

# TURF TWISTERS

## NIGHT OR DAY?

**Question:** What time, day or night, is best for watering greens? (S.C.)

**Answer:** My preference is late evening or night, although for various reasons many successful superintendents water at other times. I prefer night watering because it gives the moisture a chance to penetrate into the soil before traffic and hot sunshine have a chance to combine with the excess surface moisture and make for real problems such as scald, wet wilt and the messy condition resulting when the turf is simply mashed or trampled into mud. Disease from night watering is negligible when a good fungicide program is used and water loss through evaporation is reduced, making for better moisture economy. Factually, the best time to water turf is when it needs it, but with all the factors added up, night watering seems to come out ahead.

## WET OR DRY?

**Question:** Short of spending a tremendous amount of money for systemic fungicides, which my budget can't stand, are there any management practices that can be performed to reduce the effects of the *Fusarium roseum* disease on my Kentucky bluegrass fairways and tees? (R.I.)

**Answer:** Yes. The *Fusarium* blight disease is more severe on areas with high fertility and excessive thatch. The fertilizer and thatch (we speculate) are a cause and effect relationship, so anything that can be done to reduce the fertilizer applied should also help reduce the thatch. Mechanical slicing and dethatching may also be a help in the physical removal of the thatch and its natural decomposition. Keeping the thatch damp with more frequent, lighter applications of water may also help because this disease is more severe on droughty areas that go through continuous wet-dry-wet-dry cycles.

## YOU ARE THE ONE!

**Question:** We are planning to rebuild several greens to the Green Section Specifications. As Green Committee Chairman I had heard that the sand layer was no longer necessary in their construction. Our Greens Superintendent disagrees . . . who is right? (N.Y.)

**Answer:** The Green Section Specifications for Putting Green Construction are an exacting, scientific method of building a golf green. All parts of these Specs are well studied and tested, and all must be included as outlined until such time as our staff and our researchers tell us otherwise. If not, then the green is not a Green Section Specification green and its performance may not be good. It is therefore essential that all steps in the procedure be followed, including that of the coarse sand layer between the drainage stone and the topsoil mixture. Who is right? . . . your superintendent.