

# Pop-Up Sprinklers For Mound Irrigation

*Mounds can be meaningful additions to a golf course, but sometimes they require special treatment.*

by PATRICK J. GROSS

**M**OUNDS are popular features of modern golf architecture. They add visual interest to the golf course and often increase the difficulty and challenge of a golf hole. Although mounds often look nice, they can be difficult to irrigate and maintain. Even if irrigation coverage is relatively

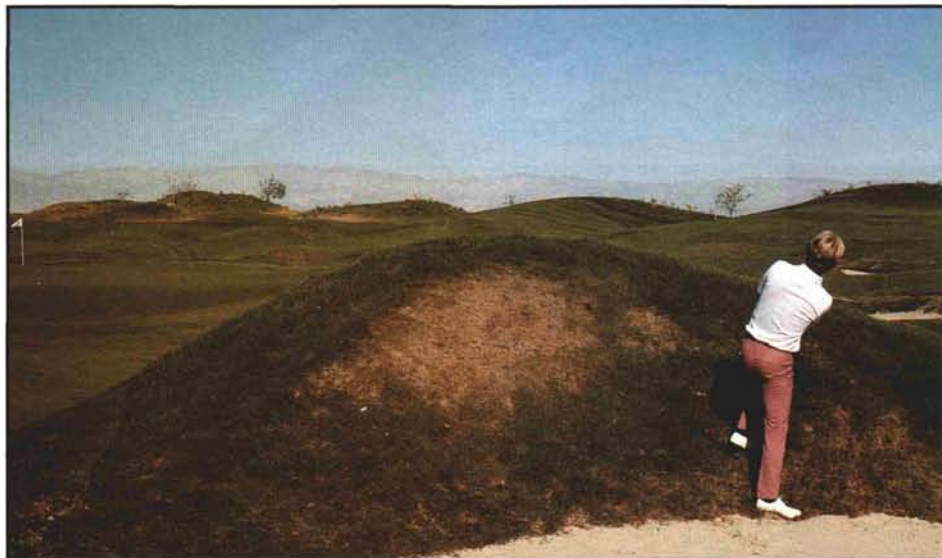
good, the tops of the mounds tend to dry out more rapidly, causing turf decline and an undesirable appearance.

Several factors are responsible for substandard turf growth on mounds. Poor quality soil is often used for construction, creating different water management needs and maintenance re-

quirements. Because of the elevation difference and slope of mounds, localized dry spots often occur on the top, and wet areas develop around the base due to irrigation runoff. Even if the irrigation system is properly designed and installed, perfect coverage is difficult to achieve on hilly areas. Eventually, this can become an unmanageable situation for the superintendent unless plenty of labor is available for hand watering.

As an alternative to costly hand labor, a supplemental irrigation system for mounds can be installed using pop-up sprinklers. There are several models available that typically are used for home lawns and landscapes. The pop-up heads usually cover a radius of 8 ft. to 15 ft. and are ideal for use on mounds. It is recommended to select a sprinkler head with a low precipitation rate since the slow, steady application of water reduces runoff and provides better water penetration. A supplemental system can be easily installed by connecting to a nearby main line and installing either a manual or remote-control valve to operate the system. Most courses that have installed such systems prefer the manual valve, which can be used by the irrigation technician or sectionmen for spot watering only. After connecting the valve, PVC pipe can be pulled or trenched to the desired location, followed by the installation of the pop-up heads.

Before installing a supplemental irrigation system for mounds, it is important to evaluate the existing system to ensure that everything is in proper operating condition. Uneven sprinkler heads and worn nozzles may be the primary reasons for uneven coverage and localized dry spots. Once these issues have been resolved, the pop-up sprinklers can be installed to provide better irrigation control with fewer wet spots and dry spots.



*Mounds can add visual interest to the golf course, but they are difficult to irrigate. The different management needs of the mounds often result in dry spots and turf decline.*



*A supplemental irrigation system, specifically for the mounds, can be installed to provide better irrigation control.*

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