

Rain, Rain Go Away!

By **BOB VAVREK**
USGA Agronomist

So much for drought that was predicted for the northern Midwest. By mid-July, many golf courses have already experienced twice the average rainfall for the entire season. The rain has come in manageable ½-inch to 1-inch increments for the fortunate few. Others have been deluged with multiple 3-inch to 5-inch cloudbursts, which often occurred within a 24-hour period.

Frequent, heavy rainfall affects the playing surfaces in a variety of ways. Sand-based greens and tees frequently appear chlorotic as nutrients are pushed below the reach of shallow roots. Root dieback has been a common concern where the upper soil profile has been waterlogged for extended periods of time. *Poa annua* playing surfaces seem to have suffered the most. The hot, rainy weather promotes disease activity and wet wilt. *Poa annua* greens have seen-sawed between soggy and wilt conditions within a matter

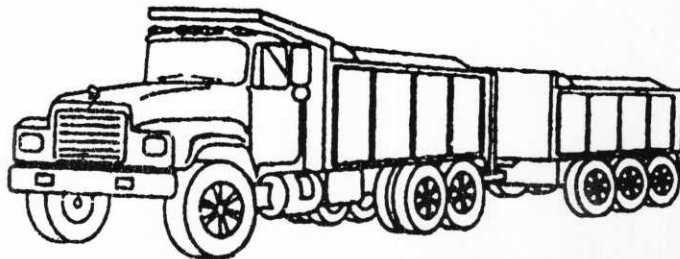
of hours.

Don't be afraid to pull out the spiker and/or aerator to address these problems. Quadratine aeration has already helped many golf course superintendents dry out mushy greens and promote a healthier balance of air and moisture in the root zone. A spiking operation every Monday morning can work wonders.

Weak, shallow-rooted turf needs to be irrigated carefully. Forget about deep, infrequent irrigation cycles on *Poa annua* greens until soil temperatures moderate and the root systems regenerate. Rely more on judicious hand-watering and less on the automatic irrigation system.

Well, at least the roughs look great.

What will be the end result of the soggy summer...stay tuned for the next update.



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