

Natural topographical features should always be developed in presenting problems in the play. As a matter of fact such features are much more to be desired than man made tests for they are generally much more attractive.

One natural hazard, however, which is more or less of a nuisance is water. This is not nearly as bad when it parallels play and forms a picturesque landscape feature of the course. But when water is between the objective (the green or driving area) and the player it may be that the man who plays only a foot short of the objective is much worse off than the one who makes a very poor shot that does not reach the water.

In the first place the player is penalized a stroke with no chance of recovering it whereas the second player having played a worse shot gets by without penalty and may regain lost ground with a fine second shot.

Water hazards absolutely prohibit the recovery shot, perhaps the best shot in the game. On the other hand how valuable these streams are when the greens and fairways need water.

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### Topdressing

By H. Kendall Read

Good putting greens can not be expected without proper topdressing. Moreover, you will not get the best results from fertilizers or treatments unless they are properly applied. It is very apparent that some clubs are not using the best methods. I am referring simply to the method of making the application and I do not refer to the mixing or preparation.

There are two common errors: 1. The dressing is applied too thick. 2. If the proper amount is used, it is not thoroughly worked down to the roots. In either case the green is left in an unsatisfactory condition and remains so for days. The Greenkeeper and Chairman are both condemned for something which could easily be avoided by a little care. I believe it is better to use an under amount than an over amount of topdressing at one time. There is no difficulty in making a fairly even distribution over the green, the most common error is not thoroughly working it in.

A very effective tool for this purpose is a home-made board scraper. I do not say it is the only tool to use but I do know it gives quick and most satisfying results. It is easily made by attaching a handle to a board about 2 feet long, 4 inches wide and 1 inch in thickness. The bottom edge should be beveled so that when the scraper is held in proper position, the lower edge is even with the ground. With scrapers of this character, the topdressing can be pushed and pulled until it practically disappears. Any material which can not be worked in, out of sight, is pushed off the green altogether and used on the approach area or elsewhere.

If a green is properly topdressed with an amount of material which is not excessive, most players would not know it had been touched and in most cases it should actually putt better immediately afterward than it did before. Careless topdressing not only causes discomfort, but frequently does actual harm by smothering the grass.

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With a lot of penal bunkers staring one in the face from the tee, there is no mystery—only misery.