

## Repairing Winter-Damaged Greens

By Dr. Leah Brilman

*Poa annua* and older bentgrass greens can suffer a significant amount of damage due to a severe cold snap. For many greens there are multiple factors that contribute to this damage, including Pythium outbreaks and shade issues. A blend of Chewings fescue and creeping bentgrass can help you get back into play sooner. **EmergenCC** is a blend of Chewings and bentgrass where all the components have been selected for compatibility on a golf course green and germination under low soil temperatures. In the Northern-tier States and in Canada, variations on this blend has been used for many years after winter damage. The blend has enabled the greens to be back in play significantly sooner. You can also use improved creeping bentgrass alone to repair this damage. Waiting for your *Poa* greens to recover from *Poa* Seeds after extensive damage can also limit your use of chemistry to control seedheads, so the greens may have less uniformity for many months to come. Action to repair your greens is also visible to golfers.

*What techniques have been used to reestablish greens? The aggressiveness depends on the extent of the damage.*

1. Hole punching with a solid quadratine followed by seeding and topdressing has been successful.
2. Verti-cutting in two or more directions followed by seeding and light topdressing is effective in placing closely spaced rows of turf.
3. Spikers are also useful and may help break up any matt that may be sealing the surface.
4. Tools such as the TurfCo Triwave or the Job-Saver aerator attachment, which produce numerous small, shallow holes, increase the success of an interseeding program.
5. Dimple tines are useful in creating areas for germinating seed on damaged greens.
6. The trick with all methods is to insure that the seed is planted within the thatch and matt so that it does not rest on the surface where it will not germinate. The seed needs to be covered by a thin layer of topdressing so that it will remain wet and germinate. Top dress again after seeding and roll the surface.
7. A seeding rate of 3-4 lbs/1000 sq. ft. for bentgrass or 8 lbs/1000 sq.ft. of **EmergenCC** insures sufficient seedlings for rapid turf establishment and resumption of play.
8. Ensure that adequate water and fertilizer is available for these young seedlings.
9. Start mowing once you have a good stand to encourage tiller.
10. Soil temperatures for germination can be helped by using a cover.



*The sooner you seed the sooner the greens will be back in play.*