Divot mix gets green light for agronomy

Becker Underwood demonstrates that divot mix coloured with Green Lawnger™ not only gives a cosmetic benefit but also has agronomic advantages.

Throughout golf’s history, divots have caused unsightly conditions and negatively influenced play, making divot repair and divot management programmes an integral part of golf course management. The use of green divot mixes has traditionally been seen as an expensive ‘luxury’ which is used in high profile televised golf tournaments and football matches.

However, there is ever growing interest in the use of specialised pigment based technologies to give agronomic values to modern day sports turf management. It has been identified that the use of green coloured sand has more than just an aesthetic ‘Green Up’ benefit but also has an agronomic benefit in terms of quicker seed germination and establishment when used as a divot mix.

Recent trials conducted in March 2012 by Becker Underwood Inc., showed an 80/20 divot mix coloured with Green Lawnger (green pigments) increased the speed of germination and establishment to that of a standard divot mix. (Figure 1).

The pigments and Colorlock™ technology in Green Lawnger, which is manufactured by Becker Underwood Inc, physically coats the sand particle and changes the colour from a light brown to a dark green.

By changing the colour of the sand from a light brown to a dark green this helps maximise the sun energy by raising the temperature of the divot mix. This happens due to the darker colour being able to absorb more of the light spectrum which includes infrared light (warm light). Light brown coloured sand has the ability to reflect more light radiation and keep the divot mix cooler, which gives the germination rate down to that of the darker material.

By absorbing more radiation (heat) in the divot mix this helps create conditions that are more conducive for seed germination when quick establishment is required in the spring and autumn.

Preparing Green Divot mix is straight forward and costs as little as £7p per Kg to produce. Mixing small amounts of divot mix can be carried out by using a portabale cement mixer or similar mixing device.