



TURFAX™

of the International Sports Turf Institute, Inc.

The International Newsletter about Current Developments in Turfgrass
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JB COMMENTS - SPORTS SURFACES

Completely modified root zones are now becoming the norm on most college and professional sports fields across the United States and certain other parts of the world. A sufficient number of various types of complete root zone profile constructions are now in place on sports fields around the country, such that comparative observations are being drawn by interested observers.

Most of these complete root zone modifications involve some kind of high-sand root zone profile construction. An observation being mentioned is that more turf tearing and divoting are occurring on fields constructed above an impermeable polyethylene barrier, regardless of whether any supplemental drainage technique also is employed. Is this due to an excessive water content in the upper surface portion of the root zone profile that is associated with or may be attributed to the impermeable polyethylene barrier?

It has been the personal experience of this author that divoting is much more severe when the turf and/or upper portion of the soil profile is more wet. This is easily observed on horse race tracks where multiple races are run on a daily basis under varying conditions. Irrigating during the morning of race day results in increased divoting even on tracks with a perched-hydration zone, rather than a polyethylene barrier.

Obviously, rain just prior to or during a competition on a sports field will increase the extent of turf tearing and divoting. Fields that already have a high moisture content in the upper portion of the soil profile prior to the rain are likely to experience even more severe turf damage. It would be interesting to hear from the TURFAX™ readership as to just what their observations are on this question. Obviously, there is a need for definitive research to address this question on a sound basis rather than just general observations.

UPCOMING JB VISITATIONS:

Provided for Institute Affiliates who might wish to request a visitation when I'm nearby:

- Jan. 6 to 9 - Reno, Nevada.
- Jan. 18 to 20 - Orlando, Florida.
- Jan. 21 to 23 - Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Feb. 7 to 13 - Las Vegas, Nevada.
- March 1 to 3 - Montreal, Canada.
- March 11 to 12 - Columbus, Ohio.