

Vermi ~ T and Vermi ~ Green Eco Enriched Compost testimonial and case study: Reaseheath College

Richard Murray, Head Greenkeeper and Instructor at Reaseheath College, Nantwich, Cheshire

Description of the Reaseheath College course

Reaseheath is a 9 hole private course with each green constructed with a different rootzone type with 'built in problems' to allow students to see and work with the problems associated with anything from a pure sand green to a full loam one. This is the course where Richard Murray chose to carry out his trials in 2006 with ORM Professional Products Vermi ~ range in order to test them in a variety of situations. As Richard says, "I never recommend anything unless I think it is a really good product". Richard uses "as close to an organic programme" as he can with no fungicides used on greens. He uses natural products wherever possible "to generate good root growth and improve the environment under the greens".

Description of Vermi ~ T and Vermi ~ Green

Vermi ~ Green is an organic, probiotic (contains beneficial micro organisms) biostimulant derived from natural organic material worked by earthworms with no chemical additives and so is entirely safe for staff and the environment.. Vermi ~ T is the probiotic liquid extraction derived from Vermi ~ Green a totally organic product. Both biostimulant products will help release locked up nutrients, stimulate root development, and increase the activity of microbes in rootzones. Suppression of diseases and reduction of thatch and black layer are added benefits. A sister product Vermi ~ Germinator accelerates germination and seedling development.

What impressed Richard Murray about Vermi ~ T?

"I previously applied a seaweed product twice a month but last year I substituted Vermi ~ T for one of these applications each month to greens and tees." The first thing Richard noticed was that there was no flush followed by "a thickening of the sward, really good colour and really good root growth". Richard's philosophy about using natural products wherever possible is based on the principle that natural products help to develop a good rootzone; as he says "if the roots are growing well, the sward will recover quicker due to pressures on a golf course.

Assessing individual greens on the trial course after Vermi ~ T was used to replace one of the seaweed treatments per month through the summer and autumn, 80% showed thicker swards and showed substantial improvement. Richard was delighted to find that on every type of green there were positive results, for instance on the full loam green the sward was noticeable thicker and on the pure sand green there was "good coverage" this green always had problems in the past.

What impressed Richard Murray about Eco Enriched Compost & Vermi ~ Green?

Eco Enriched Compost was used on the fairways and Vermi ~ Green on the greens as a dressing. "There was better colouration within a few days but not the flush of growth that we don't want. After four weeks the grass had thickened and greened." Richard puts this good reaction down to the effect of adding microbial life via Vermi ~ Green. "There is a reaction with the bugs already present like releasing nitrogen and other locked up nutrients but not bolts of growth."

Special tip from Richard Murray on how to apply Eco Enriched Compost and Vermi ~ Green:

It is vital to get the powerful benefits of Vermi ~ Green straight to the roots. "We micro cored the greens and then applied Vermi ~ Green in April/May. The fairways were slit and verti drained so that the product would go right into the ground not stay on the surface. It must get straight to the roots to make it react."

Why were the results exceptional in Richard Murray's experience?

Richard has worked in horticulture and aboriculture for 37 years and has been a greenkeeper for the last 15 years. In his experience some green keepers are still blinkered continuing to apply synthetic fertilisers and pesticides and not looking after the roots. However, in the last 10 years he thinks there has been increasing recognition that getting back to following more natural cultural practices used in the 1930's and 1940's is the way ahead.

Richard's advice is to "look after the bugs already in the ground. Anything you use must be compatible with what's already there." This is why Vermi ~ products have such unique benefits to offer greenkeepers, they are natural probiotics and biostimulants with nothing added or taken out so they are compatible with the communities of microbes already present and help to activate them and add extra beneficial microbes to suppress pests and diseases and unlock nutrients as well as enhancing root development.

After his trials last year Richard Murray is now having to buy his Vermi range products; "I don't buy products that don't work" says Richard, what better testimonial is there?