

# Pond and lake management offers superintendents myriad environmental challenges

## Aeration gear takes on crucial position among golf course superintendents

By PETER BLAIS

As concerns about water quality continue to grow, aeration equipment is becoming increasingly important as a way to keep golf course ponds and lakes clean.

"It amazes me developers will spend a half-million dollars on an irrigation system and then run crummy water through it," said Steve Brown, president of Airlake Aeration Inc. "We're seeing more and more algae growth on tees and greens. It's usually caused by bad irrigation water coming out of ponds. It would just take another \$3,000 to \$4,000 for an aerator to be assured of getting good water."

Airlake markets a diverse line of pond management equipment. The Lakeville, Minn., firm's most recent innovation is a low-energy-use subsurface system. The 1-horsepower machine moves 4,000 gallons of water a minute.

It can be oriented vertically in more than eight feet of water or horizontally in shallower locations. The unit is being tested in Florida, California and Minnesota and should be available later this year.

"It could be especially useful at Northern courses," Brown said. "Most aerators have to be removed in the fall and reinstalled in the spring. This one can remain in the water 12 months a year."

Aquascape, a Toro partner, also markets various water-quality management equipment, including surface aspirating aerators, fountains, submersible aerators, diffused air systems and air stripping systems.

The Minneapolis company has significantly modified the nozzle configuration and jettisoned the elbow-shaped outflow pipe in favor of a more linear one on its submersible aerator. The changes vastly improved the unit's mixing capabilities, according to Aquascape Division Manager Guy Hamilton.

Aquascape, a 2-year-old joint venture between Toro and Aeromix Systems Inc., has also improved its fountains. All parts are now made of stainless steel rather than aluminum, Hamilton said. Other than the motor, the fountain has just one additional moving part. The unit requires no maintenance and first became available in 1993, Hamilton added.

Toro and former partner Aeration Industries dissolved their three-year partnership last August, according to Aeration Public Relations/Marketing Manager Peg Knapp.

Aeration Industries, among the world's largest manufacturers of aeration equipment, has re-entered the golf market with its AIRE-O2 subsurface aerator. The Minneapolis firm replaced the unit's stainless steel with a composite material that has reduced the price by 40 to 50 percent, Knapp said.

The new material stands up to poor quality water just as well as stainless steel and a redesigned motor makes the unit maintenance-free, she added.

Aeration is re-establishing a distributor system for the AIRE-O2 line and is also making the fully assembled product



Clean lakes, ponds and creeks like this keep golfers — and environmentalists — happy.

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— Steve Brown, president  
Airlake Aeration Inc.

available directly from the factory.

Otterbine Barebo Inc. now uses stainless steel and thermoplastics on all its Triton subsurface aerators and 90 percent of its total water-quality management product line, according to Marketing Manager Carla Barebo.

"They stand up much better to the harsh water conditions you find today, especially effluent and high-salt-content water," Barebo said.

Otterbine recently began offering ground-fault interruption as a standard

feature. This safety device automatically shuts off the unit when a minimal amount of electricity leaks into the water.

Rain Jet Fountains of Laguna Niguel, Calif., followed up last year's introduction of a 15-hp fountain aerator with the February unveiling of a 1/2-hp model designed for shallow ponds. The FA Series operates in as little as 18 inches of water. While primarily decorative, it also discourages thermal stratification (hot surface temperatures and cool bottom temperatures), according to senior designer Shawn Robertson.

## The dye is certainly not permanently cast, as manufacturers add products

By PETER BLAIS

Pond and lake dye manufacturers are coming up with improvements to and new uses for their products at golf courses.

Becker-Underwood Inc. last summer introduced a new formulation of its Lake Colorant WSP. The improved product colors a pond from the top down rather than the bottom up. The result is a faster and more-even coloring effect, according to company President Roger Underwood.

"You can color a pond in a matter of hours rather than the day or two it usually takes," Underwood said.

The Ames, Iowa-based firm is conducting a contest for superintendents who can wield a camera. Cash prizes will be awarded for the best before-and-after pictures of ponds using the company's dyes. First-, second- and third-place prizes will pay \$1,000, \$500 and \$250, respectively.

Applied Biochemist Inc. recently began marketing a 10-percent solution of Aquashade. Called Aquashade-OA, the product is especially attractive for small ponds and even large aquariums, according to Sales and Marketing Vice President Jim Schmidt.

Originally formulated in the 1960s and improved upon in the 1970s, Aquashade has an EPA registration number allowing it to be marketed as an algicide. Most lake dyes simply color the water and make no claims regarding algae growth.

"The price is still comparable to what you would pay for a regular dye," Schmidt said.

Continued on next page

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# New formulations move care of waterways into advanced stages

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Early- to mid-spring — before the initial growth of organic material has begun — is the best time to apply lake dyes, according to Barry Lancaster, wholesale manager for Precision Laboratories Inc., makers of True Blue.

"In a pristine lake in northern Minnesota, with no water entering or leaving, a single application in the early spring would get you through most of

the summer," Lancaster said.

"As you move south, there is more direct sunlight and organic material in the water. That contributes to the deterioration of the dye. If you put it in now [early spring] before vegetation growth really gets started, you would probably have to supplement it just once in late June or early July."

While dyes help beautify water features, especially come

tournament time, superintendents are also discovering they can help speed of play, Lancaster added.

"If someone hits a ball into a treated pond, they won't be able to see it unless it's in less than a foot of water," Lancaster explained.

"So rather than wasting time looking for it, most golfers just drop another ball and keep playing. At some courses, that's helped add another foursome

or two a day."

Lancaster estimates the average course spends \$500 annually on lake dyes. Eighty percent of True Blue's sales are to golf courses, he added.

Dyes have also been shown to be environmentally friendly. Becker-Underwood spent \$24,000 on an independent study to test the effects of its colorant on plants and animals, Underwood said.

"It was shown to be

completely non-toxic, even when used at rates up to 167 times the labeled rate," he reported.

Otterbine-Barebo Inc. began marketing a lake dye called Ottershield through its aeration equipment distributors about a year ago.

"It's very effective in quarter-to-half-acre ponds and has been well received so far," said Marketing Manager Carla Barebo.

## Enter The Becker-Underwood Lake Colorant WSP™ Contest!



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AFTER

Now, you could win up to \$1,000 in Becker-Underwood's Lake Colorant WSP contest. It's easy to enter, too. Take a color photo or slide of the body of water you plan to color *before* treatment. Then, toss in the recommended number of packets of Lake Colorant WSP. *After* treatment, take another color photo or slide showing how Lake Colorant WSP improved the appearance of the water. These before and after photos/slides will be used to determine the prize winners.

### Follow these simple rules:

1. Any body of water can qualify for entry (ponds, fountains, golf course water hazards, etc.)
2. Only Lake Colorant WSP can be used to qualify for contest. Product must be used according to label directions.
3. Lake Colorant WSP product must be purchased between August 1, 1993 and July 1, 1994.
4. All entries must be postmarked by July 31, 1994.
5. To enter the contest, send "before" and "after" color photos or slides, proof-of-purchase of Lake Colorant WSP, and a brief description about how you used the product to:  
**Lake Colorant WSP Contest, P.O. Box 667, Ames, Iowa 50010**
6. Prizes awarded are as follows:  
1st Place — \$1,000    2nd Place — \$500    3rd Place — \$250
7. Decisions of the judges are final. Entries cannot be returned and therefore become the property of Becker-Underwood, Inc.
8. Winners agree to allow Becker-Underwood to use their names, photos and/or statements for promotional purposes.
9. For the names of the winners, send a self-addressed, stamped, business-sized envelope to: Becker-Underwood Contest Winners, P.O. Box 667, Ames, Iowa 50010

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### Calls galore

## Border collie solution wins over supers

By MARK LESLIE

GREENWICH, Conn. — Superintendents interested in buying border collies trained to herd geese off their golf courses can directly telephone the source — and get Richard Marcks off the hook, so to speak.

His phone "has been ringing constantly" since Golf Course News published an article about his border collie herding geese at Fairview Country Club here, Marcks said.

Marcks, who called the border collie idea "the hottest thing since peanut butter," said please call the trainer — Barbara Ligon — at 804-263-5912.

Marcks has been forwarding his many calls to Ligon, whose address is Rt. 1, Box 147, Shipman, Va. 22971.

"Our supply [of trained dogs] is getting low," Ligon said. "Calls have come in from coast to coast."

Since Marcks started spreading the word of his success with his dog Tac at Fairview two years ago, Ligon has supplied 15 dogs to golf courses in Connecticut and New York.

Greenwich's Parks and Recreation Department bought two dogs in April to rid its five parks of the messy geese.

Normally working with sheep, the border collies at Ligon's are trained specifically to herd geese as well. She uses a small fenced-in pond and a flock of mallard ducks.

Ligon charges \$350 per month to train a border collie.

An advance-trained dog, neutered and with all its vaccinations, can cost \$2,000 to \$2,500. She includes a video-taped demonstration of each dog working and also trains the new owners on the commands.

"I'm guaranteeing [the dogs] it's going to be a wonderful home because they end up being the hero of the golf course," Ligon said.