

TURF TWISTERS

MEET HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Question: The golfers at my course have very high expectations, but they don't give me the budget I need to achieve the conditions they desire. Is there an objective way to determine what is a realistic level of maintenance based on our budget? (California)

Answer: Developing a set of golf course maintenance standards can help reconcile the needs of the golfers with your available resources. The superintendent and course officials should work together to develop the guidelines, which should include such items as recommended mowing frequencies, a range of suitable mowing heights, bunker maintenance, course marking, tree pruning, course cleanup, and all other maintenance activities. It is then possible for the superintendent to determine the number of labor hours and resources needed to meet the desired goals and match this with the current budget. In this way, the course officials can see what it actually takes to maintain the golf course, after which they can set priorities accordingly.

BY PROVIDING VIABLE ALTERNATIVES

Question: Is overseeding fairways with *Poa trivialis* a viable alternative to avoid spring transition problems? (Arizona)

Answer: Some courses have had fairly good results overseeding fairways with *Poa trivialis* at the rate of 90 lbs. to 100 lbs. per acre. Although the seed is more expensive per pound, it generally is planted at $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ the rate of perennial ryegrass. *Poa trivialis* will not produce the same brilliant green color as perennial ryegrass; however, the newer cultivars have acceptable winter color without causing significant spring transition problems. It is important to note that *Poa trivialis* generally takes longer to germinate and may totally transition in the spring before bermudagrass resumes active growth. If your goal is to avoid transition problems, you may wish to try *Poa trivialis*. If winter color is the primary concern, you may be better off overseeding with perennial ryegrass at a reduced rate.

TO TRAFFIC TROUBLES

Question: The daily-fee golf course I manage receives about 50,000 rounds of golf a year. Needless to say, wear injury from cart traffic is a problem. I have tried requiring carts on paths at certain times, but the golfers loudly object and it seems like this policy is more trouble than it is worth. Any suggestions for this problem? (Florida)

Answer: A good solution would be to require carts on the path on one hole on the front nine and one hole on the back nine each week. After nine weeks, each hole has received a reduction in traffic of approximately 11 percent. This policy should be started early in the season before cart traffic has caused significant problems. Of course, during extremely wet periods, requiring carts to remain on the path is needed to protect the course from severe damage.