

NOTEBOOK...

Startling! Unbelievable! Dramatic!

WHEN part of a sports ground is virtually restored to life it is hard not to use superlatives. Especially when a problem has existed for years without proper solution and the answer is achieved in three or four weeks.

But it happened at Purley Heath Cricket Club, whose outfield - like many others - is used for hockey during the winter with the inevitable after-effects. The ground lies on original soil of doubtful quality and, as a negative 'bonus', also suffers from the effects of large overhanging trees around the ground which make the groundsman's job almost a nightmare. Colin Claydon saw it both as a problem and challenge and was determined to find a cure.

The result will interest his many colleagues with similar problems.

In April 1987 his ground showed the usual ravages of winter. The outfield, including an area of two hockey pitches, seemed in worse state than usual. Missing divots, excess wear, bare and muddy patches were the order of the day.

Despite reseeding and dressing with a sound all-round fertiliser (Rigby Taylor 9-7-7) there was little sign of good grass growth by early June. Where the turf was overshadowed by large overhanging trees picturesque and photogenic but

friendly to the outfield grass - were large bare, poorly grassed patches defying all attempts to promote vigorous growth.

All this on a ground generally noted for its all-round excellence following four or five years of hard work from the time when Colin inherited pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens in a sorry state with the turf everywhere in poor condition, vulnerable to disease and thatch-ridden.

At the outset Colin took the advice of Frank Brittin, a popular and knowledgeable friend to many groundsman and greenkeepers, and began using seaweed-based products to restore his grass: using Maxidrop as a foliar feed and Alginure Soil Improver with his top dressings. The results on bowling greens and tennis courts (used regularly for prestige county events) have been to restore the turf to a healthy condition with underlying improvement in the soil structure which ensures optimum benefit is derived from irrigation and dressings.

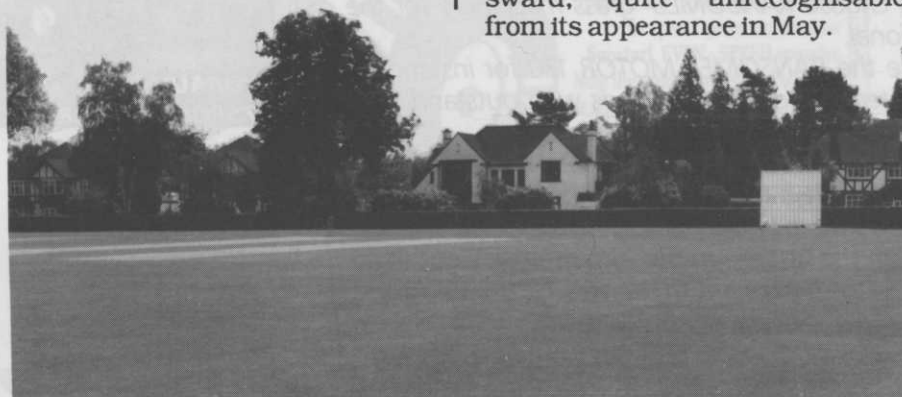
Colin therefore opted for seaweed to tackle his problem outfield areas, but using a new product - Alginure Turf Supplement, a new liquid added to Alginure's range, and the speedy result was better than he had hoped because by the end of June the area was transformed into a rich green sward, quite unrecognisable from its appearance in May.

The result was spectacular but the reason was simple. Alginure Turf Supplement is not a liquid feed, but rather, is rich in essential foods necessary for the initiation and maintenance of vital bacterial and microbial life whose activities create healthy soil conditions.

The concentration of these highly desirable 'goodies' (properly known as polysaccharides) in Alginure Turf Supplement is around 37% - an amount far in excess of that available in other purely organic liquids and it was the introduction into the soil of the natural food for those essential organisms which had the expected result.

Such organisms, encouraged to flourish, carry on the work of improving the organic structure of the soil while aeration is improved, available nutrients are released more easily and conditions are created which benefit growing vegetation.

Colin Claydon has since commenced work in his new post at Shell Sports Ground at Lensbury.



Purley Cricket Club - a view of the ground.