

TURF TWISTERS

COMPARABLE TOPDRESSINGS

Question: I have heard it said that once a club switches to a straight sand topdressing program, it cannot revert to an 80-20 or comparable type of mix. Is this true? (New York)

Answer: The answer is no. It is not recommended, but it can be done. The change must be a gradual one, though, that minimizes layering within the soil profile. A good aerification program should help avoid layering problems, and it may be advisable to return the cores brought to the surface along with some of the new topdressing material. It may also be advisable to change first to a 90-10 material for two or three years before making the final switch to the 80-20.

ENSURE A GOOD

Question: We have a hilly golf course. When attempting to repair a broken pipe it is almost impossible to completely drain the system in order to ensure a good glue joint. The water seems to trickle forever. Any tips? (New Mexico)

Answer: Believe it or not, a loaf of bread should solve your problem. After the water has slowed to a trickle, prepare the two pieces of pipe to be joined together. Wad together enough pieces of bread to form a ball slightly bigger than the pipe's diameter. Shove the bread ball into the pipe. This should give you at least 10 to 15 seconds of dry pipe on which to make the repair. By the time the pipe is ready for use, the bread will have dissolved to the point that it can be completely discharged from the sprinkler.

BLEND

Question: We are considering the construction of a continuous cart path. Several golfers are concerned that a paved path will ruin the appearance of the golf course and have suggested we build one no wider than six feet. Any suggestions? (Wisconsin)

Answer: An experienced golf course architect can often design a functional cart path that blends into the existing landscape. A six-foot-wide path is an absolute minimum, but golfers often have difficulty keeping carts on the path when passing others and on tight curves. The result is rutted, compacted turf on either side of the path. An eight-foot-wide path is more desirable because it can accommodate two carts, side by side, and makes the entire golf course accessible by heavy maintenance equipment.