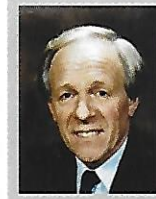


Hints On Watering ...

Just in case the sun shines!



David Bracey
Top expert helps
to keep your
green in trim

THERE ARE rumours going the rounds that the sun may actually shine a little longer this Summer. We wait with baited breath, but in some parts of the country, the opening of the new outdoor season coincided with a considerably dry spell of weather that forced some clubs into early use of their watering systems.

Observing the dew in the morning will give an indication of the areas on the green that require water - do not waste time watering a dewy surface as this clearly indicates the green has sufficient water.

The biggest problem with 'pop-up' or automatic sprinklers is that you cannot accurately pinpoint the areas that require watering, and therefore other parts of the green may be unnecessarily watered.

It may be stepping back in time, but a hand-held hose with a rose is still ideal for tackling those dry areas on the green. After watering, check the following morning to see whether you have applied enough. If not, hand water again until the dew does show in the morning.

The secret of watering is to apply it in a fine droplet form which will prevent

disturbing the fine soil. If it is a seedbed, bombing the surface with a 'pop-up' sprinkler system will pan the surface.

Choose sprinklers to apply water as evenly as possible so as to allow water to be absorbed without puddling. If necessary, surface spike diagonally with a solid tine, or use the slitter in the same direction which will not affect the run of the bowls. The turf will also benefit from this operation before an application of fertiliser.

'POP-UP' SPRINKLERS

These have great benefits subject to you having maintenance knowledge.

- They can be used at night when normal weather conditions do not encourage evaporation.
- They percolate easily with dew.
- They wash in fertilisers, making play easier the following day, and prevents scorching.

WARNINGS

- They can cause uneven watering by overlapping.
- They do not always reach the target. Buildings, hedges, trees etc allow the wind to change direction at ground level.

- The water supply may be unreliable, causing restriction in flow.
- Nozzle failures due to blockages are not always noticed, causing uneven watering.
- The system needs regular maintenance.

GIANT WATER SQUARE

Fixed jets (nozzles) are easily replaced.

- It will water the full length of the green. Approximately seven moves will cover the green adequately.
- To be fully operational, it requires two wooden ball carriages per section. One carriage is insufficient, as two are needed to assist with moving and supporting pipe sections.
- A 25mm hose with good water pressure can adequately cover the full length of the green x 6m wide each move.
- It is easy to observe that the nozzles are working properly.

TRAVELLING SPRINKLER

Variable nozzles fitted with gentle 'rain like' application can cover a wide area of the green, using a 25mm hose. Jetting arms, pulling it along automatically, control the speed and they will shut down at the end of the run. Areas can be seen covered efficiently during daylight hours.

