

# Sometimes Being a Drag Can Be a Good Thing

By Darren Davis

Recently my assistant, Brett Howell, approached me with an idea that resulted in the design of a terrific new tool. The tool is a “drag” that, when pulled behind a utility vehicle, does a terrific job of breaking up aerification cores. In addition to its intended use, we have found that it’s excellent at breaking up clippings after mowing, and also removing early morning dew from turf. The tool is the subject of this Super Tip. However, in order to give credit where credit is due, I need to provide you with some background information that led to the design of this new tool.

A few years back I was in search of a tool that would be used to remove early morning dew on the golf course, thus providing a finishing touch for tournaments and special events. As we are always busy on the morning of a special event, I desired something that could be operated by one person and pulled with any utility vehicle. My search led to the purchase of a “Dew Draggin’” from Miltona, which performed exactly as promised in the company’s catalog. The 25-foot wide “Dew Draggin’” is made of PVC and rope and effectively removes early morning dew over large areas in a short period of time.

Then when aerification season arrived, we began investigating alternative methods to break up aerification cores in fairways. We desired something that was less damaging to the turf than a steel drag mat and did not tie up a tractor. Our goal was to break up the cores so the thatch could be removed more quickly by our Rak-o-vac, or blower. So, we hooked up the “Dew Draggin’” and gave it a try. However, we quickly realized why breaking up aerification cores was not an advertised feature of the “Dew



*Top: This heavy-duty, yet simple-to-construct, drag not only eliminates dew for special early morning events it also busts up aerification cores during renovation. Photo by Darren Davis*

*Inset: Four 1/2-inch bolts through the 1-1/2-inch electrical conduit pipe connect swivels to the 5/16-inch chain which does the actual dragging on the turf. Photo by Darren Davis.*

Draggin’.” Unfortunately, the tool was not aggressive enough to be effective.

We liked the concept of pulling something behind a utility vehicle for this task, and we liked the design of the “Dew Draggin’.” This is what originated the development of our new “drag” which essentially is a beefed-up, homemade mini “Dew Draggin’.” The tool we designed is made of metal and chain, instead of PVC and rope. The new tool is very effective at its intended use of loosening up aerification cores, and, like the “Dew Draggin’,” it is excellent at breaking up clippings and removing early morning dew.

The tool is made from a 10-foot piece of medium-strength metal pipe. The pipe we chose is 1-1/2-inch electrical metal tubing (EMT). We found the thickness of the metal to be durable, but significantly lighter weight than

galvanized pipe. Attached to the pipe is a 22-foot section of 5/16-inch coil chain.

The chain is the part of the tool that touches the ground, and does the actual work. In order to get the necessary “movement” of the chain when pulled across turf, the chain is attached to two, 3/8-inch swivels. These swivels are then affixed to the metal pipe with two, 4-inch eye bolts.

The final step was to attach a pull harness to the metal pipe so it can be fastened to — and pulled by — a utility vehicle. The harness is an 8-foot section of 5/16-inch coil chain that is bolted to the pipe 3 feet from each end (4 feet apart), and is attached to the pipe by two, 4-inch eye bolts.

My equipment manager was able to construct the drag in less than an hour, and excluding labor, the total cost was \$115.15.