

This is “Turf Talk” from Scott Anderson:

The summer is coming to an end and Overseeding will begin throughout the property at the end of September. This process will be completed by the middle of November. The Practice tee at Cottonwood and select areas of the Common Area will begin at the end of September. The golf courses will begin on Oct 7 (PV) and Oct 14 (CW). Both golf courses will be closed for 3 weeks (1 week for prep / seeding and 2 weeks to germinate / fertilize / mow) before re-opening. The remaining Common Areas will be completed as the golf courses re-open. There are a couple reasons for the staggering of dates... 1) accessibility to the golf courses with minimal down time and 2) managing the demand of water pressure of the irrigation system throughout the property.

Why do we Overseed?

The sole purpose of Overseeding is to have green grass during the winter season. The lush, green ryegrass makes for a nice playing surface and certainly a beautiful backyard for the homeowners that would typically be looking at snow during December, January, February, and March.

The warm-season bermudagrass, if left to itself, will go dormant as the temperatures dip into the 40's. Left un-overseeded, the golf course would have a 'blonde' appearance across the entire property. This is evident in the areas of ROUGH throughout the golf course. The ROUGHS are left to go dormant for a couple reasons... 1) to be good stewards of water usage and 2) be good financial stewards of the Clubs dollars.

This year, 2024, there will be a couple additional 'wrinkles'. SLHOA2 is intending to NOT overseed a few areas that have normally been overseeded in the past. These areas are....

1. Unit 20
2. Grass islands on Minnesota north of Unit 20 lake
3. Par 3 fairways at Cottonwood – this is based OFF the success and positive response of last year's holes 3 and 15 at CW.

Why do we Overseed in October when the bermudagrass and golf course looks so good?

The explanation for this is simply weather - Mother Nature. As any good farmer understands, 'when it's time to bale hay, it's time to bale hay'. Overseeding is no different. By performing this process in October, it accomplishes 2 things.... 1) it gives the bermudagrass the best opportunity to re-establish at Spring-time Transition from ryegrass to bermudagrass and 2) it allows enough time for the ryegrass to establish itself prior to frosty mornings in early December. Germination rates slow down from 2 weeks to 4 weeks during the short, cold days of December, January. The slower germination rates are seen, and felt, by the golfing Membership on the Practice tee during these months.

Why do we need to stay on the cart paths after Overseeding?

Every year, the question of, 'When can we get off the cart-paths?' arises. It will be no different this year, I assure you. It's important to remember that the ryegrass was a simple seed just 2 weeks prior. The large volume of golf cart traffic is extremely damaging to the new emerging plants that haven't had the full opportunity to 'harden-off'.

After the seed is down, it's a race to get the ryegrass up and established prior to golf cart traffic. Heavy applications of water, fertilizer, and mildly warm days are required to get the new ryegrass plants to tiller and fill in. Once the new ryegrass plants have tillered to the 4th, 5th, 6th leaf stage we can begin discussions about moving from CART PATH ONLY to 90 degrees. This typically happens by Thanksgiving, some years earlier, some years later.... Mother Nature always has the final say.

During September, the team will be working diligently to complete some of the 'end-of-the-summer' projects, specifically the bunker work at hole 18 CW. Drainage is being added to the 2 green side bunkers that notoriously hold water after rain events and/or heavy irrigation cycles.

The team has coordinated delivery of ryegrass seed, calibrating seeders-sprayers, and making final audits to irrigation systems. New flags, flagsticks, bunker-rakes and a few other golf course accessories have been ordered and will look great as the golf courses re-open. Overseeding is a long month for the team. We look forward to seeing the fruits of the labor and making the first 'mowings'.

As always, thank you for your time and patience,

The Golf Maintenance Team