

TURF TWISTERS

GOLF LIBRARIES & MUSEUMS

Question: I recently visited the USGA headquarters in New Jersey and enjoyed browsing through the library and museum. Are there other public facilities in the country that feature a golf library and memorabilia? (Utah)

Answer: The Ralph W. Miller Golf Library and Museum is located at the Industry Hills Recreation and Conference Center, in the City of Industry, California. It includes a large collection of valuable old clubs and golf-related items, artwork, photographs, history, and an extensive library, which includes books on golf course maintenance, turfgrass science, and course architecture. If you plan to attend the GCSAA International Turfgrass Conference and Show, February 6-13, 1989, in Anaheim, California, a side trip to Industry Hills (about an hour) will be worth the effort. For further information call (818) 965-0861, ext. 1258.

OFFER A FREE SPOT

Question: Are USGA greens ever "soilless greens"? I have heard that mixes of sand and peat alone (without any soil added) have met USGA Specifications. Is this true? I think I would like some soil in my new greens. (Ohio)

Answer: *Sometimes* soil testing labs do recommend sand and fibrous organic matter alone in blending topmixes meeting USGA Specs. *However*, this does not mean it does not contain 'soil.' In fact, it *must* contain some percentages of clay and silt to aid in base exchange and nutrient retention. Most sands (even washed sands) contain some silt and clay as natural contaminants. Also, almost all organic matter (especially bog peats and humuses) contain some silt and clay. Therefore, you do have percentages of silt and clay, free of charge. Thus, sand/peat greens are not soilless greens. This is why a good soil testing laboratory and good information are essential when blending modern topmixes or topdressings to meet today's demands.

YOU MAY SAVE A LITTLE — BUT LOSE A LOT!

Question: Is there any danger in using "ag" chemicals in place of those with turf labels as long as the active ingredient is exactly the same? They are almost always cheaper, and therefore more available to clubs with small budgets. (Oklahoma)

Answer: There are two very significant dangers. First, even though the active ingredient may be the same, there is often a large difference in the type of carrier used in blending. Many "ag" chemicals use petroleum-base carriers that can be quite harsh on turfgrasses.

Second, regardless of the suitability of the "ag" chemical, you are using an illegal chemical if it is not specifically labeled for turf. Doing so places you and your club in a position of significant liability. The initial savings in product cost may be lost hundreds of times over in legal fees and penalties. If your club cannot afford to buy labeled products, it can by no means afford the risk of illegal substitutes.