



HATCH

'Addition of a sandy top dressing dilutes thatch and increases its permeability'



49 → ing the use of water and fertiliser to maintain grass growth but not force a lush sward. Scarification/verticutting also has an important part to play during the growing season to lightly flick through the turf, removing creeping growth and surface litter. A comb attachment for the mower is useful in this respect.

A more thorough verticutting treatment in early autumn, setting the blades to cut into the turf, can be beneficial, but may not resolve the problem alone. Hollow tine aeration in the autumn or spring is very helpful as this physically

removes a small proportion of the unwanted fibrous material, which can be replaced with a more free-draining sandy top dressing – a type of soil exchange. It must, however, be appreciated that hollow tining using 12mm diameter tines at 50mm centres removes only 5% of the surface, which is a relatively small proportion and must therefore be continued over a number of years.

More recently, with the introduction of the Coremaster 12 fitted with quadra-tines, it may be possible with severe problems to hollow tine through the summer without undue

surface disruption, this coupled with monthly top dressing. Hollow tining can also be used to relieve compaction or barriers near the surface, but for deeper seated drainage problems the use of sub-aerators such as the Verti-Drain or Twose Turf Conditioner is useful. Solid or slit tine aeration must also be carried out on a regular basis to relieve surface compaction and permit air into the soil to promote natural thatch breakdown and encourage deeper rooting.

The addition of a sandy top dressing dilutes thatch and increases its permeability, providing a more open texture which can be attacked by micro-organisms. Top dressing with a sandy soil is also believed to prolong the available nitrogen supply to the thatch layer, which in turn promotes more decomposition. The objectives are to intersperse sandy top dressing with the thatch to keep it open and promote natural breakdown – not just to bury it. Aeration through the winter helps with the 'mixing process', as well as promoting air circulation.

Where the thatch layer exists for several centimetres, such as on an old golf green, it may be possible to cut the turf thinly; cut and discard the layer of thatch, rake up the turf bed and replace the turf or, indeed, remove the turf and thatch in one go and either seed or turf. A drastic measure perhaps, but not to be discounted in extreme circumstances. It should be realised, however, that unless the cause of the thatch is eliminated the thatch will merely tend to accumulate once again after the turf has been replaced. Conventional maintenance should be stepped up before such measures are considered.

● The author, Andy Cole, until recently an advisory agronomist with the STRI, is now a lecturer in greenkeeping at the Warwickshire College of Agriculture.

RECRUITMENT

ST. ENODOC GOLF CLUB

invites applications for the post of

DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

From persons of proven ability and experience in all aspects of course maintenance and knowledge of machinery maintenance, with ability to direct and motivate staff.

References will be required.

References will be required.

No accommodation available. Salary negotiable.

Applications in writing to:

The Secretary

St. Enodoc Golf Club

Rock, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6LB

(Tel: 0208 863216)

Marple Golf Club

requires a

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The ability to organise and encourage greenstaff is essential.

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Sven Moos, Managing Partner, Golf Care GmbH Golfplatzpflege

Irmgardstrasse 22

8000 Munich 71, Germany

or call Sven Moos on 010 49 89 7900052 with any questions you might have.

ROMILEY GOLF CLUB

require an

ASSISTANT HEAD GREENKEEPER

to join an ambitious and progressive team.

Applicants should be City & Guilds qualified or equivalent, have a sound knowledge of modern greenkeeping methods, including maintenance of machinery and irrigation systems.

The successful applicant should be capable of leading a team, after initial guidance from the head greenkeeper.

Salary negotiable, no accommodation available.

Send full CV to:

**The Secretary
 Romiley Golf Club
 Goosehouse Green
 Romiley
 Cheshire**



Assistant Superintendent required

For this prestigious Jack Nicklaus designed 18 hole World Class Golf Course, 3 hole Teaching Academy and Practice Area.

A formal greenkeeping qualification is preferred but proven experience of working to high standards in the management of the course will be equally acceptable.

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Please apply with your full CV to:

**Mr Aidan O'Hara,
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Applications in writing with full CV and references should be sent to:

The Secretary
Helensburgh Golf Club
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THE GREENOCK GOLF CLUB

invite applications for the position of

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**The Secretary/Manager
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ALFORD GOLF CLUB

require a

HEAD GREENKEEPER

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A thorough knowledge of modern greenkeeping practices, irrigation systems and construction methods, along with the ability to organise and motivate staff are essential.

Salary is negotiable according to qualifications and experience.

Apply in writing to:

**The Secretary, Alford Golf Club, Montgarie Road, Alford,
Aberdeenshire AB3 8AE.**

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