O. J. Noer's Turf Tips

Growing Grass in Summer

The use of fertilizer, at light rates, during the summer season on watered fairways is becoming popular in Canada. It has been common in the United States in the past several years.

In order to make monthly applications, fast spreading is desirable.

There are several good, fast spreaders in the United States. By using almost any one of them all 18 fairways can be fertilized in a day, or less. Now Canadians have a machine of this type which is produced by a Canadian manufacturer.

The supts. believe one way to live with the power-driven golf cars is to grow grass, and to keep it strong all summer. To do this they use a little fertilizer each month, and water as needed. They counteract compaction by aerifying once or twice a year.

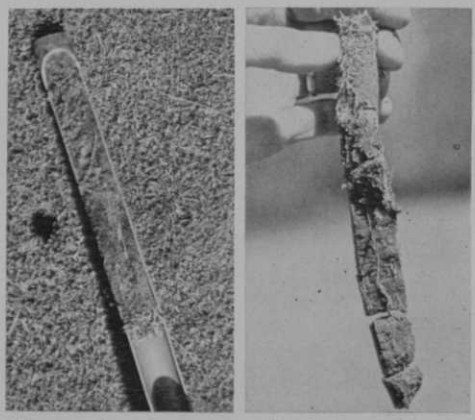
Compaction at the surface, irrespective of soil composition, seems to cause shallow rooting of bent greens in the North, and of fine textured Bermuda grass greens in the South.

How to Get Deep Roots

Two years ago root systems on greens at Rosedale in Toronto were shallow rooted, almost to the point of non-existence. Constant showering was necessary to prevent loss of grass. Now the turf is deep rooted, 10 to 12 ins. or more, in length. Turf survives without constant showering, seven days a week. A similar situation prevailed at Sea Island, Georgia. Now the turf there has healthy, white, deep roots.

Four or Five Times

Aerification four or five times a year, along with topdressing each time after plug removal, promoted deep root development. At both places, roots were far deeper than the depth of the aerifier holes. Once roots formed in the surface soil, where growth had been prevented by soil compaction, they extended downward into the non-compacted soil below.



(L) plug from bent green showing root development in aerified hole; (R) 10 to 12 in. roots, numerous enough to hold plug intact against pull of gravity. Roots extended beyond the plug.

Top Dressing Mixture

Topdressing consisted of 2 to 3 parts, by volume, of good sharp sand, 1 part loam soil and 1 to 1½ parts humus of a fibrous character. The switch to a coarser, sharp sand, rather than a fine sand, was very helpful.

Spiking regularly with a three-gang, or a single-unit power spiker is a good way to relieve compaction when it is confined to the top in. of soil.