



Scotts Victorious at Villa

Aston Villa's Head Groundsman Jonathan Calderwood says that his Scotts iTurf programme keeps Villa Park's 98% sand pitch in top condition.

"We have great results from Scotts products and excellent technical back-up from Mark Rayner, our key account manager," says Jonathan, who oversees a team of 10 ground staff – three at Villa Park and seven at the training ground, which comprises 14 pitches.

Four of them are built to a similar high sand-based specification as the main stadium pitch.

One is an exact replica of the Villa Park pitch, complete with full Desso system, and the ground staff team mirror the treatments of the stadium surface to achieve similar results.

Even though it has none of the shade problems of Villa Park, it has identical rootzone and drainage.

"The problem with our main pitch is that water just goes straight through it," Jonathan explained.

"We put around 60 tonnes of sand on it every year which makes it even more free-draining. We have a fertiliser programme that works very well for us because it is very difficult to keep grass growing well on pure sand - we use the pop-up sprinklers constantly."

"From September to March we use a moving system of UV lights rigs which makes the pitch even drier, but does keep the grass growing," said Jonathan, who was recently voted 'Groundsman's Groundsman of the Year'.



Aerators in Demand

Long Ashton Golf Club has taken delivery of its third Wiedenmann Terra Spike deep aerator in six years.

Course Manager, Jim Braithwaite, has just welcomed the latest Terra Spike GXi6

The club has earned a first class reputation for its consistently high standard of greens and fairways and pro-active approach to preparation and maintenance.

In 2003, the club bought a Wiedenmann XP 160 specifically to deep tine the course. Six months later it was the first purchaser anywhere in the UK of Wiedenmann's Terra Spike XF, the ultra-fast aerator which revolutionised the speed of deep tine aeration.

"We have had no problems at all with either our XP, or our XF. We've used them systematically to cover the course quickly and efficiently; the XP using its deeper tines on the fairways and the soil-based greens and the XF has been used everywhere," said Jim.

Noticeably in the last year heavier and prolonged rainfall has affected some of Long Ashton's clay-based greens; two of which – the 8th and 15th - have just had new drainage installed.

After discussions with groundscape sales specialist, TH White at Knockdown, a deal was struck to part exchange the five year old XF for a GXi6.

New Role for Wembley Man

ServiceMaster Ltd has appointed former Wembley Head Groundsman Steve Welch to manage its TruGreen lawn care franchise network.

As TruGreen Network Manager Steve is tasked with helping to grow and develop the professional lawn care business further.

He comments; "I've

joined TruGreen at a really exciting time. Having made a name within the industry as a leading provider of domestic lawn care we now feel confident that we can provide an equally impressive service to other markets.

My background in the sports world will obviously be a benefit to me here in



terms of technical expertise and I am looking forward to the challenge of helping the business explore new fields."