

BIGGA steps up environmental programs

By TREVOR LEDGER

HARROGATE, England — The continued effort to improve the environmental image of golf course construction and maintenance received a boost here at January's BTME '97, the annual trade show and conference sponsored by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers As-

sociation (BIGGA) "The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhone Poulenc Amenity" is open to every course in the United Kingdom that honors environmental achievement. This is the third year the competition has been held but the first time that Rhone Poulenc Ame-

nity has put its name to it. Further environmental efforts include BIGGA's release of a new video, "Golf Course Ecology," which complements the book, "A Practical Guide to the Ecological Management of the Golf Course." As the industry grows, environmental opposition to golf development is sure to become

more strident. Strengthening the environmental competition and release of the video highlight golf's need to be seen as "green."

"Yes, we do need to let people know what we are doing," said BIGGA Press Officer Scott MacCallum. "Both the video and the book are designed to be accessible to everyone, not just greenkeepers and managers but the whole golf club."

General public consumption is not the immediate aim, yet BIGGA is aware that the wider its influence, the better for the game.

Matt Phillips of Friends of the Earth was prepared to give it a cautious welcome, but also to fire shots over bows regarding the activities of golf courses.

Phillips conceded there is a positive side to golf in that Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are able to flourish on some of them, largely in uncut rough. This concession, however, was a minor one.

"Internationally, golf course construction is having a devastating impact on the environment," said Phillips. "Micronesian rain forests that have evolved over millenia are being carved out to make way for golf courses."

"Whilst we are pleased that the boom in golf course planning applications seems to have slowed down," he said, "the damage to the environment on established courses continues on a large scale."



Poor soil structure results in recurrent drainage and disease problems, excessive irrigation and syringing needs, and unnecessary maintenance expense.

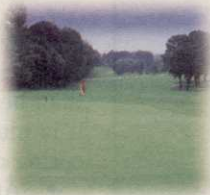


University and field tests show AXIS improves infiltration, increases available water, reduces compaction, and improves soil structure to promote healthy root growth.

You can keep treating symptoms. Or improve your soil structure once and for all with AXIS.

AXIS amends soil for turf that's more resistant to recurring problems.

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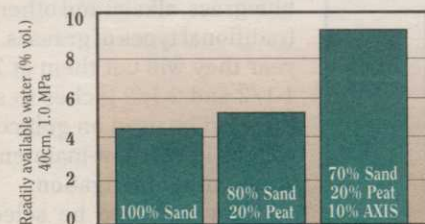


amendment that makes a permanent structural improvement in virtually any soil profile to make it easier for you to grow healthier turf.

Proven effective in USGA greens.

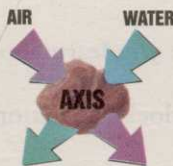
Ohio State University testing showed AXIS increases both readily available water and water retention in USGA root zone mixture, while increasing permeability in most cases.

% of Readily Available Water In USGA Fine Sand Mix



How to use AXIS.

AXIS is very effective helping you manage the air/water balance in soil to promote dense, healthy root growth.



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On tees and greens, fill aeration holes with a 50% sand, 50% AXIS mix for an ongoing, low-cost soil modification program.

2. New Construction.

Mix 10% AXIS in the top 6" of sand-based root zone mixes to help create a soil structure that combines fast drainage and reduced compaction with increased water retention.

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Strip sod from a distressed green. Till 10% AXIS, along with lime, slow-release NPK into the top 6" of the sand-based root zone. Apply washed sod directly on the modified base. Irrigate regularly. After 3 weeks, verticut the new sod, and roll. The result will be a playable green in about 6 weeks, at much lower cost than conventional renovation. Call for additional details on this technique.

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Floating green is being studied

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ciation (WSGA) began earmarking 50 cents from each individual member's annual dues for regional turfgrass research, to be administered by the Northwest Turfgrass Association (NTA).

This resulted in a total contribution of approximately \$44,000 in 1996. According to the Western Director of the USGA Green Section, Larry Gilhuly, WSU was chosen from 15 applicants to receive this grant, in large part due to the WSGA's contribution.

"It is the USGA's policy to fund research projects which have significant support from state and regional golf associations before all others," Gilhuly said. "The WSGA's contribution was a primary factor the USGA considered in awarding this grant to WSU. Without it, the grant may not have been made. This is an exciting example of how the WSGA's contribution is being put to good use and will result in long-term benefits for all Northwest golfers and our golf courses."

Along with WSU, Coeur D'Alene Resort superintendent John Anderson will be involved in overseeing the research. Anderson, formerly of the Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Ore., has received national recognition for his efforts in using and promoting environmentally friendly maintenance practices.

The USGA has indicated it will possibly extend funding into 1998 and 1999.