

# 3rd Annual Greenskeepers Workshop

JOHN L. HOPKINS

**T**he Third Annual Greenskeepers Workshop was held at the Hamilton Roselawn Lawn Bowling Club on Tuesday, the 2nd of June. The meeting's agenda consisted of invited technical and sales staff from the lawn care industry each giving a 30 minute talk to explain how their product and experience apply to lawn bowling greens.

Certain products, equipment, etc. were demonstrated on the Roselawn greens and recent purchases by the club were available for inspection and testing.

Greenskeepers are inclined to be reticent to share their "secrets" with others, so it was terrific to have 40 or so greenspeople turn out for this networking event.

Our thanks to the industry people who went the extra mile and were patient in answering the many questions put forward.

The following gives a brief synopsis of the speakers and topics covered.

## **Ron Schiedel, Compact Sod Ltd.**

*Ron's business and farm is just north of the 401 in Cambridge, adjacent to the Ministry of Agriculture.*

Under the Greenhorizons Group of Farms Ltd., Compact Sod supplies bentgrass and other sod daily to Ontario Sod of Mississauga and to Hamilton Sod of Mount Hope.

Due to the warm spring this year, golf courses made an early start, and Ron's company and his competitors were sold out of bentgrass sod in April and last year's seeding wasn't yet ready to be harvested.



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The Balmy Beach Lawn Bowling Club had to wait for this new crop to upgrade their green in preparation for the August 1999 Canadian National Championships.

Compact Sod imports and sells bentgrass seed from Oregon independent of the Ontario Seed Company. It was no surprise to them when Compact Sod introduced Glen Abbey's use of Penncross bentgrass seed coated with "Apron."

"Apron" is sprayed on fertilizer and fungicide and gives the seed a quick start and protection against damping-off or root rot.

At the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium in January 1998, Leslie MacDonald from B.C. Agriculture and Fisheries reported 100% germination of seed treated with this product (see *Turf & Recreation*, September, 1997).

Compact Sod sells many kinds of fertilizers, mainly from Nutrite of Elmira, who are now owned by Hydro Agri Canada L.P., a large Norwegian chemical company.

## **Mike Jiggins, Editor Turf & Recreation Publishing Inc.**

*We were pleased to have Mike Jiggins attend. He is a genuine source of practical information on turf.*

*Turf and Recreation fills the needs of the lawn bowling community.*

Adrien Gallant's monthly report on fertilizers is excellent. The March 1998 issue added "endogenous phytohormones" to the dictionary of fertilizer words. It gave the industry a reason for adding seaweed to the rootzone of a new sand-based green.

## **Dean Cormack, Service Manager Vanden Bussche Irrigation and Equipment Ltd.**

*The most frequent question asked Dean was "When does one water?"*

There are many reasons to pick the best time to water. These include combating fungi on the grass, when maintenance will be done, and when the green will be played on. Dean went on to explain watering routines which will not be reported here due to the differences among greens.

Vanden Bussche will help you design an irrigation system, show you the different control units, electrical or hydraulic, and the correct size and strength of piping. Dean emphasized that the security of the layout also requires some thought—particularly against late night wanderers whose primary interest is to pull equipment apart and leave your irrigation system running all night!

## **Mark Peart, Duke Equipment Ltd.**

*Mark Peart, an area salesman, brought a trailer load of Duke's better known equipment. He made each operational and explained their many knobs and whistles.*

Competitively priced is the Ren-O-Thin verticutter. For a bowling green lawn one would select the 1/32" thickness blades, set 1" or 1-1/2" apart.

The Ransomes Greens Super 55 mower is the most up-to-date machine engineered to maintain lawn bowling greens. It attains more perfectly level surfaces than those found in 90% of Ontario clubs.

Other pieces of equipment shown were (a) the small EpoMini 5 spreader for even distribution of sand (for greens) or salt (for winter roads), and (b) the heavy, 400 kg Greensaire 24" Ryan Aerator, a common aerator for those who need the economics of a "walk ahead" machine.

## Angelo Capannelli, Hutcheson Sand and Mixes

The technical sales/serviceman for the Hamilton Area, Angelo Capannelli held a discussion on "SAND," a daunting subject.

Angelo explained the preferred use of silica sand to keep the pH of the root zone closer to 7.0 rather than near 8.0. This provides the best solubility of the minor elements in the root zone. He also demonstrated their new product, Dry Bagged Sand, which may be spread over a green with a fertilizer spreader.

Dry Sand has multiple uses including leveling, overseeding, and topdressing after verticutting. It is ready for immediate use and saves both time and manpower.

## Bill Crook, Highland Creek Lawn Bowling Club

Bill was asked to present his Indoor Lawn Bowl's Chute which he constructed from a design in a U.K. report for the testing of indoor lawn bowling felt carpets.

We have used the chute to check the pace of the indoor car-

pets at Brampton, and we found a pace of 16 seconds for the 95 foot carpet.

There are many uses for this chute: (a) testing bowls for accuracy of bias; (b) testing the evenness of a green; and (c) having a competition between immobilized wheelchair people on an even footing against more mobile people.

Bill also showed the value of his laser beam transit which was reasonably priced and covered an accuracy radius of 30 feet. A much more expensive machine would be preferred for 120 foot greens but this smaller sized laser covers almost half the green and is a good start in measuring the topography.

Thanks to all who participated. It was a worthwhile day. To Roselawn Lawn Bowling Club, thanks for the venue and the lunch.

— John L. Hopkins is the Greens Advisor for the Ontario Lawn Bowls Association



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