

# Repair of Ball Marks

by JAMES R. FULWIDER

The repair of ball marks appears to be a very simple, non-scientific, and relatively unimportant part of turf maintenance. However, I have found that keeping greens free from ball marks is about the most difficult task I have encountered.

Of course, there would not be a serious problem at all if each player would repair his ball mark as soon as he reached the green. We know this is not done in many instances, so the marks are either repaired by the maintenance crew, or not at all.

I think it is most important to recognize that this is a serious problem, and to try to find better ways to get this point across to the membership. This is one area where the golf course Superintendent must have a great deal of cooperation from the Green Committee. If the players are lax and do not repair their own ball marks, the maintenance crew will have to do what is left.

Each member of my crew carries an ice pick on his greens mower, and they are instructed to repair ball marks before they cut the green. For several reasons, but mainly because of the amount of time required, this job is seldom done satisfactorily. Many marks are missed, and in many instances the repair is done hurriedly and improperly.

Superintendents should take the time to train each member of their crews in the proper method of repairing marks. It would be nice if we could demonstrate the proper method to more of the members, but this is very difficult. We have control of the employees under our supervision, so a more concentrated effort could be made to instruct them in proper methods.

The actual repair of a ball mark amounts to stretching the turf back over the bruised area with a golf tee or similar tool, and loosening the soil beneath.

*The first photograph below shows the damage caused by a ball hitting into a green. To repair the ball mark, a probe, most often a wooden tee, is inserted into the ground at points all around the mark, the soil loosened and the turf stretched over the depression. Then the soil is pressed down and made smooth. The final picture shows the result of a properly repaired ball mark.*

