

TURF TWISTERS

NO LYNCH PARTIES

Question: We plan to increase our rough area and reduce fairway widths this year. When is the best time to "contour cut" fairways and what height of cut would you suggest for the roughs? (Utah)

Answer: There will probably be a lot more rough on American golf courses this year than ever before. The best time to start fairway contour mowing for the grass as well as yourself will be this spring, just before growth starts. As to the height of cut for roughs, we would suggest somewhere between 1½ inch and 3 inches depending on density, type of grass, rate of growth, etc. Within this range, you should be able to get back to it (probably on a weekly basis) before a jungle or lynch party forms.

ON BLUEGRASS FAIRWAYS

Question: What is the best all-around Kentucky bluegrass for my fairways? (Pennsylvania)

Answer: In reality, there isn't—and perhaps never will be—a perfect Kentucky bluegrass. There are, however, many new improved varieties that have superior traits over the common types. All these new varieties have their strong and weak points. For best results, what we must do is to plant a mixture of Kentucky bluegrasses that complement each other. That is, what is one's weak point is another's strong point. When one variety is fading, the other is coming on strong, and vice versa. This blending of varieties sets up a dynamic equilibrium that should result in a good turf year-around.

OR IN BUNKERS

Question: During the playing season, what can I do to keep sand bunkers dry and still adequately irrigate greens and adjacent areas (California)

Answer: It's hard to please everyone, but here are a couple of techniques worth considering. First, of course, is to provide for good internal drainage within the bunker. Install tile lines this spring if necessary. Second, use a type of sand that drains well and does not carry a high percentage of fines; i.e., particle size below .25 mm. Third, raking (especially after irrigation) will usually help dry out the surface sand by mid-morning. Occasional deep raking (with a mechanical sand trap rake) also helps.