

## Re: Comments on the hollow tine theory

The last two weeks of August, 28 holes to hollow tine and top dress, four greenkeepers, no big budget, a little sweat and great results. Sidney Mercer's comments on Gordon Child's article, I feel are wide of the mark. We at Taunton Vale have, over the last five years, maintained exactly as Gordon and Richard Windows suggest and for us, has proved a far superior method than the late September dates we previously used. I'm sure if we can manage to cope so can other Clubs but 'each to their own' and realise that every situation is different.

**Steve Welch**  
Course Manager  
Taunton Vale Golf Club  
Somerset

## In response...

In response to Mr Mercer's letter in the November issue of Greenkeeper International I offer the following comments.

The aim of the article was to explain a philosophy with regard to obtaining maximum results from deep aeration. In our increasingly wetter climate, the autumn months – the conventional time for such work – have become far wetter than they used to be. In order to optimize performance of deep aeration treatment we must, therefore, look to other times of the year when the soils are likely to be drier and thus more receptive to the task, both in terms of drainage improvement and surface recovery.

Such a generic philosophy may not be achievable or even required in some cases and our advice in this regard would of course be site specific and only administered after appropriate discussion with the turf manager/committee etc, following a course review. Obviously, describing every such eventuality (eg. soil type, requirement of the club etc.) in the constraints of a relatively brief article is impossible.

Finally, there is no doubt that the climate is changing. If we as an industry are to adapt to this change, which we surely must, we have to adopt the best management practices to ensure the best possible surfaces are provided for the golfers.

**Richard Windows**  
STRI

## Many Thanks

I would just like to thank all members, staff and trade personnel who have so kindly sent their best wishes to me over the last few weeks.

Unfortunately at the time of writing I am still in hospital awaiting my turn for the operation. I suppose, at least Marion knows where I am as they won't let me escape.

Meanwhile I look forward to the time I can thank you all in person, and once again enjoy your company.

**Gordon Child**  
Churston

## Jim Arthur 1

I am writing in response to the letter from Jim Arthur entitled 'How can we Progress?' published in last month's issue.

I have read this letter a number of times now and I am still searching to find the connection between Scott MacCallum's article on St Andrews Bay and the one from Neil Thomas. There cannot and is not a comparison to be made between the two, how can projects like ours be blamed for Chairmen of Green sacking perfectly competent greenkeepers. Surely this is down to educating the membership and as Derek Green said "properly defining the role of the Chairman". This is surely a more sensible line of action than blaming "the golf course down the road" because they dare to do something a little different.

I can also find no comparison to be made between a guy who has been voted onto a committee for a term of office and someone who spends \$50,000,000 of his "own" personal fortune. Which one do you think has the right to dictate how their golf course should look? Answers on a postcard to Mr J. H. Arthur, Budleigh Salterton, etc.

**Neil Ballingall**  
Golf Course Superintendent  
St Andrews Bay  
Fife

## Jim Arthur 2

It gladdens my heart to read another letter from Jim Arthur in our magazine - Greenkeeper International December issue.

I have, for more years that I care to remember, been a supporter of Jim's ideas and methods as have a lot of greenkeepers, many of who would support but not necessarily be able to carry out.

I have been a retired Course Manager now for four years but still take interest in what is happening as regards greenkeeping. Jim's letter let us all know what greenkeepers are up against in the world today.

How many golf courses today do we visit where we have an abundance of natural grasses? We see swards of thick meadow grass with pop-up heads not far away, lush wormy areas and fescue and bent swallowed up.

Like Jim I am not knocking Head Greenkeepers. This is what most have to do either directed or for a quiet life. Very few are able to do their own thing.

Jim Arthur has been a consistent help to the greenkeeping profession, never afraid to voice his opinion. This doesn't mean he's never wrong but time continuously let's us he's more right than wrong.

He has stood by his ideals throughout his life, never wavering and this is why at times he courts controversy as very often people don't like to hear the truth.

**John Nudds**  
Hunstanton  
Norfolk

P.S. What has happened to Sludgecombe Municipality? I miss its humour

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