

HEAD GREENKEEPER'S NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

Course Summary

The spell of dry weather has really benefited the course which has given us the opportunity to carry out some early Spring work e.g. fertilising greens and tees.

The course seems ahead of itself for this time of year, is playing well and is a start to the season that we would always hope for.

Winter Work

15th Pond

The pond at the 15th has been cleared of the majority of reeds using a 3ton excavator. We found it impossible to get rid of every last reed, some being out of reach of the digger but we were also desperate not to puncture the clay lining so had to be less aggressive whilst digging around the edge. Last time we carried out this work we pulled out more than 200 golf balls, this time there weren't as many, which could mean the standard of golf is improving!

We have also pulled out a number of rhododendrons from the edge of the pond and will be replanting smaller more colourful shrubs.

2nd Green

Our plans for drainage work on the 2nd green have had to be reduced because the time available to complete the work was shortened due to the snow cover which caused a 3 week delay. Our aim has always been to have all winter work finished before Captains Drive-In, also giving us enough time to tidy the course and get it ready for the start of competitions.

Our initial plans included installing 6 lateral drain lines running into 2 take away drains running of the back of the green. We had also planned to landscape the back of the green, using the spoil dug from the drains.

Due to the restrictions in time we have reduced this to 2 lateral drains with 1 full take off drain and 1 reduced take off drain. The 2 laterals run across the back of the green which was always the wettest part of green.

Environmental News

Malc the Mole

The mole catcher was on the course last week and informed me that he has caught 82 moles since Christmas. There are still a few left so this work is still ongoing.

Dry stone walling

Wherever possible we will aim to maintain the course so that it blends into the environment. As we have raised the height of the surrounds on the 1st green the height of the existing dry stone wall needed to be increase as well. I am in the process of completing this work using stone recycled from other areas of the course and once finished it will match existing walls around the 1st fairway.

Course Wildlife

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
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	January 2009
Roe Deer	Sheltering in trees alongside 11th fairway	2007 / 2008
	also 18th fairway	March 2009
	1st fairway	
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	Oct 2008

PONDLIFE	SIGHTED	DATE
Roach	15th pond	March 2009

Other news

9th Toilets

The 9th toilets have been repaired and are back in use.

Holes on the car park

The greens staff have taken over responsibility for maintaining the driveway and car park. We are currently repairing pot holes in the car park.

Patio

In preparation for the start of the season, Jean the gardener has power washed the patio and has cleaned, repaired and treated all the

patio furniture. More hanging baskets will be added to this area over the next few weeks.