

TURF TWISTERS

BERMUDAGRASS OR BENTGRASS

QUESTION: We have Tifgreen bermuda greens and have been losing bermuda each spring. Can we convert to bent without rebuilding? We are about 700 feet altitude in the Piedmont area. (North Carolina)

ANSWER: Yes, if your greens were constructed properly originally. If not, changing grass alone may create a problem worse than your present one. If you have lost bermuda each spring, it would not be advisable to convert to bent without having a competent person familiar with bent growth habits check your greens.

BUMPY POA ANNUA

QUESTION: Our greens are solid *Poa annua* and every spring they are very bumpy. Why? (New York)

ANSWER: *Poa annua* is not a single pure strain. For example, there are a number of Kentucky bluegrass varieties such as Merion, Delta, Park, Windsor, Newport, etc. Each has a different growth habit, and so it is with *Poa annua*. Any one green may have thousands of separate types — some that will seed profusely, some that will not; some that are wide-bladed, some that are very narrow-bladed; some that are tall growing, some that resemble the short blade of Velvet bentgrass. With this hodgepodge of varieties, is there any wonder that growth is uneven — especially in spring when all *Poa annua* plants make their strongest growth?

TESTING: ONE; TWO; THREE

QUESTION: How often should soil tests be taken and what part of the course should they cover? Also, is there any certain time of year to take the tests? (Colorado)

ANSWER: Unless you have a specific problem or reason to test soil at a given time, soil tests every 3 or 4 years should be sufficient to keep tabs on nutritional and pH levels. Generally, the sampling of 4 or 5 representative greens and a similar number of fairways and tees will be sufficient to establish a "pattern" for you. The late fall, winter or spring months are the most popular for sampling. Once you establish a time, future samples should be taken during the same general period.