

Around the Greens

Newsletter No.1/18

Green Speed and Quality

The start of this season has followed an unprecedented amount of autumn and winter rainfall with more than 100mm of rain falling every month since June 2017. This has caused the greens staff and the course considerable problems.

This time last year the greens were in excellent condition after a warm dry start to the season. Green speeds and smoothness had been improved by the use of a vibrating roller system. Unfortunately unknown to the green staff this exasperated the problem of green drainage by compacting the turf and subsoil. Initially it was not intended to hollow core the greens at the back end of the year but only vertidrain and mini-tine. The compaction meant that the greens would require coring and deep tinning. After a dry few days in October the greens were cored but the weather changed before the sand had been applied and delayed the application of the sand. This was eventually completed in late January. This has left the greens a bit bumpy, but improved grass growth will soon smooth out the greens.

2nd Green Issues

It became apparent that the 8th green and 2nd green had suffered the worst from the wet weather. However the 8th had benefitted from drainage works undertaken earlier in the year but the 2nd remained sodden. It is evident that drainage is an issue with the 2nd green, but that work will have to be undertaken at the end of the 2018. Nevertheless, the turf can be improved and further to specialist advice both the 8th and 2nd greens have been over-seeded with a strain of grass that reduces thatch (fibrous root compaction), this we are hoping will make the greens playable through the rest of the season. The seed is starting to germinate but there is little growth in this cold weather, if the weather temperature improves, members should see the condition of both the 2nd and 8th improve.

Members have observed that a temporary green has been cut on the 14th fairway. This may be required to be used if wet weather continues and the 2nd green does not improve. It is hoped that this will not be the case and every effort to use the 2nd green will be made, particularly on competition days. The South of Scotland Golfers Association has been made aware of the issue and has suggested that we may wish to course rate the temporary holes during this year's planned course re-rating.

It is proposed to regularly mini-tine throughout the season and manually apply kiln dried sand to all the greens to improve the surface quality.

Rough Widening

Further to member and visitor feedback, certain areas of severe rough (bundie) have been cut back widening the semi rough, in particular the 9th, 10th and 18th holes. The fairway width will remain unchanged and remained in accordance with the USPGA Course Rating guidance.

Trees

Winter storms caused some damage to the trees on the course, the damaged ones have been removed. The trees between the 2nd and 3rd have been significantly pruned. This should assist the low flighted golf shot reaching the fairway off the 3rd tee.

N Wright (Club President)