

TURF TWISTERS

I WONDER

Question: My club wants me to plant flowers to beautify several areas on the course, some of which may conceivably come into play. The Green Committee says we can mark the area so the golfer will receive a free drop. I wonder about this idea and also what your opinion may be. (Pennsylvania)

Answer: It would be best to keep the flower beds away from areas where a golf ball may land. If the Committee insists, mark the area as Ground Under Repair and not as an obstruction.

ABOUT COLORED SHOES

Question: I would like to obtain several copies of the Golf Shoe Study which appeared in the September/October, 1983, issue of the GREEN SECTION RECORD. Are reprints available? (New Jersey)

Answer: Yes, color reprints are available in any quantity for \$1 each by contacting USGA Green Section, Golf House, Far Hills, New Jersey 07931.

AND 100% PURE SAND GREENS

Question: I have three new greens on the golf course I just took over, and they were rebuilt (two years ago) with 100 percent pure sand at a university's recommendations. They now have very little grass cover and have not played at all like the other 15 greens on the course. The members are not happy. What can and should be done? (California)

Answer: Straight, 100 percent sand greens are not highly favored by the Green Section. Such greens have presented serious turf management problems in fertilization and irrigation, not to mention playing qualities. But that is after the fact. Short of another complete rebuilding (this time to USGA Green Section Specifications), two possibilities for improvement come to mind:

1. Obtain a chemical soil test to determine pH and nutrient levels for phosphorus, potassium, calcium, and magnesium. Correct any deficiencies. Furthermore, if the sand has high permeability, an increase in the frequency of nitrogen (and perhaps all nutrients) applications should help. There is little nutrient or moisture retention in pure sands. With more frequent fertilization, expect higher growth rates. With more growth, grass will gradually build its own soil as organic levels increase. Over a period of time, this will improve not only nutrient and moisture retention, but playing qualities as well.
2. In similar cases to yours, the use of calcine clay or other moisture-holding materials has helped droughty, weak greens. It is important to work the material into open aeration holes and not apply it as a surface topdressing. One or two such treatments this year should help the situation.