

# TURF TWISTERS

## BUDGETING

**Question:** I would like to implement a light and frequent topdressing program. For budgeting purposes, how can I estimate the cost of such a program? (Virginia)

**Answer:** Plan to apply  $\frac{1}{3}$  cu. yd. of topdressing material per 5,000 sq. ft. To determine the total amount needed per application (all greens), you need to know the total area (sq. ft.) to be treated, divide by 5,000 and multiply by  $\frac{1}{3}$ . Next, approximate the number of treatments that will take place during the entire season. To do so, work backwards from the fall aerification date. A treatment can be scheduled every two weeks. After this number is determined, the actual quantity of material for the entire season then can be calculated. The amount necessary for a light and frequent topdressing program then can be added to that utilized after the spring and fall core cultivation. You may be quite surprised when the totals are calculated. It may not be as much material as you first thought.

## DURING THE WINTER

**Question:** We have experienced a relatively mild winter, providing an opportunity to do a great deal of maintenance on the course. The tees have a heavy accumulation of thatch and other organic matter. My question is, can we aerify the tees during the winter months to aggressively attack the thatch accumulations present? What type of harm could come from this off-season procedure? (Delaware)

**Answer:** The weather patterns will greatly influence the growth of the turf. If snow cover exists, little damage may result. However, if these turf areas remain open (without snow cover), desiccation problems could occur. If the soils are frozen, the roots cannot draw moisture to help rehydrate the leaves. In these cases little growth occurs and the hole created by aerification remains open for a prolonged period of time. Areas exposed to high winds could be stressed as a result of the wind's drying effect. The best possible scenario is to wait until the turf is actively growing so that it can recover from the mechanical disturbance.

## CREATES SUMMER IMPROVEMENTS

**Question:** Most of the players at our course have stated that the golf course seems to be getting more and more difficult to play. How frequently should we have the course rated to determine its Slope value? (West Virginia)

**Answer:** Turfgrass management practices and golf course improvements can affect the Slope Rating of your course. Also, as young trees mature, golfers face an ever-increasing challenge. It is difficult to state exactly how often the course should be rated. The USGA requires that a course must be rerated at least once every ten years, even if it has not been changed in any way. However, if significant renovations are done on the bunkers, tees, greens, or fairways, you may want to contact your local golf association to be re-rated sooner. Even if renovations have only taken place in isolated areas of the course, the overall Slope Rating could change.

10248824COK000LBRO SAMPL  
PETER COOKINGHAM  
MSU LIBRARIES  
EAST LANSING MI 48824