

Core Transplanting

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CORE TRANSPLANTING, by itself or in combination with other programs, is a technique that can be used to restore turf to bare areas on greens. It is perhaps most useful in cases where turf loss is patchy rather than complete. The turf loss shown in the photographs was the result of an aggressive pearlwort control program. Core transplanting was planned in this instance when the fall overseeding failed and cool spring weather prevented an early overseeding effort.

The first step is thorough aerification. Using a large $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch tine will make it easier to place the good plugs back into the holes. Some of the newer aerifiers will permit even larger tine coring. Do not overlap when coring, and follow a straight line method of aerification.

Cores from the healthy portions of a green are placed by hand into the holes on the bare areas. You must proceed quickly with this part of the process



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to prevent the cores from drying out. Natural settling will cause them to drop somewhat in the first few days. However, this will prevent them from being pulled up or out by the mowers.

Next, apply a seed/soil topdressing mixture by hand. Gently work it into the bare, transplanted areas to establish good seed/soil contact. Finally, apply topdressing to the entire green in the usual manner.

Without a doubt, core transplanting is time consuming. However, when it is executed properly, it will yield excellent results. Putting conditions were good three weeks after transplanting was completed. Conditions had greatly improved in as little as a week's time. Certainly this method is not meant to replace sodding or overseeding in all cases, but it has its place in course management, and it can be used to the superintendent's advantage. It prevents the patchy appearance that so often results from sodding.

A damaged green.



Removing the cores.





The damaged area.



Introducing new mature plants.



Replacing the cores.

Rough Times

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IN OCTOBER, 1985, I attended the Scotland International Golf Greenkeepers Association Conference and later played golf at more than 15 of Scotland's finest courses. Some of these are very old, with golfing history going back to the early 1400s. Consequently, this was an excellent opportunity to see how it all began.

Almost immediately, Americans will notice how the maintenance of grasses around the sand bunkers and the rough grasses next to the fairways differ from home. These grasses are not neatly groomed and cut short. They are taller, with little evidence of any maintenance. In the United States, the same areas are cut relatively short, especially around the bunkers. In Scotland, they have

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historically allowed the roughs to grow naturally. One exception is a secondary type of rough, usually eight feet wide, at the fairway perimeters. These grasses are maintained two to three inches tall next to the one-half-inch cut on fairway grasses.

Usually, Scottish roughs are a mixture of fine fescues and bentgrasses that are ideal for the purpose. Because of the low soil fertility and cold temperatures in Scotland, all grasses grow slowly. Surprisingly, some fairways are cut only five to ten times annually because of the climate. These unusual features make it possible for the golfer to find his ball in the rough and attempt to recover. It may still take an outstanding shot, however.