

Course News – Autumn and Winter Programme

Welcome to the last Course Update of 2019.

Despite above average rainfall in October the planned course maintenance works for September and October were completed. This included the Verti-Draining of Greens in October (half inch tines, 9-inch depth, with a 10% heave), the application of 30 tons of sand, brushed in and fertiliser applied.

With the change to colder and wetter weather, in recent weeks, we have seen signs of fusarium, on a few greens, which have been treated with iron and fungicide to good effect. As previously stated this will always be an ongoing battle but is currently being well managed. Worm Suppressant has also been applied in October to the main and temporary greens and on designated fairways.

Our programme of maintenance work on the greens continues to follow the Sports Turf Research Institution (STRI) and on the 2 October we had our second visit from Gwynn Davies, who has been working with us this year, and overall the assessment and feedback was positive although more needs to be done going forward. Comments and feedback from Gwynn included:

The Greens are in good condition with a strong dense sward. Remnants of disease activity are recovering

The organic matter remains high and is moisture retentive – a reason why the 10th and bottom part of the 14th and top area of the 18th greens are not draining and recovering quickly from heavy down pours of rain.

Some improved grass root growth is visible but the aeration and application of 100 tons of sand needs to continue

Concerns this year over speed of the greens would be partially alleviated with the investment in a front mounted brush for the greens mower – The purchase of a front mounted brush will be looked into for 2020.

Regular cycles of aeration and light top dressing have worked well. Aeration is critical to producing quality fine turf and should continue throughout the year

What's planned for Autumn and Winter?

Greens

- Cut and Rolled as necessary
- Maintain temporary Greens for winter use
- Winter Greens to be cut at 4-5mm depending on condition
- Drainage works on the 10th, 13th, 14th and 18th Greens
- Holes moved at least weekly, more often if mid-week competitions taking place

- Apply fungicide and iron as required.

Tees

- Regular Tee marker rotation
- Cut as required
- Height of cut for winter play 15mm
- Maintain temporary Tee areas for use
- Divot Tees
- Completion of trimming Hedges around Tees
- Bin, ball washer and bench station areas to be maintained and kept tidy
- Ball washers – to be checked regularly and topped up as required
- Bins emptied at least weekly

Approaches

- Cut, dependent on growth rate
- Height of cut for winter play to be raised to 20mm.

Fairways

- Cut as required
- Height of cut for winter play to be raised to 20mm
- All major Hedges on fairways to be trimmed back, provided conditions allow and the use of a tractor can be obtained.

Bunkers

- 18th fairway bunker to be reduced to a more manageable size (filled in and grassed over)
- All edged, strimmed, weeded
- Raked at least once a week
- Bunker banks – cut as necessary.

Trees/Plantations/Rough/Pond Areas

- Plantations and Rough cut as required

- Pond banks – To be kept tidy
- Tree Works – to include the removal of old/damaged trees
- Continued general tidy up of loose tree debris in areas of play.

Other Works

- Patio tables and benches to be stored away for winter and cleaned/checked over/repaired in readiness for use in 2020
- Practice net area to be kept tidy
- Out buildings to be repaired and painted – if time permits

Course Alteration Works

As you can see work is well advanced in the creation of two new greens and a new 16th Tee. The greens are being prepared on the principles of the USGA recommended specification and the aim is to have the greens completed by the end of November. If all goes to plan our target is to be back playing on our newly configured 18 hole golf course by May 2020. That said, this will be dependent on the weather this winter, the knitting of turf success, etc).

Further progress updates on the ongoing works will be provided and I hope all members will be content with the reconfigured course this winter, in the knowledge that this is a relatively short term inconvenience.

Finally, I would like to thank Mike Smith, Martin Adams, John Nichol and Paul Redhead for all their efforts and time freely given with the Grounds Staff in carry out large parts of this work.

NB. Some of this programme of work is clearly dependent on weather

If anyone wants to get in touch with me or any of the Greens Committee regarding course conditions, recommendations or just to say hello please don't hesitate to approach us or get in touch with me directly.

Greens Committee Members; Dave Morley, Paul Redhead, John Nichol, Doug Turner

Date: 1 November 2019