

Getting the Green Ready for Play

***Remember:** Do not go on the green if it is too wet – you will damage the green, put marks on the surface and will affect the woods.

- 1) Walk the green and have a look at it. If you have debris (leaves, twigs) on the green you can use a rotary mower to clear it up and use it like a vacuum rather than a mower (preferably a rotary mower that has a rear roller rather than wheels because the wheels may put 'runs' into the green. Don't forget to clean out and make good your ditches.
- 2) Last chance to 'deep aerate' the green to 3"- 4" (75mm to 100mm) depth and it will tie in nicely with giving the green its spring feed. Because of the holes the fertiliser will go down deeper and get nearer to the roots.
Base your fertiliser application on your soil test but basically a bit of nitrogen to get things moving and phosphate and potash.
When aerating try to use a solid tine and not a slit tine because of the possibility that a slit tine hole may open up if we have a warm end to March or early April.
- 3) Moss occurs because of weak sward and poor surface drainage. There are three main types of moss and they need dealing with now. Many chemicals have been removed from use so you can use a liquid iron or the most simple method is the use of 'lawn sand' which is a fine sand that contains sulphate of ammonia (nitrogen) and sulphate of iron. It is the iron that helps to control the moss (Does not kill the spores but kills the plant) and follow the manufacturers recommendations for application. The iron may make the green go black, do not worry, and try not walk on it. Put the lawn sand down and leave for 7 – 10 days. The nitrogen in the sand will help give the green more feed.
When the moss is black and it's a nice dry spring day you can then scarify the dead material out of the green.
It is very important you use the correct scarifying reel- a light scarifying reel, otherwise you will leave marks in the green and you are hoping to play in a few weeks.
- 4) If you have had a lot of moss you may need to over seed lightly. However the success of germination in the spring is not great but if you leave space in the green then you will get moss again. If you do need to over seed then you must have good seed to soil contact and to achieve this you can use a sarel roller or the Dennis sorrel cassette or similar to put thousands of holes into the green so when you put down your seed (Bent or Fescue) at 5 – 7g/m² and then brush your green this will help to get more of the seed into holes to achieve the close seed to soil contact required.
- 5) Once you are getting some growth then you can slowly bring down the height of cut (do not 'shave' your green straight away) from 12mm to 10mm to 8mm down to approximately 6mm in stages over a period of time.

Remember: If you want to increase the speed of your green then you should be looking at verticutting and scarifying and we will cover this in due course.