

HEAD GREENKEEPER'S NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2009

Course Summary

This year we have changed our approach to greens maintenance, particularly the use of coring to remove thatch. In previous years we would have hollow tined all the greens in April. This was not popular with members as the weather often increased the time it took for the greens to recover. This year using our new machinery we will be limiting the coring to Monday each week and only when weather conditions are suitable. Our aim is to complete a small number of greens and to reduce the disturbance to members. We hope to have more coring completed but in a less disruptive way.

The course continues to improve and encouragingly, has drained well during the recent wet weather.

Course Maintenance

Fusarium patches on greens

The quality of several of our greens has been affected by scarring from Fusarium patch which occurred over the winter months. We had a spell of three weeks when snow covered the course and unfortunately conditions were just right for the disease to take hold. As soon as the greens cleared of snow they were sprayed with fungicide which killed the disease. However, the disease leaves dead patches or scarring which is now visible. We are currently working on overseeding the greens but the recovery period for the scarring is dictated by the weather conditions, temperature and early Spring growth.

First green

The first green is open for play and so far all feedback has been positive. Drainage on the green also seems much improved. The members seem to like the new design and I have had several comments that the hole is now fairer to play. As with all new turf this green will take several months to bed in and we will continue to top dress it at every opportunity.

150 yard markers

Following comments from members we have replaced a number of 150 yard stakes that had gone missing. We have also painted all the 150 yard discs on the fairways to make them more visible.

Drop zone on 10th trench

We had planned to fill in the 10th trench as part of the winter work. However, due to restrictions on time and budget this work has been delayed until next Winter. In the meantime to eradicate the golfer's dilemma if their ball ends up in the trench we have dedicated two drop zones. The first drop zone is for any ball that lands between the two blue marker posts and the second zone is for any ball that lands between the blue and white marker posts.

Even though this is not ideal it provides a solution until we can complete the necessary work on the trench.

Step through on 3rd wall

It was brought to our attention that balls occasionally rolled through the gap in the wall. As a result we have built a step in the gap which should prevent balls rolling through but still allow golfers to step through when retrieving golf balls.

Environmental News

Gorse



Although not a major attraction at present, the gorse bushes planted last year have started to flower. The gorse bush at the 17th gives an idea of how these areas may look in a few years time when they are fully established. We are still hoping to increase the amount of gorse over time.

Course Wildlife

Steve Harrington has reported finding a Newt on the 7th fairway believed to be from the 7th pond.

Geoff Allen spotted three deer bolt out of the trees to the right of the 1st tee in early April.

Heron spotted by Head Greenkeeper near 6th wet area.

BIRDS	SIGHTED	DATE
Goldcrests	5th fairway and 6th tee	2008
Reed Warbler	Wet pond on 6th fairway	2007
Green Chested Woodpecker	15th pond	2007
Owl (type unknown)	Next to 2nd tee	June 2008
Sparrow Hawk	Back of the 13th green	July 2008
Male and female Pheasant	Under the beech trees on 18th fairway	July 2008
Pheasant (male and female)	Edges of the practice ground	March 2009
Heron	15th pond	2008
	6th wet area	April 2009
Kestrel	Back of the 11th Green also sat on a fence post back of 14th tee	Sept 2008
		March 2009
MAMMALS	SIGHTED	DATE
Fox	Between 1st and 18th fairway	Oct 2008
	Near the 15th tee	Jan 2009
Roe Deer	 Sheltering in trees alongside 11th fairway	2007 / 2008
	 also 18th fairway	

	↗ 1st fairway ↗ 3 deer seen near 1st tee	March 2009 April 2009
Grey Squirrels	Trees at back of 13th tee	2008
Stoats	Crossing the maintenance track side of 11th fairway	June 2008
Field Mice	Edge of practice ground	October 2008
PONDLIFE	SIGHTED	DATE
Roach	15th pond	March 2009
Newt	7th fairway near 7th pond	March 2009