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FROM THE VAULT

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July and August are usually the toughest months to keep putting greens healthy.

SUMMER MANAGEMENT ON THE PUTTING GREENS

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Editors Note: *It's been another challenging summer in many parts of the country. High temperatures, high humidity, and busy golf courses have always made it difficult to keep putting greens healthy. This excerpt from the 1954 issue of the USGA Green Section Record article describes the critical factors involved in keeping greens healthy during July and August – careful water management, drainage, and air movement. These factors are just as important now as they were in 1954.*

During the difficult turfgrass months of July and August, superintendents gird themselves to keep their putting surfaces in tiptop condition. July and August are the most difficult months for the greens, as the combination of high temperatures and high humidity, coupled with heavy use of the areas, provides difficult obstacles for the turfgrass to surmount.

One management practice that has been the subject of much controversy has been that of watering putting surfaces. Most turf leaders agree that early morning watering is preferable to night watering. Early morning watering washes away the dew, which is a good nutrient culture for fungi, and tends to dry the blades of the grass plants sooner. Dew keeps grass blades wet longer, thereby providing better conditions for fungi.

to remain active longer on the grass blades.

Another equally important watering practice is that of lightly syringing the putting surfaces during periods of high temperature when the evaporation rate is greater than the rate at which the plants can absorb water from the soil. It may be necessary during extreme periods to syringe the greens several times during the day in order to keep plants from wilting.

Troublesome greens—those with poor air, surface or sub-surface drainage—should be given special attention during July and August. Greens with built-in headaches tend to show symptoms of water deficiency (or excess) sooner. These greens fare best if they are hand-watered carefully.

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