

From The Fairways and Grounds:

I would like to “Thank you” all for your cooperation during our final round of greens aerification the past month. As I have mentioned before, aerification is an essential process for healthy turf. There are several beneficial factors associated with aerification, such as:

- Relieves soil compaction from traffic so that there is proper gas exchange. Oxygen is taken up by the roots and gives off carbon dioxide. We do not want the carbon dioxide to get trapped in the soil or death will occur.
- With the removal of many cores of turf and soil in the process of aerification, we are also removing dead organic matter referred to as “Thatch”. Thatch builds up just below the turf and above the soil. Thatch can be beneficial in terms of how receptive the greens are in holding a golf shot. But excessive thatch holds water from getting to the root system, ties up valuable nutrients for plant growth, and is an ideal environment for insects and disease that live off dead organic matter. Aerification and core removal allows us to also remove much thatch.
- With the removal of cores during the aerification process it creates many holes throughout the surface. Sand is then applied back into these holes which have been approved by the USGA for superior turf growth. Therefore, we have the ability to modify our soil by filling the holes with sand and at the same time smooth the surface as well. This process is called “topdressing” which we do periodically throughout the season as well only at a much smaller quantity.

We are scheduled to aerify the greens, tees, and fairways twice a year in the spring and fall. Normally it is a 3-4 week recovery time before the greens are at optimal putting condition again. We finish up the Estates course in mid-September so we should have all courses back in a superior playing condition.

Our next major cultural practice that we perform will be “overseeding” for winter play. Overseeding is the process of seeding a cool season turfgrass such as Perennial Rye grass into the fairways, tees, and greens. The Champions golf course the overseeding will include the roughs, but not the greens. The Palmer golf course will not have any overseeding done to it. We overseed in the winter time because cold temperatures will turn our primary Bermuda grass turf brown and into a dormancy state. The overseeding will ensure a premier playing surface throughout the winter season.

The dates for overseeding have been moved up earlier in the season this year except for the Champions Course. Please note the overseeding schedule for this fall:

- Haig Course – Closed from 11-2 to 11-6.
- Squire Course – Closed from 11-9 to 11-13.
- Estates Course – Closed from 11-16 to 11-20.
- Champions Course – Closed from 12-7 to 12-18.

During the seed germination period which is 7-14 days for Perennial Rye the golf courses will be constantly water to promote consistent germination.

The maintenance department appreciates all the positive comments on the putting surfaces and the other changes on the Squire course. Without your membership support, these competitive enhancements would have been difficult to perform and for that the maintenance department “Thanks you”. In these difficult economic times we all appreciate your support and understanding.

The greens on the Squire course will soften up over time. As I mentioned earlier in this article, the thatch layer controls how receptive the greens are to holding a golf shot. We performed a modified greens renovation where we removed all soil 4 inches below the surface, which also removed the entire thatch layer. Over time as that layer builds back up the greens will soften up as well.

Improvement plans coming up:

- Continue improvements to all course restroom. We are presently working on the Champions course.
- Removal of excess sand in the bunkers on the Estates course.
- Renovation to some bunkers on the Champions course with all new sand.
- Continued weed control on all golf courses.
- New cart path yardage discs on the Squire course.
- Continued landscaping at the Croquet courts.
- Level Croquet courts corners.

In closing I am happy to announce that we will soon have our comfort station completed at the Estates course. The bathroom is coming along very nicely and landscaping should begin towards the end of September. We will be connected to city water and sewer at this time. Therefore, drinking water will be available at this station. I do not have an exact opening date at this time.

I hope you all had a relaxing summer and the opportunity to take a vacation away from the heat and humidity. It has not been a typical summer for course conditioning with the rains, disease and weed pressure, and to top it all off this year, we had a major outbreak throughout South Florida with the insect called a “mole cricket”. This critter ate up a bunch of grass roots throughout the area this year. Where the turf was treated we were able to only have minimal damage. In the roughs and out of play areas we have to sod the areas of devastation. What would we do if all we did was mow the grass? Thank you all again for your patience’s and support and hope to see you all on the golf courses very soon.

For Better Turf,

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