

# TURF TWISTERS

## DON'T DELAY

**Question:** The last couple of years I've heard several references to the Green Section Internship Program. I would love to spend a week traveling with a Green Section agronomist. How do I apply? (Indiana)

**Answer:** The process starts with each university nominating one student from its turfgrass management program to the corresponding Green Section Regional Director. The internship program is limited to juniors, seniors, and graduate students in four-year turfgrass management programs. A stipend and all expenses are paid. The USGA regional agronomists interview the candidates, and one or more students are selected to participate in the program. Nominations for the 2001 program are due back from the university on November 30, 2000. Your starting point is to let your turfgrass professor know that you would like to be considered for the program.

## ADDRESS

**Question:** As an assistant superintendent, one of my least liked tasks is determining when our greens should be opened during a frost condition. The decision is easy, but what I don't like is having to go into the pro shop and "face the music" of irate golfers. Any tips on how to handle this situation? (Washington)

**Answer:** Above all, *do not* avoid the unpleasant task of going into the pro shop and directly facing the complaints. Let's face it, the people behind the counter receive plenty of complaints daily. *Look at this as an opportunity to hone your communication skills with golfers!* Explain that your decision is based on sound agronomic principles and you are trying to protect their investment. Although it is sometimes difficult, try to do this with a smile on your face while educating the golfers that a little patience now will serve the greens, tees, and fairways well in the future. For those who simply refuse to listen, a handy photo taken on the course showing the telltale black footprints of frost damage can be very convincing. If they still won't listen, remember that the world is full of CAVE people — Citizens Against Virtually Everything!

## THE SITUATION AT HAND

**Question:** Our course recently experienced vandalism on two of our greens. The greens were damaged by the tires of a car. Additionally, gasoline was poured in several areas and lit on fire. From a playability perspective, a large portion of the greens was affected. However, actual turf damage was limited to about 10 percent of the turf. What is the best method for repairing this damage? (Delaware)

**Answer:** Repair of vandalism on greens is both time consuming and tedious. Sod is the obvious solution for repairing the damage. However, the method is important. First, if possible, obtain sod from a nursery green or practice green to minimize visual impact from turf differences. New sod will work too, although the appearance of the sodded area will often last several years. When sodding on such a small scale, it is important to use narrow sod strips. Six- to 8-inch strips of sod can be obtained using a hand sod cutter. The small strips make the job time consuming; however, they allow for surface contours to be maintained. Wider strips of sod can lead to irregular areas that take many topdressing applications to address. Vandalism is unfortunate, but careful repair can minimize the impact on playability.