

# TURF TWISTERS

---

## DURING THE SPRING TRANSITION

**Question:** In late winter and early spring it is almost impossible to identify how much bermudagrass is alive beneath the ryegrass overseeding. Is there an easy way to eliminate the uncertainty of whether or not the bermudagrass has survived the winter prior to spring transition? (Louisiana)

**Answer:** The following tips should prove helpful. First, do not overseed the entire area of every green. A 4' x 4' sheet of plywood can be laid over a seldom used portion of the green during the overseeding process. This will create a "window" to view the status of the bermudagrass as the spring progresses.

Another approach is to remove plugs from your greens every three to four weeks throughout the winter. These plugs should be placed in either a greenhouse or a warm, sunny window to force the bermudagrass to break dormancy. This will help you monitor the viability of the dormant bermudagrass throughout the winter.

## GEOTEXTILE COVERS

**Question:** Our club has begun using geotextile covers on two perennially weak greens. Currently, the greens are lush and free of disease. Is there anything we should do prior to removing the covers to assure continued success? (New Jersey)

**Answer:** As with any "good thing," too much can be a problem. Keep an eye on what is happening under the cover. Elevated heat and humidity levels under the cover create a good environment for disease activity which normally would not occur.

In addition, it is critical to avoid a severe frost on newly uncovered greens during late winter and early spring. Cold temperatures can set back the turf considerably, negating some of the positive effects of the covers. Therefore, once the covers are removed in early spring, keep them available should the threat of severe frost arise. The mowing height should be raised for the initial cuttings to avoid scalping, and a contact fungicide should be applied to extend protection against cool-season diseases.

## NEED REGULAR MONITORING

**Question:** I'm having a difficult time maintaining an effective equipment replacement program. With a continually rotating board of directors, my equipment requests tend to be tabled regularly "until the next set of directors is elected." What can I do to convince the Board that these equipment needs will not go away? (Florida)

**Answer:** Develop and graph a five- or ten-year "high-use equipment" replacement program that can be referred to annually. Within this program include the date of purchase of existing equipment, original cost, life expectancy, estimated replacement cost, and the year to be replaced. Delays in annual equipment purchases can then be shifted to the following year and not be forgotten, thereby illustrating the cumulative effect of delaying annual capital improvements. As directors change, the equipment replacement program will be well defined.