

Anchors away as divots get heave-ho

Ever since golfers started using iron clubs on turf fairways there has been the problem of divots, their replacement and regrowth.

Birds soon learnt to exploit this new food source as worms, grubs and insects sought refuge under replaced turf.

It is not only birds which disturb divots as machinery, golfers' spikes and drying winds which desiccate the turf all contribute to rooting failure.

Attempts were made to fabricate divot anchors 50 years ago but were prone to failure as the anticipated moulded anchor was intended to be made of clay, seed and fertiliser, designed to eventually break down and improve the soil.

This never got off the ground let alone into it.

Many bio-degradable materials have been investigated in the development of the divot anchor and varying methods of manufacture, such as moulding, pressing and laser cutting have been attempted.

Fairway	Number anchored	No. disturbed by machines/	birds
1st	313	5	11
15th	168	Nil	Nil
18th	188	3	5

Most methods and materials gave unwieldy and unacceptable anchors in terms of practical usage on fairways.

The material chosen to fabricate the anchor is an impact styrene, which though non bio-degradable, has a number of advantages as it is malleable yet tough but breaks readily by the impact of a clubhead.

Moulding an anchor with this plastic allowed the designer to use the minimal amount of material that works efficiently.

Field trials under normal conditions and fairway management were held at South Herts Golf Club, Totteridge, during the period November to March.

In the STRI trial pairs of reasonably adjacent divots were identified and marked. One divot of the pair was then anchored.

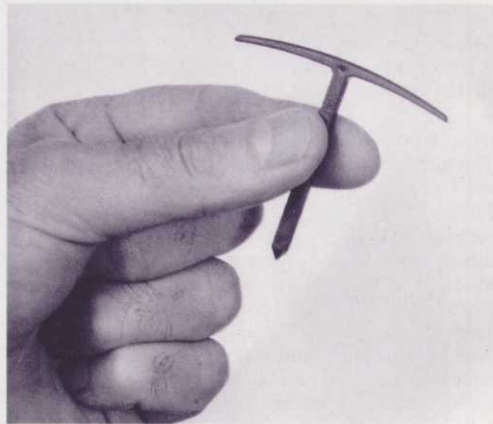
Final assessments were given after a period of at least one month when re-rooting of the divots was evaluated visually and scored with appropriate scale methods, the results showed that already over a third of the unanchored divots had been displaced and would therefore not root.

Of those divots which had been anchored 14% had been dislodged, primarily by the aeration work as vertidrainage had taken place on the fairways during the trial.

The STRI commented that significant improvement was brought about by the use of anchors in terms of divot retention and recovery.

An informal trial was also conducted when all divots were routinely anchored on three fairways. Only substantial divots with rooting potential were anchored. Thin divots, scuffs and fragmented turf was excluded.

All the anchored divots in the trials, identified by coloured aerosol markings had grown in and were undetectable by mid April when grass



Not a pick axe for pixies, but a divot anchor!

growth was under way.

Course machinery such as Sweepers, mowers, slitters, scarifiers and overseeders had no major adverse effect on anchored divots. Vertidrainers will, however, pull out an anchored divot.

General thinking now is that the golfers themselves should anchor their own turf. Members are always demanding that more attention is paid to the welfare of their course.

Encouraging members to anchor their own divots gives the players an input in preserving their club's fairways and can be instrumental in better course care generally.

The Manufacturers of "Tuff Tie" Divot Anchors have now made available a "Locker Room Dispenser" which gives a supply source of anchors for members.

The text on which advises on the reasons for their use, the Dispenser can be located in the Changing Room or alternatively in the area of the 1st Tee.

For further information Tel: 0181 275 0018

Martin procures new job

Johnsons Seeds has appointed Martin Swinnerton as Procurement Group Manager. Based at the company's headquarters in Boston, Lincolnshire, Martin will be responsible for contracting seed crops, systems stock control and purchasing for Johnsons' entire seed range.



Martin is no stranger to Johnsons. After studying agriculture at Reaseheath College, he joined the company as a trainee 12 years ago. Immediately prior to his new appointment, Martin was Sales Administration Manager.

Martin and his team will be dealing with the entire supply and production chain, from securing deliveries and packaging, to liaising with suppliers throughout Europe, United States, Canada and New Zealand.

Ken's On Course

Ken Barbour, formerly Golf Courses and Estate Manger at East Sussex National, has formed On Course, Golf Course Consultants.



Trained at Penn State University Ken has over 25 years practical experience in all aspects of turfgrass Management.

He is now offering a full consultancy service to golf clubs throughout Europe.

He can be contacted on Tel/fax: +44 (0) 1825 732031.

I'm sorry, could you spray that again?

In a move supported by BIGGA, the suppliers of Blazon Spray Pattern Indicator are offering Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers the opportunity of an expenses paid trip to next year's Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Convention in Florida, USA.

Included in the trip will be the registration costs for the Pre-Conference Seminars, Educational Programme and entrance to the trade exhibition. In addition, the winning

greenkeeper's club will receive a brand new Hardi AMK 300 Tractor Mounted Sprayer.

All Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers have to do is order one or more of Blazon Spray Pattern Indicator before June 30 complete a Blazon Claim Voucher and their name will go into the national draw. At the end of the campaign, the first name drawn by Gordon Child, BIGGA Chairman, will be invited, together with a representative of the club, to

receive the prizes at this year's Saltex. Details are being mailed to every golf club and additional leaflets will be available from Farmura and Blazon Distributor representatives.

This initiative is part of the joint BIGGA/Blazon 'Spray Watch' campaign introduced last year to increase awareness of spraying issues, as they affect safety, and the need for a responsible approach to the practice of spray application within a golf course environment.

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Alastair Tough, Muckhart GC

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