

# FIELD DEMONSTRATION

## YOU'RE GOING TO LIKE THIS MACHINE!

By Monroe S. Miller

Ever since I returned from the GCSAA Conference in San Francisco I've hounded Ed Devinger and Steve Barritt for a demonstration of Toro's Greens Aerator. The company was cautious in their release of it — I watched them being built in Tomah in early May — to be certain it was ready for the field. Well, we got our chance in June and it was well worth the wait.

I should point out that I've no intention of using it on putting greens. The Ryan Greensaire remains, for me, the machine for that application. The Toro, however, is what I've been waiting for to use on tees and fairways. What do I like about it, after a field demonstration? Principally, it offers the following advantages for me:

1. Speed. Stand back or it will run you over. The machine moves at a relatively brisk pace. Toro personnel talk about an operating speed twice that of a Greensaire. They do not exaggerate. We started the Toro on the south side of our 7th fairway at the same exact time the Ryan started. We stopped the Ryan at the instant the Toro reached the north side. In the time the Toro travelled the 98 feet of width of the fairway the Ryan (a 1985 model) had covered 55 feet — close enough to twice to suit me.

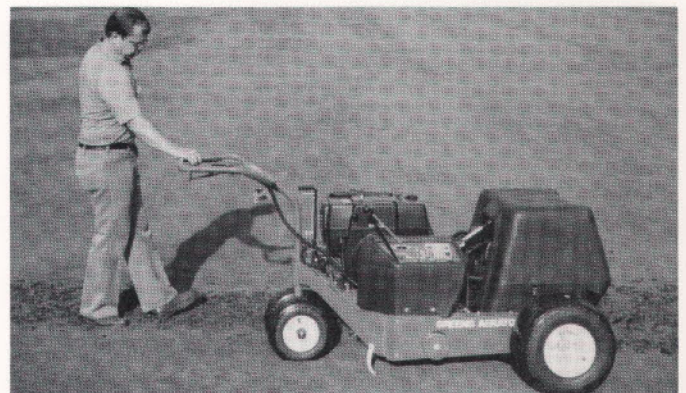
2. Soil quantity removed. Both machines were fitted with 5/8" tines. We measured off 4 square feet behind each machine, harvested the cores and weighed them. Although it is a crude experiment, there is value in the result. The weight of the cores pulled by the Ryan was four pounds, that of the Toro harvest was three pounds. Steve Barritt informed me that a 3/4" tine will soon be available for the Toro and my hunch is that they will bring up a quantity of soil equal to that of the Ryan with 5/8" tines. By the way, if you decide to buy a Toro, make sure they give you hardened tines — we broke a few in the hour or so we ran the machine.

3. Simplicity. The machine has a lot of features that make it simple for a mechanic to work on and simple for an operator to use. The tines are quick and easy to change. The entire coring head can be removed in less than ten minutes (actually closer to five minutes). It has an electric starter. All operator controls are close together and easy to get at. A really excellent feature, in my mind, is a reverse gear. The power plant is a 16 horsepower Kohler cast iron block engine.

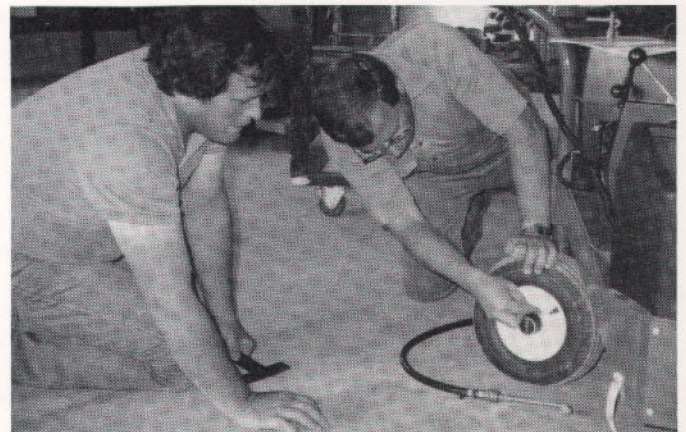
A lot of the conversations I've been in since seeing the unit in San Francisco centered on the elliptical hole versus a perfect circle coring hole, especially for putting green application. In our trial the hole was somewhat elliptical but not greatly so. It could be that the higher height of cut on fairway turf disguised this somewhat, so no judgement can be made. We did, however, measure coring depths dozens of times, and the Toro depth of penetration was almost always an inch or slightly more deep than the Greensaire.



Dave Noltner, Mechanical Assistant at Blackhawk Country Club, was impressed by the ease of operation and speed of the Toro Greens Aerator.



Steve Barritt, veteran sales engineer for Reinders, demonstrated the Toro Greens Aerator on Blackhawk C.C.'s 7th fairway.



Dave Noltner and Steve Barritt leveling the aerator by adjusting the tire pressure.

I like the machine a great deal and think it would be an extremely valuable addition(s) when aerifying our fairways and tees. The price of the Toro Greens Aerator is about \$8500.

I hope our Board of Directors approves the purchase of a pair. We could use them.