

Turf Twisters

Q: Divot recovery on our bentgrass tees and fairways is poor at best during the summer. What mix should we be using for rapid divot recovery? (Iowa)

A: The overriding reason for slow divot recovery in the summer is that high tempera-

tures retard seed germination and subsequent seedling development. This same situation explains why properly replaced divots have difficulty taking root during late June, July, and early August. As for divot mixtures, there are countless variations of sand, seed, soil, and peat or com-

post. While many combinations work well, they all have their own unique advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, peat added to sand offers good nutrient and moisture retention, but its dark color can increase heat absorption and subdue divot recovery during the

summer. On the other hand, dyed green sand, while more expensive, can be used to improve the appearance of heavily divoted practice tees, but it won't lead to faster divot recovery.

Q: We have bentgrass greens and bermudagrass collars. Bermudagrass encroachment is a constant battle, and we seem to be losing putting surface. Isn't there any *new* solution to this problem? What about using zoysiagrass instead of bermudagrass in the collars? We have been told it will not encroach. (Oklahoma)



A: This is a problem whenever two different grasses are maintained adjacent to

each other. Bermudagrass encroachment from the collar is a problem in bentgrass greens or bermudagrass greens. Zoysiagrass imposes the same problem. Some superintendents maintain an excellent green/

collar interface, but they do it with weekly hand edging during the growing season and monthly during the non-growing season. It is usually accomplished by using a thin-blade edger and picking the runners by hand. It is labor intensive but it works!

Q: The ponds on our golf course deteriorate every summer when the temperatures rise and algae and aquatic weeds proliferate. The ponds become unsightly and there are limitations as to the chemicals we can apply due to our environmentally sensitive location. We have tried straw and various biological products, but the results have been inconsistent at best. Are there any biological or non-chemical options we can use to improve a bad situation?



A: The decline of shallow golf course pond systems is not uncommon and is usually due to a number of factors, including shallow water depth, heavy nutrient loads, and bank erosion. Chemical treatments for weeds and algae under such conditions usually bring short-term success, but inevitably the poor conditions return. The best advice is to contact a pond/lake manager/consultant in your

region to review the site and develop an integrated management plan that addresses the inherent problems with the pond and restores it to a more balanced and natural system that requires fewer chemical inputs. A list of professional lake managers and consultants in your region can be found by contacting the North American Lake Managers Society at www.nalms.org or (608) 233-2836.

