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**EFFECT OF ROOTZONE CONSTRUCTION
ON SOIL PHYSICAL PROPERTIES AND
PLAYING QUALITY OF GOLF GREENS
UNDER NEW ZEALAND CONDITIONS**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Applied Science
in Plant Science at Massey University
New Zealand**

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1999

ABSTRACT

A field experiment was designed to examine the effect of five different rootzone constructions (partially amended sand, silt soil, pure sand, fully amended sand and partially amended plus zeolite sand) and aeration methods (untreated control, HydroJect, Verti-drain and scarifying) on soil physical properties, root development and playing quality of golf greens. The five rootzone constructions were randomly arranged in three blocks. A split plot design was superimposed on the rootzone constructions using different aeration methods. Aeration treatments were carried out in the spring and autumn of 1998. Measurements of bulk density, total porosity, volumetric moisture content, air-filled porosity, infiltration rate, oxygen diffusion rate, saturated hydraulic conductivity, root mass, organic matter content, surface hardness and green speed were made to monitor differences between treatments.

This study found there was no benefit of fully amended sand rootzone compared with partially amended sand rootzones (either plus or without zeolite). Although root development was greater in the pure sand rootzone, this occurred predominantly in the top 50 mm. Excessive accumulation near the surface of the profile can have detrimental impacts on turf growth. Rootzone construction had an important effect on surface hardness, i.e. pure sand rootzone produced the hardest surface, silt soil rootzone the softest and amended sand rootzones intermediate hardness. Rootzone construction had no effect on green speed in this study.

Aeration treatment had no effect on any of the soil, plant or playing quality parameters measured in this study. This suggests either aeration treatments were very short lived or that long term effects of aeration treatments were not yet apparent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most thanks to my chief supervisor, Martin Wrigley, Senior Lecturer in Landscape Management; for his friendly supervision, encouragement, and understanding throughout the duration of my studies; for his tirelessly review of many drafts and suggested areas for improvement and invaluable support whenever I needed it.

Sincere thanks also to Dr. Richard Gibbs, Turf Scientist at the New Zealand Sport Turf Institute, my second supervisor, for his expert guidance, constructive criticism, and patient in correction of my written work.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Bruce Christie, for his friendly help in data analysis and graph preparation. His contribution to this study is invaluable.

I must also thank the rest of the staff at the New Zealand Sports Turf Institute for providing me with an interesting workplace, sharing their knowledge with me, and maintaining the trial.

I would also like to thank the AgResearch Grasslands, for helping me in data collection and using their equipment.

Final thanks must go to my parents; for their love, encouragement and support; and to my fiancée, Chen Chen, for her love, understanding and contribution.

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