

TURF TWISTERS

WINTER BLANKETS

Question: Should I remove ice from greens this winter or is a "blanket" good for them? (Utah)

Answer: A "snow blanket" on greens will usually help protect them from drying out or desiccation injury. However, an extended period of coverage by an "ice blanket" can cause serious damage to the turf, especially *Poa annua*. If solid ice remains on the greens for more than 3 weeks, it should certainly be removed.

WINTER BIRDS

Question: We have had seasonal trouble with coots getting on one of our greens. What do you suggest to minimize these birds on the green? (Florida)

Answer: We would suggest you contact the local wild life representative. He may have a solution for your unusual problem. However, we have observed a method of handling this type of problem by placing a fence 24 inches high between the green and the water. This reduced the number of birds on the green about 90 per cent. Note: Webster says, "Coots are stupid fowl, slow in flight and not classified as game birds."

WINTER GREENS

Question: How much harm can we do by playing the regular greens this winter? (Mass.)

Answer: Weather conditions change so rapidly that it is difficult to give an unqualified answer. If the ground is frozen solidly or thawed beyond the depth of one inch, there is no cause for alarm as far as soil compaction is concerned. However, some grass blade damage may occur as foot traffic crushes the frozen blades. Real injury occurs when the ground thaws at the surface but not below one inch. Traffic then causes severe soil compaction, a tearing of roots from the plant and a squeezing and displacement of the soil, causing very uneven putting surfaces. The decision to play or not to play regular greens must be flexible and must rest with the superintendent, the Green Chairman and his Committee. And it may have to be changed within a few hours on any given winter day.