

## Trenching during wet weather — the easy way

By TERRY BUCHEN

VASTERAS, Sweden — Most of Sweden accumulated more than twice its normal rainfall during last year's growing season. The good news is, this rainfall identifies areas on golf courses that need additional, or first-time drainage. While it has been extremely difficult to operate traditional trenching machines because their rubber tires often cause severe turf damage, local course managers and greenkeepers have devised new ways to add drainage pipelines during wet conditions.

To continue with a drainage master plan, Fullero Golfklubb course Manager Jan Stavas bought a modified "Track Hoe" from a local distributor. The distributor had added a trenching machine auger, enabling it to work in wet soil conditions.

"It operates hydraulically, with all necessary controls in the equipment operator's cab," Stavas said. "Through a laser leveling device near the far end of the trencher, the equipment operator can see at all times to accurately do the proper percent slope."

Yet, the most important part of this implement is that the "Tracks" allow it to operate on any fairway or rough area, with little or no disturbance to the



The original trenching machine design allows for trenching during wet weather and soil conditions.

turfgrass and its playing conditions.

The Fullero Golfklubb crews lay the 100-millimeter-diameter plastic perforated drainage pipe 300 millimeters below the surface of the ground. Then they completely cover it with 6- to 9-millimeter-diameter pea gravel. Since the top 50 millimeters of the subsurface is native soil, the pea gravel can sometimes be as deep as 300 millimeters, depending on the

slope of the ground.

At the course's low points, Stavas extends a 100-millimeter-diameter pipe vertically and attaches a 150-millimeter-diameter catch basin to remove excess surface quickly and efficiently.

"We are extremely pleased with our modified trenching machine," Stavas said. "It has allowed us to make much progress all summer long, even during very wet soil conditions."

## Brits researching new nematodes

BINGLEY, England — The Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) is monitoring a potential new problem for cool-season amenity turf which appears to have taken a foothold: parasitic nematodes.

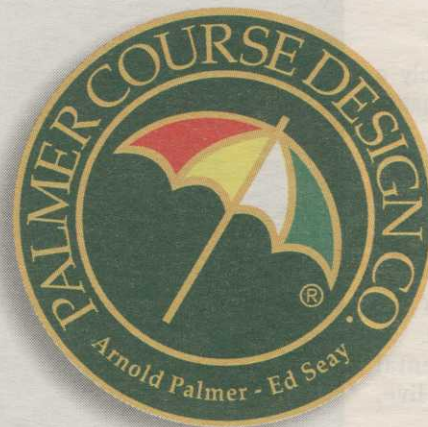
Nematodes, microscopic roundworms, have long been recognized as a problem of warm-season turfgrasses. But over the last few years from turf samples received at the STRI biology laboratory, they have now been identified at numerous sites in the cool-season turfgrass areas of the UK, Northern America and Continental Europe.

STRI is in the process of determining the extent and severity of nematode damage to turf across the UK and is keen to increase the scope of its research.

STRI pathologist Dr. Kate York explained: "The symptoms can vary dramatically. But, in general, if you have areas of turf which never seem to pick up after fertilizer application, or always seem to be 'lagging behind' the rest ... nematodes could be at the root of the problem."

York wants to receive samples from potential nematodes sufferers. She can be contacted at STRI, St. Ives Estate, Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD161AU, Tel: 01274 565131, email: stri@rmplc.co.uk.

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