



## CONTROL THE WEATHER

BTME 2014 was a roaring success and everyone left Harrogate with a spring in their step anticipating the new season with relish. Alas, the weather has been playing its part again in spoiling thoughts we had of an early start to the season. Here Alan Abel from Complete Weed Control gives his views.

“There is nothing but sadness for all those flooded out of their homes recently. As far as our industry is concerned, all involved in turf husbandry are struggling either to make surfaces playable, or get anything done whatsoever. The ground has been like a sodden sponge, where just walking on it has a marking effect.

“We need two or three weeks with a dry easterly wind to help with the drying process and enable much needed fertiliser programmes to start.

“These recent conditions have led to swards that are hungry so now is a good time to get soil samples done and analysed. With the correct programmes put in place when the ‘big dry out’ does eventually happen, turf should recover quickly.

“On a happier note, temperatures are remaining quite reasonable, but this is leading to a lot of early growth of weeds. The temptation is for an early spray, but as previously said; it’s economically advantageous to wait till the real season starts.

“The other problem is moss and the weather has only exaggerated the problem we all have with this invasive nuisance. Talking of invasives; because of all the flooding, courses near water should be vigilant for the germination of Himalayan Balsam. This pink flowered weed looks very delicate just now and for a few weeks to come, before becoming a real issue on river banks, whilst being capable of spreading very quickly.

“Another invasive that may be taking advantage of the lousy weather is Japanese Knotweed, as this also spreads through flood ravaged areas. Remember, a piece weighing 0.062 grammes can be viable and grow into a mature plant.

“The chafer grub population this year is also high along with the leatherjacket count. Additionally worms are causing unsightly casts and providing weeds with a ready-made seed bed. I’m not trying to sound like a harbinger of doom, with pestilence around every corner, just bringing these problems that may be lurking into focus.

“Complete Weed Control has over 40 Amenity Assured Standard franchisees in the field, ready to help all turf managers’ deal with any of the problems outlined above. Please call for a survey of nuisance plants, a soil sample service, and a price on worm, leatherjacket or chafer control.”



## NEW DEALER FOR CHARTERHOUSE

Charterhouse Turf Machinery has taken on GGM (Gibson’s Garden Machinery) as their dealer for West & South Yorkshire. GGM Groundscare is a specialist supplier of tractors and high quality professional land-based equipment together with after-sales support.

Probably best known for its iconic Verti-Drain® aerator, Redexim products have constantly evolved and expanded to not only offer aerators, but also top dressers, overseeders and scarifiers for natural turf as well as a growing range of machines for Synthetic surfaces.

Andy Melville, GGM Commercial Director, said: “For over 30 years Charterhouse Turf Machinery has been providing turf managers with professional maintenance machinery. The addition of their range of products will strengthen the expanding range of groundcare products that we at GGM already have to offer.”

# CAMPEY TAKE DEMO TO HART



Hart Common Golf Club was the venue for the first UK demonstration of the VHR Top Changer - a tractor mounted injection process that can inject fluid and small particle materials, in this case 7" into the playing surface leaving very little playing surface disruption afterwards.

Combining aeration and sanding in one action, the VGR Top Changer introduced by Campey Turf Care is designed to encourage rapid, healthy grass growth. Over time the process can completely change the top surface without any interference to play.

The VGR has a working width of 1.6m and produces a closely spaced row of holes that are immediately filled with sand to allow a path of air and water to penetrate the top layer of the soil and be absorbed by the root zone. Nutrients, wetting agents, liquids and soil improvers can also be placed directly at the roots.



## HOW TO IDENTIFY THE WIEDENMANN AERATOR FOR YOU

Wiedenmann's Terra Spike brand markets no fewer than ten machines so there is quite literally an aerator to suit everyone. But who buys what? According to the Wiedenmann UK sales team, the starting point generally depends on two things - what do you want to achieve and what size is the tractor? The filtering process then moves to factors like required depth, speed, size of site, versatility and budget concluding normally with a match of one or two Wiedenmann aerators that often can be demonstrated in situ.

Mostly purchasers have already identified they have issues with compaction or thatch or a combination of both.

Solid tining is the traditional route to resolve compaction. Usually clients volunteer where their specific problems lie, typically somewhere in the range of 100 mm to 300 mm below the surface. As Wiedenmann Terra Spikes operate down from a very competent 220 mm to a handsome 400 mm, most machines remain in the frame. If thatch is severe then perhaps the aerator's focus will be hollow coring. Depth here wouldn't be as big as a concern as thatch normally occurs in the top 50 mm of the soil layer but a faster machine could be favoured as it produces optimal hollow coring results.

Early recognition of the tractor employed is essential because obviously the larger the aerator the more hp is required. Tractors from approximately 25 hp to 60 hp can all accommodate one or more aerator. Importantly, the aerator's working width should be slightly wider than the tractor wheel span preventing issues with tyres tracking over newly tined ground. Wiedenmann's fleet goes from working widths of 1.35 m right the way up to 2.1 m so contractors or those with considerable territory to cover, like estate managers, might start by looking at the widest machines first.

The name badges attached to the Terra Spike fleet give a clue to each area of machine speciality - the extra fast XF, the extra deep XD, the extra penetrative XP while the 'G' prefix on the GXi relates to its suitability to greens and fine turf areas.

All Terra Spike aerators have easy to operate controls for depth and heave settings that are tool free. Changing tines takes less than 15 minutes. By using a variety of tines in combination, soil decompaction and soil exchange can be done cost effectively using only one machine.

An excellent anti-vibration system significantly reduces any vibration through the tractor to the operator. Another advantage a Wiedenmann delivers is the consistently regular hole pattern and clean finish. Wiedenmann machines prove daily that aeration can be done quickly and effortlessly without leaving tell tale signs.

Versatility is the key with all the Terra Spikes, the XF, the XD and the XP models in particular, have "access all areas" status so can be seen widely on golf courses, municipal sites and club pitches.



## DON'T RISK A 'WILL-FIT' THIS SPRING

Spring is a key time of year to consider your turf equipment and its performance, but never more so than this year after the wettest winter on record. With the ground in better shape and spring course renovation underway, Lely says it's imperative users' Toro equipment is up to the job of looking after that all-important new grass.

Well-maintained bedknives are vital in producing a quality cut and genuine Toro bedknives are the best there are, outperforming 'will-fit' inferior quality parts.

Recent research at Toro headquarters in America proves this point. In tests focused on many physical characteristics, in particular the flatness of the knife and positioning of the chamfered mounting holes, results showed that competitor bedknives failed in over 50 percent of Toro quality specification standards.

Dull bedknives damage grass, affecting after-cut appearance and the long-term health of the turf.