

contact me – Tel: 01384 292396 – so I can put them into the report. I can only report things which I personally hear and would like to put things in which you also know or have news on which you think is of interest.

Let me leave you with this. When you get this report you will probably have or being involved in lots of arguments with members about the condition of Augusta and why your course is not like that. This is just the Annual Augusta Blues. A post Augusta Disorder!
Jonathan Wood

East of England

The first competition of the season was held at Thorney Lakes GC, a new course with plenty of water hazard (hence the name). Thanks to Head Greenkeeper Sid and his staff for an excellent course under the demanding conditions.

The turnout was extremely good for the first competition of the year and hopefully you will show the same support for the rest of the events. All standards of golfers play, so new members are always welcome.

The Thorney competition was sponsored by Peterborough Garden Machinery and it was nice to see sponsor, Alister get off his sick bed to come and support the

event. Other sponsors were Fieldcare, Atkins, Rigby Taylors, Barenburg and Purdys, with some wine from Roy Harrison.

It was also nice to have the Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, supporting our event. Peter outlined some forthcoming events and donated some raffle prizes.

Results: (Order of Merit for BIGGA Blazer Points in brackets)

1. David Welberry, Kirton Holme GC, 37 Pts (10 Pts);
2. Peter Larter, Reg Administrator, 36 Pts;
3. Richard Smith, Immingham GC, 34 Pts, (8 Pts);
4. Graeme Macdonald, Ryston Park GC, 33 Pts, (6 Pts);
5. George Venable, Hemingford GC, 33 pts, (4 Pts);
6. Kevin Hodges, Cambs Lakes GC, 33 Pts, (2 Pts)

Nearest the Pin: Richard Owen, Boston West, 6 metres

Best wishes to Charlie Macdonald, of Newark GC, who has been appointed the new Course Manager of Crieff GC. Charlie has been a great supporter of the East of England and will be sadly missed.

Graeme Macdonald

SOUTH EAST REGION

Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

South East Region

The inaugural Regional Challenge



Around the Green



Shield was held at Princes Golf Club, Sandwich, on Maundy Thursday. Perhaps an unfortunate choice of date as London, Essex and Kent Sections were unable to raise a team to challenge for this Shield being so close to Easter. East Anglia, Surrey and Sussex however each raised a team of 11 members together with a team made up from trade and guests and enjoyed a marvellous day at this classic links venue.

The event was the brainchild of Chris Allen, Lewes, who is keen that all the Sections within the Region should get to know each other and what better way than a golf match! It is hoped that with a more suitable date this event will become a regular fixture in the Region's calendar.

Generous sponsorship by John Deere and Avoncrop Amenity Products provided a fine array of prizes, John Deere donating a Princes Club Chrystal Decanter to each of the 11 members of the winning team with other prize winners picking up prizes courtesy of Avoncrop Amenity Products.

The Regional Challenge Shield and decanters for hte team competition was decided on a Stableford with the best ten scores in each team to count with Surrey winning with 301 points.

Best Individual Scores were: 1. Gavin Kyle, 37 pts; 2. Matt Allen, 36 pts; 3. Danny O'Rourke 35 pts; 4. Mark Day, 34 pts. The two nearest the pin prizes were won by Roger Tydeman and Terry Bent. Guest Prize winner, Mike Smith.

The Region's thanks are due to, not only Chris Allen for organising the event, but to the teams who supported it – particularly East Anglia who travelled such a distance to be there – and last but not least to Princes Golf Club for providing such a wonderful links golf course, bar and catering. Derek Farrington

Essex

I recently enjoyed a day at Walton Heath GC for the Gentlemen's Dinner. The course was in good condition ad the organisation was first class as usual. I didn't see many Essex winners, only me! I won the putting competition so thanks to SISIS for the prize.

The Section held a seminar at Writtle College on March 18 when, at very short notice, Edward Clarkson gave a talk on Symbio. Thanks for stepping into

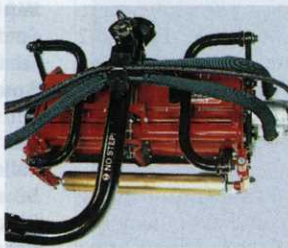
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the breech Edward. Twenty five members were present and we retired to the bar for a few beers. The prize winner of the sponsored questionnaire was Robert Williams of Gosfield Lakes. We received 54 completed entries. Thank you Graham for your work in collating the replies, the results will be available after May 14.

Martin Hucklesby, of Five Lakes, gave a career talk to sixth formers and further education students at Southend Leisure Centre to help promote the industry in our area and show how professional we all are.

Anyone interested in playing in a summer golf league should contact Mike Fance at Stockbrook Manor GC, Billericay.

It was good to hear from Douglas Parmenter who tells me he is a Jim Arthur fan and at 77 years of age is still reading *Greenkeeper International*, a wonderful magazine. Thanks for your good wishes and keep reading the magazine Douglas.

We have a few movers and shakers this last couple of months. Martin Dumbrill has moved from Rochford Hundred GC to a course in Austria, as Head Greenkeeper, to be nearer his fiancée. Steve Lawrence has moved from Channels to Suffolk G and CC as Head Greenkeeper. Keith Chinnery, Head Greenkeeper at Colchester GC was married on March 7, congratulations!

We have our first golf meeting on April 22 at Chigwell. This is the Hayter Qualifier. Our next meeting at Writtle College is on May 14 when we have two speakers, Roger Levitt, of Johnson's Seeds, talking on the Life Cycle of the Grass Plant and Andy Cawley, of Dow Elanco talking on Fungicide Functions.

That's all for this month, don't let the grass grow too long under your feet!
Dave Wells

East Anglia

Milton College, Cambridge, was the venue for an Education Seminar on March 19. Some 30 people attended the lectures and all heard something of interest to them. Mike Franklin, from Boughton Loam, gave an insight into the companies operating procedures from the types of top dressings and rootzones they supply through to the screening, grading and distribution. The importance of the correct types and use of grass species was the subject of Andrew Hodgekiss, from Johnsons Seeds. With the use of slides showing various trial plots and full planting schemes, a good presentation

Around the Green



was given and certainly left all those attending with something to think about the next time they have reason to seed a particular area of their course.

After a good lunch was had by all Lyndon Upham, Course Manager of Gog Magog GC, made a presentation taking us through the various stages of the construction of the new 18 hole course at Gogs. With some splendid slides we were shown the work from the initial removal of the top soil through the laying of the greens, tees and fairways and on to the irrigation installation. We were then taken through the maintenance which has brought the course up to the highest standard. John Beck, from Miracle Professional, finished the day with an interesting look at some fertiliser surveys. John gave some explanations to the statistics which in some instances threw up some surprises.

March 27 saw the first South East Region team challenge match. Four of the regions sections managed to raise an 11-man team at quite short notice and had the honour of playing Princes GC at Sandwich in Kent. This true links course with not a tree, gorse bush or sprig of heather was certainly a challenge for all playing on the day and a fair breeze blew which meant the narrow fairways became even harder to hit. The East Anglia team came fourth out of four teams, but only just! This did not matter too much as I am sure for many it was their first taste of links golf and this taking place at the club where Gene Sarazen won the 1932 Open Championship. Surrey came through as the winners and it is hoped the competition can be played as an annual event.

April 9 was a beautiful spring day and 31 competitors took full advantage of the balmy weather and played a medal round at Fynn Valley GC to see who would be progressing through to the South East regional final of the Hayter Challenge. The course was in superb condition and all credit to Tony and his greenstaff for making it so. The prizes were presented by Ron Sargent, the Fynn Valley Captain. Results:- 1. T Russell, nett 68; 2. M Mison, nett 69; 3. S Millard, nett 70. Qualifiers

through to Ham Manor on June 27 are:- 1-9 - P Howard, A Carter, M Keyse, R Boyce. 10-18 - S Millard, J Timms, M Virley, D Childs. 19-28 - T Russell, M Mison, T Huddleston, J Holliday.

Anyone who is unable to attend on this date please contact Ian Willet as soon as possible so a reserve can be contacted.

The loo seat (!) trophy went to T. Tyrrel for his 17 on the first hole. The best trade score was nett 75 by Brian Richardson. This, he tells us, is the first prize he has ever won at golf. He seemed to be reasonably happy with his prize which was a golf trolley and visions sprang to mind of Brian riding it like a cowboy, travelling west towards the setting sun! John Humphreys came second also with a nett 75.

Thanks once again to all the greenstaff, bar staff and kitchen staff at Fynn Valley GC who made the day so enjoyable, not forgetting the trade who supported us so well. They were CMW Equipment, Colliers, Hayter, Pattisons, Rhone Poulenc, Rushbrook and Sons, SISIS and Turf Actant. Apologies for anyone I have left out!

The next golf meeting will be at Felixstowe Ferry GC on Wednesday June 25. There will also be an education seminar to be held at Milton College, Cambridge in June, details to follow in the near future.

Finally, many thanks to Ian Willett who this year started the difficult and demanding job of Section Secretary in such a fine and enthusiastic manner. I trust all members will show their gratitude to him by attending the golf competitions and seminars when possible.
Stephen Millard

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Gordon Child
Tel: 01803 844056

South Coast

On Thursday March 6 we had our final winter lecture at Crane Valley GC where between 40 and 50 members were present. Bob Scott and Alan Sinclair of British Seed Houses gave us a very interesting talk on the British Seed Houses set up. They touched on the new seeds that are being produced and the genetic engineering that is involved in producing these seeds and also spoke about the new creeping bent grass, providence. Providence has been sown on some new golf courses and is giving good results. The talk was very well illustrated with some very good slides. We



enjoyed a splendid lunch courtesy of British Seed Houses and on behalf of the Section I would like to thank Bob and Alan for an excellent presentation and a very nice meal.

After lunch we played 9 holes and I would like to thank Crane Valley GC for allowing us the use of their clubhouse and courtesy of the course. Thanks to Martin Summers and his staff for presenting the course in pristine condition. The day went very well and was well attended so thank you to all of you who were there.

For all of you who have qualified for the Hayter Regional Tournament please ensure that you are there on the day. If you cannot make it let Mark Webb know in plenty of time so he can get replacements. We want a winning team this year however a winning team cannot be achieved without a complete team. The venue this year is Burnham and Berrow GC on June 11. Good luck!

Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

I would like to start my report this month by welcoming the Region's new Administrator, Paula Humphries, to her post within our Association. I am sure Paula will prove to be an excellent Administrator for the Region continuing on from Gordon and Marion's splendid work.

The Section's last meeting of the winter programme was held at Honiton GC on Thursday March 20. With the sun on their backs our golfing members played over the excellently prepared course for the Supaturf & Rhone Poulenc Trophies. This was also the Section's qualifier for the Hayter Tournament with qualifiers going forward to the Regional Final which will be held at Burnham and Berrow GC on June 11.

Our non-golfing members were joined for the course walk by our guest speaker, David Everett. We would like to thank John for guiding members around the course and sheds.

After a superb lunch our President John Palfrey presented the prizes on the behalf of Supaturf and Paul Clifton presented the prizes for the Rhone Poulenc Trophy.

Supaturf Trophy for Head Greenkeepers and Trade:- 1. Buster Lewer (Daignton), 41 pts; 2. Tony Gooch (Torrington), 40 pts on back 9; 3. Tony Ramsden (Budock Vean), 40 pts.

Rhone Poulenc Trophy for Assistants:- 1. Steve Worrall (Stover), 44 pts; 2. Tony James (Tehidy), 41 pts on back 9; 3.

Peter Gross (Ashbury), 41 pts.

Hayter Qualifiers:- 0-9 Category - C Bland, R Daly, T Gooch, T Ramsden, C Rawlings; 10-18 Category - M Child, B Lewer, D Manley, M Parrish, S Worrall; 19-28 Category - T Clark, P Gross, T James, S Saunders, N Turner. Our congratulations are extended to all who have qualified for the Regional Final.

Our afternoon educational talk rounded off an excellent day with Dave Everett, Head Greenkeeper at Lyme Regis, presenting an excellent talk on the effects of chemical vandalism to his course and the steps and decisions he has had to take on the long road to recovery. The Section would like to thank Dave for his superb talk.

Also the Section would like to thank Supaturf and Paul Clifton, of Rhône Poulenc, for their continued support and to Honiton GC and all their staff who made our day run so smoothly, with special thanks to Trevor Pipe and his crew who had the course in excellent condition.

Richard Whyman

South West

With no tournaments to report on this month now is the time to say a few words about education and other events in the pipeline.

In the last few months we have held a first aid course, a PA6 and a PA1 spraying course. All have been fairly well attended and resulted in everyone achieving their desired qualifications thanks to the likes of Noel Stevens, our regular tutor, for pesticide application. These courses are held when sufficient numbers are available so please if anyone is interested let me know by giving me a ring on 01380 828380. As well as being held locally and with other greenkeepers they provide a small revenue for the area's funds, all of which help to subsidise other events, so your support is very much appreciated.

The PA2 courses and tests will be held throughout the next few months on a very local basis. I will be contacting people whose names are on my list and trying to arrange them at the candidate's home club or, if possible, get them arranged at a neighbouring club so as to keep the costs down. Either way it is only two candidates per spraying machine and so will be done on a very low candidate to tutor ratio. Once again if you are not sure if you are already on my list give me a ring and I will start to get things sorted out.

Numbers on the chainsaw waiting list are growing to the point where we have sufficient to

run a course. However, after some discussion it was felt we should leave this until the early autumn when greenkeepers will have a bit more time and it is more relevant to the type of work we will be doing.

I am indebted to my friend and colleague Mark Ford, from Kingsdown GC, for enquiring about the possibility of running a course for abrasive wheels, their use and maintenance. I am sure practically every club has one but unless you are qualified you are not allowed to change an abrasive wheel. You can use it, but it can only be changed by someone who is qualified to do so. So it should be of great benefit to Course Managers, mechanics and First Assistants to attend such a course which we will be running when we have sufficient numbers. Once again give me a ring and we will get one going, probably at Chippenham College, but other venues may be possible.

Anyone interested in becoming an NVQ assessor should ring Kevin Green on 01179 793127. Kevin has asked me to point out, however, that the courses now being run are only open to Course Managers who have a candidate waiting to be assessed on their staff. If there are any questions regarding this then do not hesitate to give Kevin a ring. He normally gets home from work before 10pm.

The GA Greensomes is coming to Chippenham GC on May 21, so get your names down for that. I have been doing some industrial espionage and can confirm that Chris Sealey's greens are so sickeningly good it should be worth looking forward to. The next event will be the match against the Secretaries at Long Ashton. Please put your name down for this crucial match and try to keep your handicaps as high as possible. Remember that if you have, or intend, to put your name down for these matches you must make yourself available on the day. There is nothing worse for our secretary and team captain than having desperately to find a team at the last minute after being let down.

My apologies for omitting the preview for Westurf in last month's article. I can only put it down to youthful inexperience.

Last, but not least, can I congratulate Robin Greaves on his election to the Board of Management at Headquarters. Having shared a room at Harrogate with Robin I feel sure that his enthusiasm and abilities as a communicator will contribute a great deal to the progress of the Association.

Marc Haring

WET...

But not behind the ears!

Ocmis Irrigation

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The growth of **SWT**

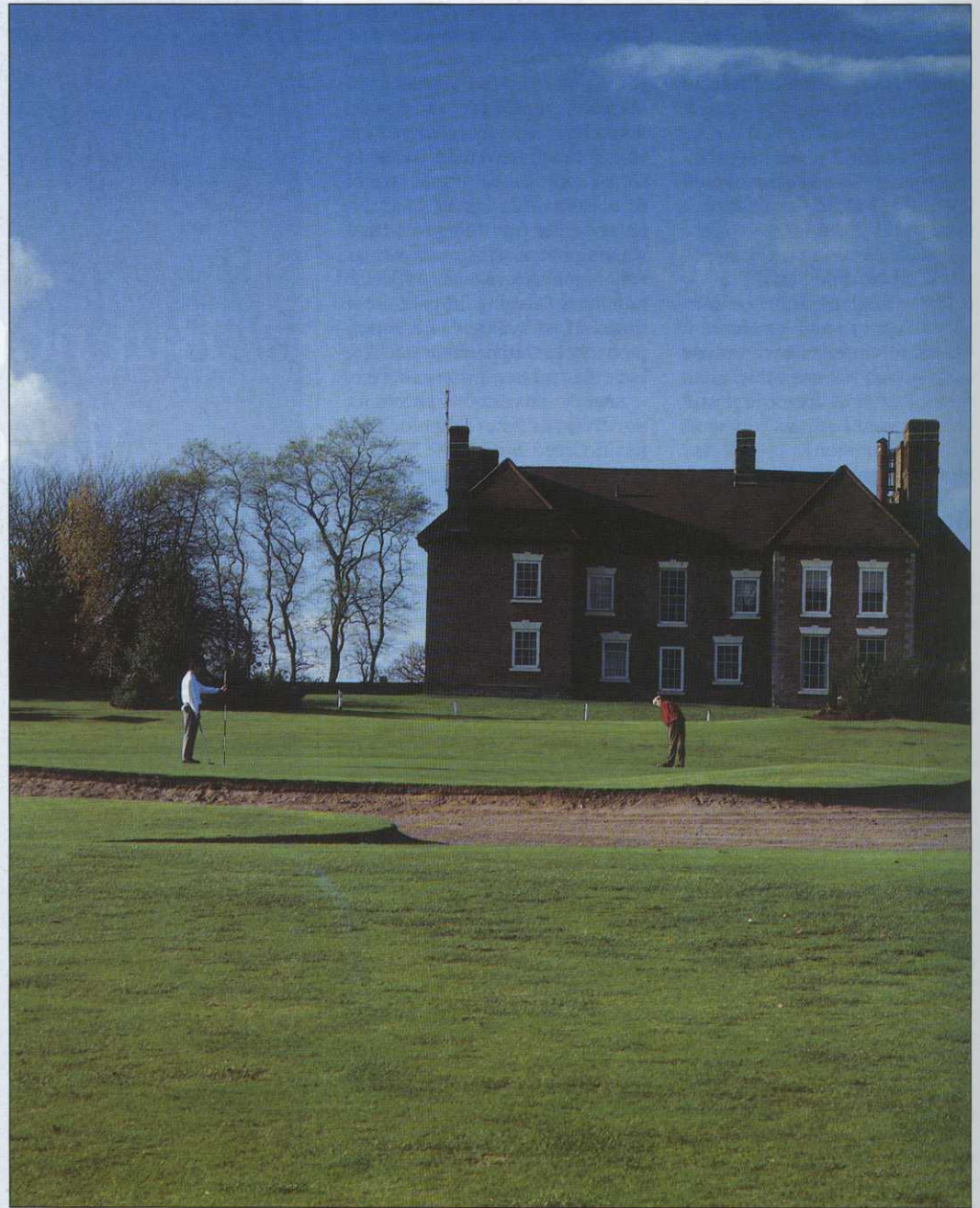
Bryan Griffiths, Chairman of Golfconsult International Ltd, looks back at the introduction of a new style of green construction.

In the early 1970s most golfing folk had never heard of the acronym 'SWT'. A few thought it meant "sea-washed turf". It took years for the truth to sink in – that it was a very different thing and a revolutionary step forward. We are discussing the now better known "Suspended Water Table" (SWT) putting green specification. In the beginning there was ill informed scepticism among the British "experts" which was well aired in the golf press.

SWT first hit Europe from America in the 1960s and Britain in the early 1970s. The first three British courses incorporating the earliest version of SWT, all designed by the author, were Staverton Park, in Northants (1976), Dougalston, near Glasgow (1977) and Telford Moat House, in Shropshire (1978). A recent review of their performance in the interim shows that between them they have taken about 2 1/2 million rounds of golf – with no serious problems nor any use of winter greens.

This was not achieved without some initial difficulties for the greenkeepers tending the unfamiliar; inevitably mistakes were made. Happily, to their credit, the greenkeepers then responsible – the three are still there – soon mastered the arts of keeping SWT in superb condition over the next 20 odd years – the oldest in Britain. After this long experience in mature operation and many more since the late 1980s, the burden of proving that SWT is in any way inappropriate for Britain rests with those sceptics mentioned earlier.

With one exception there was a lag of some years before the next generation of SWT greens appeared. That was at Shifnal Golf Club (1929). Being close to Telford, members could try them and were sufficiently impressed to convert their own greens to SWT under the guidance of agronomist Martyn Jones of Myerscough College between 1983 and 1988. He was the first well-informed agronomist advo-



cate of SWT in Britain. With long experience, he has now created SWT test beds for experimental purposes at Myerscough College.

In the early 1990s a veritable surge of new SWT construction began, perhaps sparked off by the so-called "signature" courses by big-name professionals. However, if strict SWT criteria is applied some claims would prove false – such as "sand greens"; US greens and others. There is only one authentic version – built precisely to the USGA (or British equivalent) SWT specification in every

small detail. However creating SWT greens is a major (and expensive) construction management challenge. Without the tightest day by day close monitoring of the materials and work, failure is a high risk.

It should be pointed out in fairness that the critics of yesterday have come round to accepting SWT. There is now also a British version – not exactly re-inventing the wheel; more a valid claim for an equal substitute. For those concerned with new (or replacement) greens it would be prudent

to do their homework very carefully.

Although there have inevitably been minor modifications along the way to the original USGA SWT specification of the 1960s, the basic formula remains of:

- slit plastic pipe herring bone drainage
 - 100 mm gravel raft
 - 50 mm coarse sand filter layer
 - 300 mm rootzone mix
- all to a depth tolerance of plus or minus 10 mm maximum and to strict material specification.

There has always been, as

in Britain

greenkeepers know all too well, the problem of rootzone aeration. Over the years an industry has evolved supplying machinery to slit, spike, verti-drain and otherwise assault putting surfaces, in its simplest form, to get oxygen into the rootzone. Some older greens would hardly survive without this twice yearly brutal assault!

For the fortunate (or perceptive) owners of SWT greens, and more importantly their greenkeepers (which too many owners forget), an innovative and effective solution to deep aeration of SWT greens is at hand. Invented in the US and first used at the Augusta National, the drainage aeration system is here to stay. Unfortunately, older traditional greens are not suitable.

This new system enables air (and oxygen) to be forced through the rootzone, either by pumping in, or extraction via equipment attached to the drainage outlet. Thus it not only oxygenates but also removes the toxic gases so harmful to high quality putting turfgrass.

This perhaps is a clue to the quality of those infamous Augusta greens. According to some published reports, those greens are the famous golf course's last line of defence against today's powerhouse golf game, and the 300 yards plus drives with the new long range golf cannons. The impact of which is both astonishing and even disturbing at the same time. In 1995, young Tiger Woods drove 320 yards on the Par 4 11th of 455 yards, needing only a sand wedge to the green. On the Par 5s 2nd and 8th at 555 yards and 535 yards respectively his second shots were with 5 and 2 irons. No wonder those greens are a critical factor.

But readers can appreciate from all this that British golfers can now play SWT greens at home and for the price of a current green fee. Nor should we forget incidentally that the British amateur Gary Wolstenholme beat Tiger Woods in the last Walker Cup at Royal Porthcawl.

Several demonstrations in Britain of the SubAir SWT greens aeration equipment have taken place in the recent months on 25 modern construction greens in

various conditions and circumstances and the general findings reflect a pattern of performance. Typically the bottom 50 - 100 mm of the rootzone were in a saturated state. The application of a vacuum on the drainage system removes this saturation, stimulating increased infiltration from the upper level of the profile and induction of fresh atmosphere through the surface. Essentially the system is an acceleration of the natural process of the movement of air and water through soil by means of gravity and atmospheric pressure. An initial complete air exchange within a green, as measured with an electronic soil gas analyser, takes anywhere between 15 minutes and two hours depending on conditions. Subsequent treatment time will vary according to seasonal growth conditions and treatment interval. A marked warming of the upper 50 mm of the rootzone was also evident when operating the system in the warmer conditions of the early Spring weather this year.

Nowadays we live with continuous change - in golf no less. This latest innovation, either in permanent installation or mobile form, will enhance the largely high quality and all weather characteristics of SWT greens to produce the finest putting surfaces available. There is however one important caveat. The end results are subject to continuous and effective greens maintenance. SWT is otherwise a waste of money without greenkeeper's expertise.

Which is where the experienced greenkeeper makes his entry on the stage - preceding pampered pros and cossetted club members lucky enough to play these superior greens. This is emphatically not to say, by any means, that superb putting surfaces are not produced by greenkeepers on many, older, traditional greens. How they do it is a mystery to most golfers - amounting to almost disguised genius in some cases. And perhaps this is the reason why, for so long, the unsung greenkeepers, too often with inadequate managerial support, are not as highly valued - and paid - as they undoubtedly deserve.



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REAL WORLD TEST

Shallow Aerators

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Hugh Tilley continues his look at aeration, this month concentrating on shallow aeration.

The condition of turf is dictated in large measure by what happens below ground. Aeration is a vital element of the greenkeeper's work allowing air to get to the roots, and perhaps equally important, surface water to clear. Keeping the top levels of soil open and free of compaction usually requires regular mechanical treatment, this also helps remove thatch.

There are many machines on the market, tractor mounted or self propelled, ride-on or pedestrian – as well as drum type machines which seldom feature on the golf course – and all are offered with a choice of tines and heads. Of course aeration is a total concept and most greenkeepers use a series of machines and programmes in order to achieve their objective thus it would be wrong to view any one machine or programme in isolation.

While most machines use tines worked by cranks to give a vertical motion, there is the Toro Hydroject which uses a water jet to blast holes in the green, and this has the advantage of not leaving debris on the surface. Most of these machines have attachments to row or swath cores so that picking them up is easier, but some manufacturers, such as Ransomes, market their own collecting system. Aeration and coring is inevitably linked to topdressing, often with the top dressing being brushed into the core holes. This may allow the greenkeeper to change the composition of the root zone of the greens – and may even be the prime idea thus more important to some than simply aerating the green. All the machines considered here offered a range of tines, such as coring, solid and slitting, and flexibility over spacing, although to vary lateral spacing it may be necessary to change tine holders. How tines are held into the machine varies, but no-one said that he had trouble keeping tines in. Nor did anyone report difficulty changing tines, most are held in by a pinch bolt, but some



Dennis Ayling and the Sisis Technicore

use a set stud. As no one was trying to work at greater depth than about four inches (100mm) – imperial measure is the norm – there were few problems of tine breakages or bending. However as all were working on mainly greens there should be few stones. Most greenkeepers also used their aerators on tees and approaches. Several mentioned the fact that vibration is inherent in the process and that vibration

could be “a killer” (of the machine) but only one reported this as problem which needed attention, ie regular application of spanners to check tightness.

Changes in distribution have caused Multi-core Aerators to have its own machine made in UK. This totally new model incorporates Ian Waddington's past experience in this field, and includes several features which he considers to be improvements

on the machines which he sold in the past. Two widths are available and both are tractor mounted. While the standard spacing is 61mm, several options are offered and include slitter and mini tine heads. Unfortunately because the machines are so new, Course Managers contacted felt unable to comment and so it has not been possible to include Multi-core in this feature. Incidentally the company has changed the livery and moved headquarters to Wetherby.

Sisis Technicore, at Rowlands Castle Golf Club in Hampshire

“Versatile” was a one word answer to why Rowlands Castle have a Technicore. Dennis Ayling, Course Manager, is extremely pleased with the machine which is run behind an Iseki 320 compact tractor. The club has had the machine for two years and bought it after consideration of several rival, which Dennis commented were “tinny”. He has also had satisfactory past experience with Sisis.

Experience with the machine has been that it is fast and gives all the depth needed. The fact that it has a positive action – punching the tines into the ground, and that it is British were plus factors.

There have been no mechanical problems and only tines have needed replacing. The greens are on original soil, and tees are also treated occasionally. Dennis said that in his experience because the underlying subsoil of clay with flint it is essential to work down to the full depth of four inches over a series of uses. Early use trying to attain full depth had resulted in some bent tines. Having used the machine for two years it is now easy to get this full depth – and quicker, treating all greens now takes about a day.

The club has a range of tines including slitting and pencils and as well as using the coring tines in spring and autumn, the pencil tines are used to open up the turf and allow water to penetrate quickly.

Hardi Coremaster 12, at Sonning Golf Club, Berkshire

The Coremaster has been on the course for over two years and



Mark Cheesman aboard the Hardi Coremaster

was supplied by Risborough Turf – and Course Manager Mark Cheesman commented that the back-up from both Risborough and Hardi has been excellent. In fact the machine has given no problems. One of the primary reasons for the purchase of this particular machine is its system of automatic lubrication – to the main bearings, it uses a pumped oil system which has a visible pressure gauge.

Mark said that it was routine to check the system twice a day, particularly for blockages – which are readily spotted, however no problems have been encountered, nor have oil lines split, and there has been no oil on the grass.

The club has a range of tines, hollow and solid, and quadruple holders with close spaced pencil tines. Normal procedure is to hollow core in autumn, following this with over sowing and top-dressing, and to repeat this cor-

ing in the spring. Cores are collected manually. In addition tees and approaches are cored at this time prior to application of a slow release fertiliser. "Quadrating" – using the pencil tines is practised monthly in summer mainly to minimise surface compaction. Mark also stated that this exercise allowed water to penetrate better. He considered that climatic changes over the past years has made this more important than ever before.

Greens are soil based but have no stones to complicate the operation of aeration. Tees and approaches are tined with solid tines in autumn, and the club also undertook some deep tine aeration. Greens are slit weekly in winter.

The club does not have a "set time" machinery replacement policy, thus Mark expects the Coremaster will continue to be operated until it ceases to be eco-

WHOLE IN ONE

"Tournament® has been used at Barton-on-Sea Golf Club for the past five years, with superb results. The density of the sward has greatly improved. We also use the product at half rate in early September to enhance colour and quality of sward for our traditionally late major competitions."

Tony Gadd, Course Manager
Barton-on-Sea Golf Club

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R. Thomson, Head Greenkeeper
Hoebridge Golf Centre, Surrey

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"Agriland Tournament® was applied to the Show and Practice courts prior to the Direct Line International Championships, June 1996. The condition and appearance of the turf was considerably enhanced, and recovery of the most heavily used practice facilities was greatly assisted by the product."

Roy Charman, Turf Manager
Devonshire Park, Eastbourne

INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL

"I first used Tournament® just before the play offs in 1995. Since then I have used the product regularly and the pitch has continued to improve. I applied Tournament® just prior to the Euro'96 Cup Final because I knew I would get a quick green-up without the worry of any blackening of the turf."

Robert McCullagh, Head Groundsman
Wembley Stadium



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conomic to repair. However there is no sign of this occurring in the near future. He said that the club keeps detailed records on machinery costs, and has a greenkeeper/mechanic thus it can control repair costs.

Groundsman Industries, at Harpenden Golf Course

This pedestrian operated machine is, according to Stewart Boyes, very efficient and user friendly. He considers tractor mounted machines too heavy and damaging to greens turf and thus keeps them off. He also likes the fact that the Groundsman is self-contained and this allows it to be taken out at a moment's notice – without all the hassle of having to get a tractor free and attach it. As a result the club spreads its use of the machine rather than trying to do all greens at a single session.

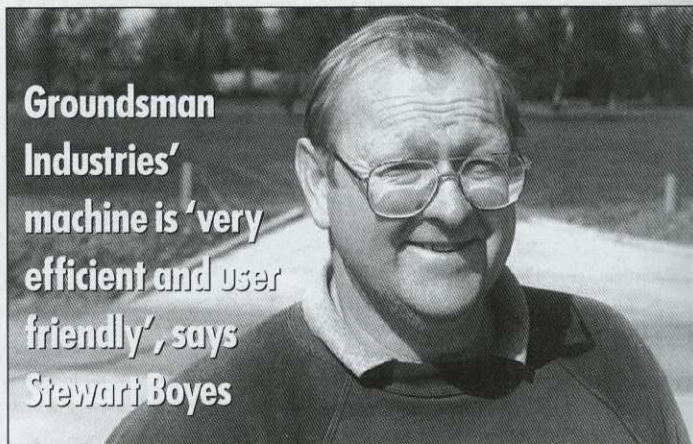
The course was built in 1931 on heavy red clay, thus keeping

the surface open for drainage is particular important.

Harpenden's machine is now four years old and has just been thoroughly overhauled and updated by the manufacturer in Ireland. This resulted in several detail improvements. Service support has been extremely good, Stewart commenting that Groundsman Industries was only a phone call away – and usually on-site within a day to attend to the machine.

Ironically on the day Stewart was visited the machine had just broken down – a problem attributed to the flexible coupling on the main shaft – thus it was not able to be taken out for a photograph! In the past it had proved very reliable.

The club has several types of tine, from one inch upwards, in hollow, solid and chisel forms. Hollow coring takes place in spring and autumn, doing six



Groundsman Industries' machine is 'very efficient and user friendly', says Stewart Boyes

greens over two days per week, this way the number of greens out of play or effected at any one time is minimised. This operation is followed by topdressing using a 70/30 mix and overseeding with bent. Tees and approaches are also cored, but slightly more deeply. Dethatching is seen as the major role in the aeration programme, with the tines only being allowed to penetrate some one inch plus to two inch.

During the summer the greens are treated to slitting using the one inch chisel tines to a three inch depth and this versatility is seen as one of the great advantages of this machine. Another not inconsiderable plus is that it is not an expensive machine, to purchase, maintain nor to run.

Cores are swathed and picked up manually.

Maintenance is very simple, greasing round each time the machine is used, as well as checking engine oil. The Kubota GH250 engine has proved reliable and a good starter. A major result of the recent upgrade has been to further reduce the vibration naturally produced by the operation.

John Deere Aercore 1000, at Wernddu Golf Centre, Abergavenny.

Now in its second season the Aercore is used only for greens and has had a remarkable effect on the speed at which water soaks into them. "It has made irrigation so much more effective that wet

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ter is not now being used. He also reported that aeration had given a great all round improvement of the greens," said Head Greenkeeper, Haydn Woods.

The important reasons for buying the Aercore were its build quality and the service back-up – supplying dealer is Frank Sutton of Raglan. Several competing machines were demonstrated but their build quality had not appeared as impressive.

Keeping the centre open during the winter is vital to the economics of the business and as a result the Aercore is used regularly throughout the winter. Coring is carried out in spring and early autumn. Three quarter inch solid and pencil tines are also used and Haydn commented that tines were not expensive. Cores are collected manually – then sieved so that the soil can be used on the tees.

The machine has suffered no

mechanical breakdowns, it is very quiet and it is fairly quick and easy to fit to the hydraulic linkage and pto – on a JD 855 compact tractor.

Jacobsen Aero King T1224, at Cradoc Golf Club, near Brecon

One of the most picturesque of all courses but one with a chequered past since its 1968/9 establishment. Cradoc is now a private par 72 club with over 700 members. It is on redstone clay and is heavily contoured with some very interesting drives. Head Greenkeeper, Malcolm Davis, is extremely proud of the course and the improvements that have been made to it.

The club buys its machinery from a range of suppliers and the Aero King was bought at an exceptionally good price from the local dealer. It is a 4ft wide pedestrian controlled self propelled machine. However as an ex-demo



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Malcolm Davis with his Jacobsen Aero King T1224



buy it has not been without its problems, some of which were corrected under warranty. Since then club policy has changed to buying new – but Malcolm is happy that he would re-buy Jacobsen should the need to replace arise.

Early problems included replacing four ball joints, a choke cable, safety switches and a gearbox shaft, however once these problems were sorted and the machine became established on the course's machinery list it has proved totally reliable – and the Honda engine has never caused any concern.

The machine is used as an integral part of the club aeration programme which includes slitting using trailed slitters and Verti draining, a machine for the latter being routinely hired in August, with the course shut for two days while it is carried out.

The staff includes four full time greenkeepers plus a part time greenkeeper/mechanic, the latter being responsible for most servicing of the equipment on the

course. Parts supply has been satisfactory. Malcolm recognised that the task the machine does results in an exceptional degree of vibration, thus he accepts that this must take its toll in terms of wear and tear.

Ransomes Ryan GA30, at Bristol & Clifton Golf Club

Head Greenkeeper, John Barr, placed manoeuvrability as the most important feature for the Ryan GA30 at Bristol, but in addition he said it was a fast machine which could comfortably treat 18 greens in a day. This particular machine, supplied by T H White, is now in its second season with no mechanical problems. John said that initially there was some tufting – but it was just a matter of reading the operator manual and adjusting the settings – since then it has been perfect. The club carries out its own servicing.

Soil on Bristol Down – the club is close to the Westurf venue – is sandy limestone, and while drainage is little problem, thatch can build up and there can be surface compaction. As well as greens the machine is used for tees. Some greens and tees have steep bank surrounds and these require exceptional manoeuvrability. John said that the Ryan GA30 scored on this because it could turn so well, and this probably meant a large time saving which gave it an overall work rate to equal any tractor mounted machine.