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INSTITUTE

PART OF LABOSPORT GROUP

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Managing bowling green following Covid-19

Over the last few weeks, we have received many queries about the impact that the Covid 19 lockdown may have on the management of your greens.

Some of the most frequently asked questions are discussed below:

## **1. *Should I change my autumn fertiliser programme?***

The autumn fertiliser programme is based around getting full recovery from renovation. As most greens were not renovated this year due to the lockdown, there is no need to apply the normal multiple applications of nitrogen or NPK fertilisers this autumn.

One or two fertiliser applications on cotula greens, (e.g. Ammonium sulphate – 10kg, DAP – 15kg or an NPK fertiliser e.g. 12-5-14 at 20 – 25kg) will be adequate.

## **2. *How do we manage thin areas on cotula greens?***

Where there is enough cotula plants present in the thin areas and whilst conditions are warm enough, fertilise these areas every 10-14 days with ammonium sulphate, to encourage a complete cover.

Note: If you have Cotula maniototo and the plants are still in their summer leaf (which is common in thin areas) the plants will still spread.

## **3. *How do we manage thin areas on starweed greens?***

Use a spiker, hand fork or similar and 'pepper' the weak/bare areas with holes to a depth of 4 – 5mm. Mix starweed seed with some dry sieved soil, broadcast over the patch and sweep mixture into the holes.

## **4. *Moss Control***

Control of moss is no different to other years, i.e. this is when we normally control it. Just make sure the moss is wet before treatment.

[www.nzsti.org.nz](http://www.nzsti.org.nz) | [contact@nzsti.org.nz](mailto:contact@nzsti.org.nz)

## 5. **Bare areas**

With no renovations, sourcing stolons to repair bare areas will be more difficult than normal. The best options if you have bare areas are as follows:

- Plug out bare/weak areas using plugs from the green corners or nursery.
- Order bulbils (we expect these too be collected as normal) and re-establish bare areas once available.
- As a last resort re-establish bare areas with browntop – some cover is better than nothing and it can be easily removed at a later date.

## 6. **As we can't renovate this autumn, will this be a problem?**

Short answer ..... No!

Missing a renovation will not result in significant long-term issues that can't be resolved next autumn. Thatch a major concern, will be less of a problem if you reduce your autumn nitrogen applications (as discussed above). causing issues especially if the autumn fertiliser has been reduced.

Also; missing renovation is not new and is commonly practiced in the autumn preceding major bowls tournaments such as the 'BNZ Nationals'.

In terms of renovating this spring, don't panic; if the greens have good cover they will play fine for the coming season. Needle tyne (6mm diameter) solid tyning could be an option in the spring ,but again not essential if not able to be undertaken .Clubs and their members have already lost part of their season (this autumn as part of the lockdown) and we don't want to unnecessarily inconvenience members for another season.

## 7. **Weed Control**

Many clubs have 'missed' their autumn weed control programme, particularly controlling hydrocotyle. The key thing is don't panic and try to catch up your spray programme now ..... You could actually do more damage than if the weeds remain, i.e. maniototo could be damaged and bare areas created by spraying may not fully recover.

- Hydrocotyle - brush patches prior to mowing during the off season. Additionally, we may be able to spray in spring – Talk with your local agronomist as to the practicality and effects this may create.
- Grass - control is possible during winter with propyzamide (e.g. Kerb) on Cotula; and haloxyfop e.g. Ignite on starweed during early spring.
- Starweed – can be controlled with propyzamide during winter – spring.

## 8. **Will bulbils be available this winter?**

The plants will still produce bulbils, but at this point we are unable to confirm their availability. We will endeavour to update information as alert levels change.

**If you have any further questions, contact the NZSTI team.**