

# CUT THIS



**Joe Hollier**

Welcome to Volume 3 of "Cut This" STANZ's newsletter.

In this volume we look at the impact that covid has caused to our stadiums, from empty stadiums to half-full and full again. Syngenta talk about winter fusarium and some way to tackle it this winter. I take us back to the basics of aeration as the rain starts to fall it's a good reminder to help improve our surfaces. A good article from Mental Health Foundation on how to tackle bullying in the workplace. We celebrated Pink Shirt Day on Friday. Pink Shirt Day is an antibullying campaign that celebrates diversity and creates environments where all people can feel safe, valued and respected.



Each year, workplaces, schools, organisations and individuals join the movement to make a stand against bullying. Bullying is a serious issue in New Zealand. Every year, one in 10 workers report they have been bullied at work.

Our AGM will be held in June, venue and date to be confirmed.

As always if you have any ideas for Field Days or articles you want to see in “Cut This” then please ask, flick me an email [admin@sportsturf.nz](mailto:admin@sportsturf.nz) Or talk to one of your local committee members

## IN THIS ISSUE

## Cheers from your Chair

- Joe Hollier

## Covid Problem

– Shaun Davies

## Microdochium Patch in Turf

- Syngenta

## Basics of Aeration

## How to be an Upstander

- Mental Health Foundation

## Upcoming Events

## STANZ AGM

TBC June

## Covid Problems

### Shaun Davies

Two years on since the start of the covid pandemic one would have thought daily life would have returned to some form of normality. Turf maintenance in many ways has just been business as usual but for us in the world of events in stadiums, life has been anything but normal.

The Covid pandemic has thrown some massive challenges in front of us in the world of events. We have gone from everything being cancelled, to full crowds returning, to capacity crowds, back to no crowds and now to pockets of 100 people scattered throughout venues just to allow people to come and view sport. All the government restrictions create massive headaches throughout all operations of stadia. What has been awesome to see is how all stadia and venues across New Zealand have been able to adapt so that we can still host sport/events for people to not only view either at the venue or on tv but to also be able to play it safely under the restrictions.

Even though as venues we have been able to adapt to still bring events for people to watch it has come at a great cost. Financially at venues we have been hit hard with essentially no income coming in due to the cancellations of events due to the government restrictions or people contracting covid. Planning of maintenance programs with constant changes in event programs has made for some challenges. At times at the drop of a hat to host an event and everything you had set out to be put on the back burner. It's always been the unknown that's been the challenge. One day you are preparing the field for an event, the next it's taken away from you. The best example of this was last year during the bunnings cup season for us we had the first two rounds (early August) with Waikato at home and then Delta struck. We were thrown into lockdown and Waikato had moved to Tauranga to continue their season. Every week we would get the field ready as if we were going to be hosting them at home again but were always waiting on the government announcement to release us from lockdown and let them come home. This carried on all the way up until the final (20th November). The week of the final the government then announced we were going to level 2 and rugby could return. During this period, I had also been dealing with contractors around renovations and these dates were changed four times due to the possibility that we could host games at any point.

The current outbreak of Omicron has potentially been the toughest for us in events. As sport is now continuing to try and keep games going, they can be rescheduled at very short notice. Compared with previous restrictions games were very black and white and were essentially just cancelled. Now there is so many more other factors that will influence whether it can go ahead and a lot more planning goes into events for potentially no outcome at the end.




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# Microdochium Patch in Sports Turf

## Syngenta

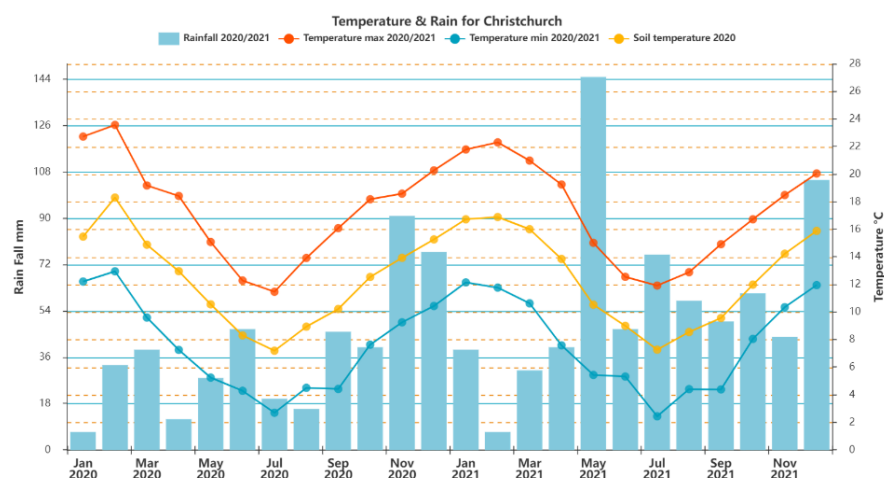
The casual agent, *Microdochium nivale*, formerly *Fusarium nivale*, is a single fungal pathogen responsible for two phases of disease known as Pink Snow Mold and Microdochium Patch. Pink Snow Mold forms under snow cover whilst Microdochium Patch will occur in cool and wet conditions in the absence of snow. In some regions, Microdochium Patch can occur all year round and on a number of turf types where it starts in small circular patches of less than 5 cm in diameter. The initial patches will appear as small water-soaked spots and can appear as streaks, which change rapidly from an orange brown to dark brown to finally a light grey colour. The spots can then enlarge to a larger patch of up to 20 cm in diameter.



The pathogen can survive as dormant mycelium in leaf and thatch over summer, and when temperatures fall, the active spores (conidia), can be transferred by mowers and end users of the facility. This gives rise to the streaking or smearing observed when turf is infected. It is important that as temperatures fall, mowing continues as long as the turf is growing, as it reduces the risk of leaves matting in longer cut stands during winter, which creates a favourable environment for the pathogen to thrive. Spring allows for an opportunity to reduce thatch levels if present, as the pathogen can be severe in turf that has high thatch levels in cold wet weather. As with any winter hardening programme of turf with nutrients, monitor N usage and ensure K levels are optimum in autumn.

Microdochium Patch will start to be observed in mid to late autumn, dependent on location and current weather conditions. These are typically periods of cool wet weather which result in extended surface leaf moisture. Temperature ranges for growth of the pathogen are between 0 – 16°C, so it is important to keep a watch of the weather patterns and maintain good data. Recently, Syngenta have introduced a range of digital tools to assist you in making informed decisions based on data. When looking at 2 years of historical weather data for various locations in both the South and North Islands of New Zealand, it provides a guide as to when you can expect to see emergence of the pathogen and allow you appropriate time for control if present.

For example, Christchurch saw temperatures fall below 16°C in the late April/early May period in both 2020 and 2021. However, the higher rainfall in May 2021 (145 mm) against May 2020 (28 mm) would have seen a higher incidence of pressure from Microdochium Patch in 2021.



The trend continues for most of the southern portion of the North Island, with temperatures falling below 16°C with similar late April/early May timeframes. Some variations will always exist based on location, but the Turf Tools available for free on the Syngenta Turf website is a strong starting point to assist you in timing any pesticide, fertility or cultural works.

Should Microdochium Patch become evident, then Syngenta have options at hand for control.



INSTRATA® Turf Fungicide is an ideal choice for curative control of Microdochium Patch. INSTRATA® Fungicide features a triple mode of action, with 2 contacts (chlorothalonil and fludioxonil) combining with a systemic (propiconazole) to control conidia on the surface along with penetration of the leaf to provide protection of the leaf constituents. The triple mode of action is ideal when using as a resistance management tool and INSTRATA® is regularly rated as one of the strongest fungicides for Microdochium Patch at 28-day intervals at 18 L/ha.

Another alternative for an initial preventative approach once temperatures start to fall below 16°C is HEADWAY® Maxx Turf Fungicide. Both actives (azoxystrobin and propiconazole) are systemic in nature and will enter the plant and move upwards, providing protection from inside. The combination grouping of the two different actives is also an ideal resistance management tool and is used in 28-day intervals at 9 L/ha.



Since Microdochium Patch affects the leaves, good coverage of fungicides is essential. When applying either INSTRATA® or HEADWAY® Maxx, water volume for both need to be between 300 – 500 L/ha. Nozzle selection should be either Syngenta XC025 (purple) or Syngenta XC04 (red) dependent on ground speed. As always, you will get the best from both fungicides when using a well-calibrated sprayer. There are also calibration calculations on the Syngenta website if any assistance is required. Another key feature on the Syngenta website is the spray window calculator which is in the Weather Forecast section. Enter in your location and scroll to the bottom and select Ground Spraying. This will provide you with recommendations over the upcoming week on the best day to spray based on the weather forecast for your individual location.



Please read label prior to use.

For any more information on INSTRATA® Fungicide, HEADWAY® Maxx Fungicide or Digital Tools visit [www.syngentaturf.co.nz](http://www.syngentaturf.co.nz)



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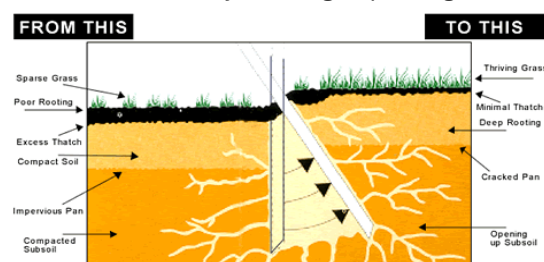


## The Basics of Aeration

We all know that keeping our turf green and healthy can be a challenge especially when the rain starts to fall. Applying fertilisers and seed to the surface of our turf can only do so much, it's important to get into the soil to reduce compaction and encourage air movement. Ground aeration is the best solution to this problem. Knowing the benefits of ground aeration can help improve your soil health immensely.

When the public play on our sports parks they want a firm, well drained surface with full grass cover. To understand this, it helps to familiarise ourselves with the way that healthy soil supports the turf. About half of the soil's volume is made of dirt particles and organic material. The other half consists of air pore spaces. These tiny chambers let air and water move freely, nourishing the grass from the bottom up.

With the use of machinery and players running all over the turf and without aeration those air spaces reduce, we create suboptimal conditions. This becomes evident when you look at the field. Grass may become weak and struggle to grow, leading to a thin patchy surface. Hard, bare spots may develop, reducing the cushioning that the turf provides. In addition, water has trouble sinking into compacted soil. Instead of being absorbed, it pools on the surface. It may also drain inconsistently, leading to pooling and creating anaerobic conditions.



When we aerate, we encourage root growth and allow water to move by opening pore spaces. With the empty space the aerators create in the soil, grass roots will have room to breathe and grow. Longer, stronger roots lead to lush, plentiful blades of grass. A strong root network also absorbs water more efficiently. With proper aeration and ground maintenance, the need for irrigation is less and we'll have fewer drainage problems.

Using the right equipment will improve the results of your grounds maintenance. Close tine spacing and deep penetration often produce resilient turf. Core aeration involves using hollow tines that puncture the soil and pull out small plugs. These chunks of dirt are usually left on top of the grass. They break down over time, replenishing the grass. With deep tine aeration, solid spikes are typically utilized to puncture the turf, although hollow tines may also be used.

**Core aeration** with hollow tines is ideal for:

- Reducing compaction in the top 3 inches of soil
- Mixing soil layers
- Improving the soil in the off season, when turf has more time to recuperate

**Deep tine aeration** uses longer prongs and offers several benefits, including:

- Better penetration of extremely hard soils
- Deep water drainage
- Heals more quickly than core aeration
- Less disruptive than removing plugs





## How to be an Upstander



Almost 40% of people have witnessed bullying. 10 Upstanders are people who notice bullying behaviour and address it to help someone who is being bullied. Bystanders, in contrast, are people who notice bullying behaviour but don't – or cannot – help.

These five steps can help you be an Upstander and take safe and effective action. There are no one-size fits-all approach to being an Upstander and it's not easy to work out how to help safely. Every bullying situation is different, so think about which option(s) will work best for you.

### Tautoko/support the person experiencing bullying:

- Tautoko the person being bullied, even if you just stand beside them and let them know you've got their back
- Let the person doing the bullying know you've noticed the behaviour and that it's not acceptable
- Encourage them to ask for help, go with them to get help or provide them with information about where to go for help
- Show them our 'Getting help and advice' fact sheet
- Let them know they're not alone and you're there for them.

### Don't support or engage in the behaviour:

- Make it clear to your hoamahi/colleagues that you won't be involved in bullying behaviour
- Don't encourage bullying behaviour by harassing, teasing or spreading gossip about others, verbally or on social networking sites
- Don't acknowledge, reply or forward messages or photos that could be hurtful or embarrassing to a colleague.

### If you feel safe, call the person out on their bullying behaviour:

- Be direct, calm and confident, and let the person know their behaviour isn't okay
- Use your words to show aroha and kindness to those involved. It may be hard at the time, but it can make a huge difference.

### Leave and act:

- If you don't feel safe to intervene, it's best to take a breath and think about what you can do to help
- Later you might want to talk to the person being bullied and ask what might help, or have a quiet word with the person doing the bullying behaviour.

### Get tautoko/support or help:

- You might want to go with the person who is being bullied to HR or their relevant manager
- If your organisation has policies around bullying prevention, this might help you figure out what to do next and who is best to talk to.

Clear policies and practices, known and shared values and expected behaviours, and leaders who role model these values/behaviours, will help people feel confident to be an Upstander at work. When modelled these values/behaviours, will help people feel confident to be an Upstander at work. Upstanders are confident to take safe and effective action to support the person experiencing bullying, there is a greater possibility that bullying can stop.