

GREEN KEEPERS

This article started out as a reminder to all Greenkeepers that now is the time to do the maintenance on your Greens equipment.

If you aren't confident to do it yourself, have the mowers serviced by a qualified agent.

Rollers only need oil and spark plugs replaced and if needed bearings renewed.

Sprayers- these are invariably being used thru winter, but are still a good time to replace jets.

And while you are in the shed give it a good clean out.

This is where things change. I have just serviced our Garden groover, a very easy to operate machine. This got me thinking of how greens maintenance has changed over the last 25 years. This is my personal experience only.

In those early days greens were watered by flooding and or portable sprinklers. Now we have single station, nine point, pop-up, remote controlled irrigation systems, as well as flooding.

Greens were 'ironed' with water filled rollers, either pushed or pulled manually, or if lucky had an electric motor to drive it. Now we have a sit on motorised roller. My first experience was a Forrest with Briggs and Stratton motor. I now have an updated version of the same. There are also many versions engineered locally.

Spraying units haven't changed dramatically over the years. My first experience with a battery operated pump was a Katipo and I still believe it is one of the best units about.

Renovation practices --- Back when water filled rollers were used, the greens became very compact. To relieve this compaction, we used a drilling machine with eight 7" bits. It took about 10 hours to complete a green. Aptly named boring machine. Then we would either groove with a Franich, 1/4" tynes to a depth of 1", or core with 1/2" tynes. Fertilise and soil. If you could still see the plant after soiling, you hadn't put enough on.

Today's method—and I state this

is my personal practice. Groove with 2mm or 3mm tynes to a depth of 10mm to 15mm, depending on thatch depth. Granulated product is spun on, then up to about 20 barrows of soil spread onto green and rubbed in, until all you see is a 'green' green. The next season I core with 10mm tynes to a depth of 70mm. Again using only a minimal amount of soil.

The 'Aercore' machine we use for coring, completes the job in under 2 hours. It windrows the cores making for ease of removal. This machine can also be fitted with solid tynes which enables it to be used thru the playing season to aerate and relieve compaction. Just one of the many machines that have been developed to change and definitely improve our Greenkeeping Practices over the last 25 years.

PS There is still a place for drilling machines.

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