

Turf Twisters

Q: In 1990, our greens were completely rebuilt to USGA guidelines and have performed satisfactorily. However, the base Tifdwarf bermudagrass contains a high percentage of “off-type” surface contamination, and it has become progressively more difficult to provide consistent and accept-

able playing conditions and aesthetic character. We are in the initial planning stage of renovating the greens and converting to an ultradwarf bermudagrass cultivar. Our obvious question is whether or not resurfacing is a viable option, or is total reconstruction necessary? (Florida)

A: With proper construction and subsequent management, USGA greens can easily have an effective life expectancy of 25 to 30 years or longer. Thus, resurfacing is a viable option. Review the article “Rebuild or

Resurface” (by Bud White, *USGA Green Section Record*, January/February 2006, 44(1):1-6). It is available on the Turfgrass Information File at: <http://turf.lib.msu.edu/2000s/2006/060101.pdf>.

Q: The USGA says “bunker” and I say “trap.” What real difference does this make to golf course maintenance? (Indiana)

A: Perhaps none, and yet there could be significant impact. There are activities a player cannot do in bunkers that are acceptable on other areas of the course. This means that a defined

edge is important to properly apply the rules. The use of incorrect terms suggests ignorance of the rules, which suggests the maintenance program may not be accommodating proper application of the rules. Terms and definitions provide the foundation for the rules, the game of golf, and course maintenance.



Q: We recently sent disease samples off to a diagnostic lab. In their response, the lab stated that the sample that we sent was not in good enough condition to provide a reliable diagnosis. How should samples be sent to a diagnostic lab? (Delaware)

A: Proper sampling is critical to proper diagnosis. First, a cup-cutter-size plug, 2 to 3 inches deep, should be taken at the edge of each area to be sampled so that a combination of damaged and healthy turf is provided. The plug should be wrapped

in a moist paper towel and then wrapped in foil to preserve the plug. It is critical to prevent the underlying soil from mixing in the turf canopy. Pack the plugs securely in a box as if they are fragile so that they will not be damaged during

shipping. Finally, use an overnight shipping method so that the plugs reach the lab quickly. Shipping after Wednesday could lead to samples sitting in a box over the weekend because most labs are not open on weekends.

