

## DISTRIBUTION CENTERS

## Soil Free Turfgrass Sod: Adding options to the superintendent's tool kit

### The Challenge: Establish playing surfaces quickly

The condition of your greens' playing surface is the most important element of your course. Reputations can be made or broken depending on how they perform. It is no wonder that the best way to establish a new greens surface in the cool season region has always been considered growing it in by seed. And what may surprise people is that, as turfgrass sod producers, we agree!

If you can afford a year to bring your green to perfection, it is the way to go. Unfortunately today's fast-paced world, club members' unwillingness to play on temporary greens, and financial pressures, make this optimum approach a luxury of time unavailable to most. So many clubs continue to struggle with unmanageable situations with turf that survives on the edge.

During the last eight years, Manderley has developed a new and realistic alternative for establishing your Bentgrass playing surfaces: Soil free Bentgrass turf using the StrathAyr™ process. Manderley adapted this proprietary system from Australia to our cool season requirements, and after overcoming some initial challenges in perfecting the system, the product is now used by some of the most prestigious clubs in the country. There is another option for establishing greens in a very short period of time.

### Soil Free Technology – What it is

Soil free turfgrass sod is nursery grown turfgrass that is processed to completely remove any trace of soil from it. The turfgrass can be obtained in either small roll or large roll format (200 sq ft rolls), which leaves fewer seams. Once the soil is removed the product is extremely lightweight and conforms to the greens surface perfectly. The product is free from thatch and contains no soil borne pathogens. The product is clean to handle and can be shipped over large distances by refrigerated transport since the lack of soil mass allows air to pass through to cool it efficiently.

### Soil Free Performance – What it means

Soil free turfgrass matches your green's profile material perfectly. It is as if you grew the seed in your green from the start, but with several months of saved time. There are no interface problems to worry about with differing particle sizes or contaminants. The turf on the surface perfectly matches your green's mix and is free-draining.

### Soil Free Performance- What it does

Another benefit of soil free turfgrass is that it produces roots at an astounding rate when compared to either seedlings or typical sod with soil. As the turfgrass is already mature and well-nourished, it can devote a large portion of its energy to new root development following the disruption of the initial transplant. This rapid establishment allows you to adapt the green to your specifications sooner than would otherwise be possible. Top-dressing operations and reducing the HOC can begin quickly. Depending on the existing environmental conditions, 21 days to play is not unusual.

### Soil Free Turfgrass – What it is not

Soil free turfgrass is a product available to the professional superintendent to establish a greens surface in very little time. It is an excellent way to finish time-pressured grow-ins or make renovations timelines acceptable to the club management.

Although soil free turfgrass can establish new turf on the surface, it cannot fix the problems beneath. It is still important to determine the underlying reasons why your turf may be having difficulty in the first place and to address these before establishing a new surface.



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