Conference and Show in Washington, D.C., February 5-13, 1985.

When asked to explain this concept, Timmerman replied, "The Early Bird registration was introduced for the 1984 Conference and Show and was very successful. This plan allows members to

take advantage of savings on Conference fees provided they register prior to September 15, 1984. They will also receive preferential housing and preferential banquet seating for the first time this year, as well as other discounts".

Early Bird registration allows members a 10 percent discount on all conference fees, a 25 percent discount on educational tapes purchased during the Conference, preferential banquet seating, preferential housing assignment and preference in seminar assignments.

"This Early Bird registration is available only to GCSAA members. We are continually striving to offer the best to our members and this is one way we can offer substantial savings to those members attending our Annual International Golf Course Conference and Show," said Timmerman.

Savings are also available to those members taking advantage of advance registration. However, the savings are not as great as through the Early Bird registration. Non-members can realize a savings through advance registration but are not eligible for the special Early Bird registration.

Non-members can also take advantage of a special savings plan. All individuals who become new members of the Association between February 2, 1984 and December 31, 1984 receive complimentary registration for the Washington, D.C. Conference and Show. And those who join and register prior to September 15, 1984 will be able to receive the Early Bird benefits.

Special Early Bird registration forms will be mailed to all GCSAA members around July 15. Any member not receiving this special registration form should call 1-800-GSA-SUPT.

