

SHATTERCORE AERIFICATION

This is a subject that continues to go on & on, we never seem to hear the end of it or it's importance to cultural practices in relation to growing fine turf.

Over the years I have aerified just like everyone else but never have been completely satisfied with the practice as specified. Although some good results did occur to varying degrees. The standard practice of coring is a very time consuming method and just too much flack is gotten back from the golfer when it is being done. And it is still a cultural practice we must continue to do.

Therefore for many years I have been searching for a better more efficient way to accomplish this practice.

It all started with a new problem green at Chevy Chase Golf Club. Trying to solve a severe no response growth situation regardless of nutritional & watering factors and still having perfect Ph factor.

Consultation and various opinions from many different professional people in the business was considered. The recommendations varied to the point of even redoing the green; which was out of the question.

During the winter of 1980 I stopped at the Arlington Club where George Widner is Supt. and we discussed Aerification and he showed me something different. A solid homemade tine, using it for approximately 8 years with no problems.

Well, I had my curiosity aroused and decided to make up a set to try out next spring. My first experiment was on a tee that was beat to death with about 30% bare ground. The ground felt like a small earth quake was occurring around my Ryan WG-24; the soil was totally fractured and the bare areas became perfect for overseeding. The process left the ground fluffy not just slick round holes.

Experiment #2 the problem green using a 5/8" solid homemade tine I proceeded to aerify and had the same quaking action which loosened the green up totally even in between the holes. Following the aerifier was one man with a roller. This is a must afterwards. Then I proceeded to apply the Indiana Sand dune sand that Dr. Daniels prescribed. This practice has been done on this green once a month for the entire 1981 season and has done a 180 degree reverse. This problem green now plays just like the other 17.

This being the case I decided to do the balance of my greens in the same fashion but continue to use my 1-1-1 mix of top dressing. The results was outstanding and far more efficient and economical in total using only two men.

The first thing done was to pull the cup, then make one pass roll and replace the cup, then continue aerifying. This allowed the golfer to still enjoy the use of the green and not interfere with his game and I still got the job done.

There was a side benefit that occurred that I had not planned on. We all know about the wear pattern that the riding Greensmower gives us. Well, that problem has been eliminated due to this method of aerification, along with it's efficiency and cost saving factors.

I made up a second set and Art Cleason happened to have a lathe and he turned down one set for me to the exact same size as a standard Ryan 3/8" tine. For which enough gratitude cannot be expressed.

I used these tines in the middle of June in 90 degree weather with perfect results again.

This method works on the principal of ballistics and shatters the entire area around the hole and believe me there is no compaction due to this type of tine. The surrounding ground just explodes and becomes soft and fluffy, again taking water like it is supposed to and

the turf just responds far better.

This practice even works for wear & tear areas due to golf carts traffic wear, and that is a headache for all of us we can do without.

The material for making these tines is available at your local hardware store, standard 5/8" cold roll steel rod. And all you do is cut them to the same length as a standard tine and put a rounded tip on one end using your grinder. It takes about 20 minutes to make one tine. If you have a lathe you can make up any size you desire.

At this point I know there is a great deal of skepticism in the minds of many of you reading this article. And all I know is that for the first time in all the years that I have aerified, I am finally satisfied with the practice.

It worked for me and it has been working for George for many years with no adverse effects.

Think about it. Try it, evaluate it for yourself, then appraise the results. I believe you will be pleased with the results and the cost saving factors.

If you remember many years we had a hand unit with solid tines to take care of localized dry spots which took forever to correct a very limited area problem. Well, this is the premise I used to make my decision on in relation to using solid tines in the Ryan WG 24.

All I know, gentlemen, is that the new method WORKS for me. And it should work for you.

**Leonard Schnepf, Supt.
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Because of the benefits derived from attending Turf Conferences, my club officials insist that I go to New Orleans. I sincerely hope that other clubs are doing the same for their grounds superintendent.



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