

WRCC Greens Committee News Flash

October 2018

Dear Members,

The big question! Has Spring arrived, Yes or No? One minute it's boiling hot and the next we are in winter dress. Very difficult to get going with the golf course summer treatment program, with such big swings in temperatures.

The early rains during August gave the golf course a great kick start, with everything bouncing back to life but this was short lived with the heat wave and hot winds experienced during September. Not only do these extremes dry things out, but they also cause other problems such as plant disease and fungal growth. This has its biggest impact on Greens and Tees.

There are a couple of the Greens that have black, bare patches developing with Green 8 being the worst of the lot. So, what is it and what is being done to restore these Greens?

We have identified this as "Surface Algae" which is terrestrial algae that lives in soil and is often referred to as edaphic algae. Terrestrial algae found on Greens and Tees are divided into two groups, namely the green algae and the blue-green algae. We have also narrowed it down to the blue-green algae because the surface condition of our Greens is neutral to alkaline.

Algal growth requirements are: -

- Excessive moisture
- Soil surface exposure to sunlight (photosynthesis)
- Adequate nutrients
- Shade (combined with the excessive moisture)
- Less competition from turf grasses

A characteristic of blue-green algae, despite not having roots, is its ability to bind or hold soil together. This gives off toxins and forms a matted crust layer and in some cases a slime layer. The crust and slimes prevent the turf grass from growing back into those areas affected unless removed or broken up.

The most important aspect of getting rid of this problem, is to identify the original cause of the algae growth. This was done some time ago by removing

a few trees that were casting shade onto the Greens. Numerous algae patches had already developed because of the shade and good rains. With the removal of the trees we understood that UV Irradiation would take care of the rest. This did not happen, the adverse took place! These bare areas received more sunlight and the algae just grew because of photosynthesis and our irrigation program. Players and machinery assisted in spreading this algae to other areas of the Green.

In order to get rid of this problem, two weeks ago Peter applied an application of an algae growth controller. The second application will take place this week. In addition, the Green needs to be aerated and the soil crust broken up. Deep-tining and verti-cutting will take place to achieve this and then a layer of silica sand needs to be applied, thick enough to prevent the algae from photosynthesizing.

Unfortunately, Green 8 and areas on a few other affected Greens will play more difficult for a while. We apologize for any inconvenience and trust you will understand the problem we are dealing with.



GREENKEEPERS REVENGE FUNDRAISER

What a great day of fun and enjoyment!

Despite only having a field of 58 players, everyone had fun testing their skills against the Greenkeeper's Obstacle Course. Thank goodness for the Deliverance Package, it assisted in teams coming in with formidable scores on the day.



The Putting Challenge, run and marshalled by Chic and Geoff, was well supported by both children and parents. Thanks guys!



The prize giving and auction was well supported, with much fun and lots of chirps flying all around.

Our thanks go to all sponsors and helpers for their generosity of time and money resulting in the Greens Committee having raised R 32 000.00 which will go towards improvements to the golf course.

Congratulations to all the winners on the day, especially to John Robson winning the raffle prize worth R 24 000.00



