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The anatomy of...

A Charterhouse core collector

Charterhouse introduced its first pedestrian CC3000 Core Collector in 2002, the featured CC3001HL coming along in 2006. It may look the same, but it is much changed from the original.
Charterhouse has established that the average golf green will, post coring, yield around a tonne of cores depending upon size and moisture. Multiply that by 18 greens, and you could end up with 18 tonnes of cores that need to be picked up. No surprise that this task is increasingly carried out by a core collector, with many clubs hiring in a unit as needed.

The problem with hiring is that most clubs will want to be coring at pretty much the same time as everyone else which can mean you have to wait for a collector. It was to address this issue by offering a relatively low-cost alternative that led to the development of the original CC3000 Core Collector. Picking up across a 1.0m width, the pedestrian machine was designed to keep up with a pedestrian core of the same width.

The original unit proved a success for Charterhouse, but the design has moved on. First was the hydrostatic drive system. This was directly driven from the 5.5hp petrol engine which made starting tricky; the recoil starter had to pull over not just the engine but the drive as well. This made it difficult to turn the engine over, particularly when cold.

The second issue related to the pick-up system. In outline this used the same collection head design as the existing CC3001HL model but with a pair of impellers picking up and discharging the cores into the hopper. Turning at a relatively high speed, the impellers work just fine but they also had a tendency to smash the cores. This could in turn lead to debris building up in the elevator which, if left, could lead to blockages.

The CC3001HL overcomes the first issue by doing away with the hydrostatic drive and replacing it with a simple belt drive. When the collector is at a standstill, the drive brakes the wheels and disengages the transmission clutch. The power unit is thus disconnected, making it far easier to start. The 7.5hp Briggs also has a bit more power, this proving useful when handling a full hopper up an incline.

To get around the problem of cores getting broken up within the elevator, the two impellers were replaced by a conveyor. This has a more gentle pick-up action, helping reduce debris build up and the need for cleaning. Another new feature is the ability to reverse the conveyor. If the elevator does get blocked, reversing the conveyor should clear it.

These developments from the original design have helped boost sales of the Core Collector, Charterhouse having sold more of the British made units this year than any other year. The way in which cores are picked up, however, is not changed, the slim stainless steel bottom blade design of the original machines being carried over.

In work, the operator drives the three-wheel unit from the rear, the ‘dead man’ handle being pushed down to engage drive. Four forward speeds are offered, with first two typically providing the right balance between a comfortable working pace and the ability to cleanly pick-up the cores.

The swage boards at the front of the unit window the cores ahead of the collection head, the slim profile of bottom blade allowing it to slide beneath them.

The whole system is very simple, with the machine produce good results not just with cores but also debris brought up during deep scarifying. Once passed over the bottom blade, the cores are picked up by the conveyor and discharged into the 1m3 hopper. Dust and debris is contained by a hinged steel cover over the hopper.

When it comes to emptying the hopper, the operator can discharge into a turf truck or trailer, the hopper lifting to a side of up to 1.30m. The actual tipping action is designed so the hopper lifts and moves back, avoiding the problem of material spilling back as the load is dumped.

The tri-cycle undercarriage affords the unit with good agility, making the Core Collector and ideal partner to pedestrian as well as tractor mounted cores. Running on smooth tyres inflated to 1.2 to 1.4 bar, a full collector will weigh in at around 530kg.

**SUMMARY**

Collecting cores manually can be time-consuming, the job becoming a greater chore if the cores start to break up. Mechanical collection is therefore something that golf and sports turf professional tend to favour. The snag is some collectors are pretty costly to buy and hiring can be tricky if you are not at the front of the queue when you actually need one. With a retail price of £6,595, the Charterhouse CC3001HL Core Collector certainly appears to be well worth a look. Simple, easy to operate and, above all, capable of dealing with large volumes of cores it does exactly what it says in its name.

With grateful thanks to: Gareth Roberts, Course Manager, Hankley Common Golf Club and Nick Darkinger, Tim Franklin, Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

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**Step-by-step Analysis...**

**Charterhouse C3001HL Core Collector**

The swage boards at the front of the unit window the cores ahead of the collection head, the slim profile of the bottom blade allowing it to slide beneath them. The whole system is very simple, with the machine produce good results not just with cores but also debris brought up during deep scarifying. Once passed over the bottom blade, the cores are picked up by the conveyor and discharged into the 1m³ hopper. Dust and debris is contained by a hinged steel cover over the hopper.

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The tri-cycle undercarriage affords the unit with good agility, making the Core Collector and ideal partner to pedestrian as well as tractor mounted cores. Running on smooth tyres inflated to 1.2 to 1.4 bar, a full collector will weigh in at around 530kg.
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The swing boards at the front of the unit window the cores ahead of the collection head, the slim profile of bottom blade allowing it to slide beneath them. The whole system is very simple, with the machine produce good results not just with cores but also debris brought up during deep scarifying. Once passed over the bottom blade, the cores are picked up by the conveyor and discharged into the 1m³ hopper. Dust and debris is contained by a hinged steel cover over the hopper.

When it comes to emptying the hopper, the operator can discharge into a turf truck or trailer, the hopper lifting to clear a side of up to 1.30m. The actual tipping action is designed so the hopper lifts and moves back, avoiding the problem of material spilling back as the load is dumped. The tricycle undercarriage affords the unit with good agility, making the Core Collector and ideal partner to pedestrian as well as tractor mounted corers. Running on smooth tyres inflated to 1.2 to 1.4 bar, a full collector will weigh in at around 530kg.

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