



January 2021 Newsletter



Frost . . .

Early players wait for course to be opened for play after a recent frost delay

'Tis the season for . . . frost !!!

As the temperatures continue to drop, we once again become aware of a common challenge. . . ***frost.***

Conditions may not look as serious as they often are, so we appreciate our golfers understanding the need to be patient. Here are some facts that might help:

It doesn't have to be freezing for frost to form: Frost typically forms on turf over the course of chilly nights when the grass itself gets colder than the surrounding air. Any number of factors help create those conditions. Plain old temperature, of course, but also dew points, wind speeds, humidity and cloud cover. And then there's the biggie: Wet Bulb temperature, which is the temperature air cools to when you add water to the equation. You know how the air feels colder when you lick your finger and hold it out? Same thing happens when grass gets wet. The surface temperature of the plant drops to the Wet Bulb temperature. If it drops low enough, frost can form (all the more likely in shaded or lower-lying areas of the course), even if the air temperature hasn't plunged below 32F.





Around the Track

The clearer the night, the frostier the dawn: You've probably noticed frost delays are more common after clear, crisp nights. That's because clouds trap heat, warming the atmosphere. If it's overcast at night, you've got a better chance of being in the clear for your early morning tee time. If the air is crisp and you can see the stars, don't be shocked if you're delayed by frost on your course at dawn.

What's the damage? That depends on a range of factors, including the varietal of turf, the health of the grass, the severity of the frost and amount of activity the frosty turf endures. When grass gets frosted over, the water in its plant cells can freeze and expand. If you mow that grass in its frigid state (or trample on it, or ride your cart across it), those icy molecules can shatter. That's not broken glass. It's broken grass. That doesn't mean you've killed the turf, which, in most cases, will recover. But you can see the impact soon after in discoloration. It's not just an aesthetic issue, because you can obviously do some structural damage to the plant, but most often the impact is visual. That impact is more readily apparent in the longer grass of the rough. It's also more obvious when the damage is caused in early season frosts, in, say, late September or October, when the grass is still succulent and growing, and the discrepancy between healthy and unhealthy turf is clearer. It's much less apparent later in the season, when the turf has started going dormant. As a general rule, if there's frost on the ground, golfers are not allowed on the course. although if it's just a tiny patch in the shade of a tree, golfers are asked not to drive or walk through that area . . . common sense.

Our practice green . . .

As we often say, we feel our practice green is one of the best in the area and we try to keep it that way, but can use your help. We occasionally have to deal with golfers who simply don't read the signs, such as "5-ball limit," or "don't hit into the net," or "please don't hit range balls back into the driving range (leaving unsightly divots).

These rules are established to help us keep the practice area in good shape, to make your experience at our course enjoyable. We appreciate your support. Thanks.

