

Lack of water par for the course

Cammeray Golf Club, Sydney NSW

Lack of water is an issue for many NSW golf course managers. Craig Wright from Cammeray Golf Club in Sydney tells us how he keeps his greens from becoming 'browns'.

While Sydney has received good rains in the last few months, dam levels have risen only fractionally and Level 2 water restrictions are still in place and likely to continue for some time. Like most businesses that rely on water, golf courses have had to alter their watering behaviour to cope with the reduced usage.

Craig Wright from Cammeray Golf Club in Sydney's northern suburbs has looked at a number of ways to use water more effectively while maintaining the standard of the course.

"We use only town water, not having our own dam to draw on. We have special permission from Sydney Water to water the greens between 1am and 4am five days a week. On the other two days we can water the tees. It's not an optimum arrangement, but with rainfall so scarce we have to do the right thing.

"The restrictions have also forced us to look at the way we fertilise and even the products we were using. After some trailing, we've settled on a stable of products that do the job.

"We use Scotts Sierrablen because polys don't have to be watered in. With the course mainly kikuyu, Sierrablen works very well. When we do get a bit of rain, I use some Scotts Hydraflo for better water retention in the soil.

"I give the course some minor trace element feeds between renovations and always use slow release fertiliser."

In a move that will relieve some of Craig's daily stress, The Roads and Traffic Authority and North Sydney Council will soon construct a 4 megalitre dam on part of the course to collect stormwater runoff from the adjacent motorway. This will also stop any spills pollution from entering the nearby bay. The club will irrigate using dam water and, as an added measure, have a new water hazard on a par three hole.

"The dam will be a huge help. But even when I look around the course now, I think the greens and fairways are in good shape. Though without Sierrablen and Hydraflo, I wouldn't be getting anywhere."

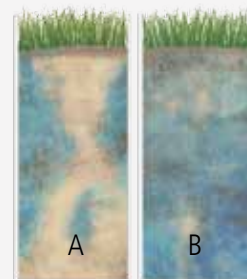


How wetting agents work

Wetting agents are used, primarily, before the onset of hot weather to pre-condition the turf to accept irrigation. The wetting agent stops soil particles from becoming water repellent (hydrophobic) and changes the surface tension. This allows water

to move freely through the soil and thatch to form an even water front. Wetting also assists in the even uptake of fertilisers.

Scotts Hydraflo is a new generation wetting agent that can be used on all types of sports and amenity turf. Besides promoting uniform water penetration, Hydraflo reduces water run-off on uneven ground through deep water penetration.



A. Not treated with hydraflo; Application of coloured water shows uneven distribution

B. Treated with Hydraflo; Ensures an even matrix flow retaining moisture and nutrients in the root zone



Growing success