

Turf Twisters

Q: We heard that a recent IRS ruling allows a course to depreciate the cost of building greens. Is this true? (Oklahoma)

A: Actually, it is now possible for some courses to depreciate the cost of building greens, tees, and bunkers over a 15-year period. This ruling can be found on the

Internal Revenue Service website by searching for Revenue Ruling 2001-60 (www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/rr-01-60.pdf). You also

might want to view the "February 7, 2002, Industry Directive to Examiners" document and the "February 25, 2002, Industry Directive."

Q: Our zoysia fairways often become soggy as the winter wears on. Carts are restricted to paths more often, and as we play from less-desirable lies, handicaps rise steadily. Would overseeding with perennial ryegrass in the winter be a good idea for us? (North Carolina)

A: Organic matter development with zoysia causes these sites to retain water. This grass can act almost like a sponge, especially at sites

with clay soils that don't drain well. Overseeding with perennial ryegrass does not relieve these symptoms, and it could make the problem worse. The best solution is to add drainage to the fairways, which addresses both surface water runoff and water soil seepage issues. Drainage experts are available to outline the planning, materials, time line, and costs of these projects. This planning stage is critical for success.



Q: Several greens on our course are susceptible to winter injury where water from melting ice and snow collects after a midwinter thaw. We have chipped away the ice and taken samples to document injury, but the process of removing turf from a frozen green often causes considerable damage to the sample. Any hints on ways to remove turf without damage? (Minnesota)



A: Try using a battery-powered hand drill equipped with a 2" to 3" hole cutter. Chip away most of the ice with a chisel or ax and use the bit to drill through the ice and into the first inch or so of putting surface. Gently

tap a flat-head screwdriver or chisel into the space around the plug until the frozen bottom breaks free from the green. Remove the sample and place it in a Styrofoam cup filled with topdressing or divot repair mix. A healthy sample will begin to grow after four or five days on a warm sunny windowsill.