

Melnor Travelling Sprinklers

There can be few Head Greenkeepers who, given the opportunity, would not jump at the chance of having an automatic watering system installed at their Golf Club. The advantages of automatic watering are numerous, and well known, but many Greenkeepers must regard the possibility of their Club adopting such a system as being highly unlikely.

The basic factor which unfortunately precludes many clubs from installing an automatic watering system is cost. It is estimated that conversion costs per green (in most cases involving the installation of new pipework) could amount to £500/£600 (approximately £9/£12,000 for 18 holes).

Paradoxically, the chance less well-off clubs have of enjoying the benefits derived from an automatic watering system, e.g. reducing course labour costs, becomes increasingly remote as world commodity and product prices continue to increase at an alarming rate. However, it may interest, and perhaps reassure Greenkeepers, that an "automatic" sprinkler is available (at a very reasonable cost) which will meet many of the criteria laid down for automatic pop-up sprinkler systems, i.e. the **MELNOR range of TRAVEL-MATIC SPRINKLERS.**

The unique range of TRAVEL-MATIC sprinklers are manufactured by Melnor Industries of the USA and during the past ten years or so, several hundred thousand units have been sold. Although MELNOR produces its own underground sprinkler system,

the TRAVEL-MATICs form part of their very large and comprehensive range of domestic lawn sprinklers. During the past three years in which the TRAVEL-MATIC has been sold in the UK, an increasing percentage of annual sales has been taken up by "professional" users, e.g. Bowling, Tennis, Cricket Clubs, Parks Departments, Growers, etc.

Four models of the TRAVEL-MATIC are available, the basic difference between them being the length of hose the sprinkler will accommodate, i.e.

	Water coverage up to :
Super (model 3803)	
300 ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ " hose	20,000 ft.
Deluxe (model 3503)	
240 ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ " hose	16,000 ft.
Standard (model 2503)	
150 ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ " hose	10,750 ft.
Compact (model 2203)	
100 ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ " hose	7,900 ft.

Satisfactory coverage can be achieved at average water pressure (diameter of throw x hose length = area watered). Where conditions are adverse, the self-travelling sprinkler is the only unit that can be adapted to meet the situation.

ASSEMBLY

Initial assembly of the TRAVEL-MATIC is simple and straightforward:

1. The appropriate length of hose is connected to the TRAVEL-

MATIC drum (by means of brass coupling provided). The hose is then fully wound on.

2. A shut-off valve is connected to the free end of the hose.
3. The required length (and diameter) of feed hose is connected to other side of shut-off valve.
4. The free end of the feed hose is connected to the water point and the shut-off valve is sited in the desired position.

Operation

Having picked up the end of the guide wheel frame, the operator walks forward leaving a trail of hose on the ground behind him.

(The hose pattern laid down will depend on the nature of the area to be irrigated, but can be devious as one requires.)

On reaching the point where one wishes to commence watering, the following steps are taken :

1. The width and fineness of spray is selected by adjusting the spray-arm nozzles.
2. The TRAVEL-MATIC's rate of speed is selected by adjustment of the control knob. All models can be set for stationary sprinkling. The Super and Deluxe versions have two forward speeds, while the Standard and Compact versions have only one forward speed.
3. The guide wheel is positioned on top of the hose.
4. The water is turned on.

How the TRAVEL-MATIC Works

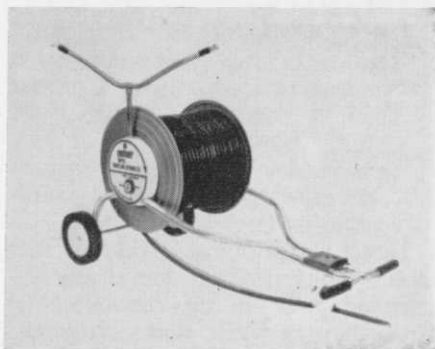
Around the base of the vertical tube, which supports the spray arm and through which the water passes, is a fixed gear. This gear is connected to a series of other gears, the last one being permanently fixed to the sprinkler's hose drum. It therefore follows that the rotation of the spray arm will cause the drum to revolve, (as-

suming that the TRAVEL-MATIC has been set to travel) and thus reel in the hose. In effect, the TRAVEL-MATIC is pulling itself towards the water point and the guide wheel, resting on the hose, ensures that it faithfully follows the laid down hose route.

Eventually, the guide wheel will make contact with the shut-off valve, effectively stopping the flow of water to the sprinkler, and thus bringing it to a complete halt. By the time the TRAVEL-MATIC comes to rest, the complete hose length will be back on the sprinkler's drum.

Some advantages of the TRAVEL-MATIC Sprinkler

1. The spray pattern formed by the revolving spray arm results in very even coverage with little variation in the density of application across the width of spray (up to 60 ft.) and fineness of spray, controlled by adjustable nozzles.



2. The TRAVEL-MATICs are both easy and quick to set up. Even the largest unit should take less than two minutes to connect up to the water point, run the hose out and turn the water on.
3. With its ability to follow any laid down hose pattern, The TRAVEL-MATIC can be used to irrigate irregular green shapes without excessive water being

laid down due to constant "overlap" (which is a feature of the impact "part circle" sprinkler's green watering pattern).

4. Whereas the segment, or part circle, sprinklers are, perhaps because of poor water pressure or faulty mechanical action, somewhat prone to dwell or stick at the end of each sweep, the TRAVEL-MATIC can be relied upon to spray evenly due to the constant rotation of the spray arm. This is an important point to bear in mind when one considers the problems arising from unattended, or faulty, sprinklers, i.e. flooding, water wastage.
5. The value of night time watering—in providing considerable reductions in water usage (less evaporation and transpiration loss) and allowing full utility of club facilities, is well known, as are the problems in implementing night time watering by means of ordinary portable sprinklers. However, the TRAVEL-MATIC's ability to shut itself off automatically, having completed its task of laying down a precise bed of water over a prescribed area, provides an economic answer for those clubs who cannot afford to install a fully automatic underground system.

To be worth doing, night watering should be carried out completely unattended and in this context, the Greenkeeper, when considering the TRAVEL-MATIC, should bear in mind the security of those objects left out on the course overnight.

Pressure

The number of TRAVEL-MATICS which can be operated at any one time depends on several factors, e.g. the pressure available from the club's water source, the size of TRAVEL-MATIC being used, the diameter (and length) of hose connected from water point to the sprinkler.

The water pressure required to operate the TRAVEL-MATIC in a satisfactory way is a good deal less than is required for most other types of sprinkler, and this can, of course, be useful where water to the greens is provided by public mains. Apart from the hose drum, TRAVEL-MATICS are manufactured from non-corrodible materials. The gears are made from a nylon material.

NEW PRODUCT

A unique plastic capable of being nailed to wood without splitting is being used to produce letters, numbers and backgrounds for tee boards, and other signs around the golf course.

The plastic, called Duraply is marketed by **Sharman Parker Ltd. of Chapel-en-le-Frith, Cheshire**. It is rot-proof, fade resistant, simple and effective to use. If letters or numbers need to be changed a pair of pincers are used to remove the nails, and then the new letters or figures can be nailed on.

By maintaining a small stock of Duraply numbers, letters and backgrounds clubs can now make or alter tee-boards and other signs at a moment's notice with very little cost.

As well as letters and numbers, Sharman Parker are also offering a range of coloured backgrounds.

Further information is obtainable from Sharman Parker Ltd., Smithfield Mill, Market Street, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 6JS.