

Course Report April 15

As I write this report we are just coming to the end of two weeks of heavy maintenance on the golf courses, and I would like to thank the greens staff for their efforts in carrying out a large amount of work in that time. As I wrote in last months report this work is very important to help prepare the courses for the season ahead. During the maintenance weeks the greens, aprons and tees on both courses have been vertidrained to a depth of 20cm. They where then scarified to lift the leaf and remove organic matter. Approximately 60 tonnes of sand dressing was then applied to each course and brushed in All of the work was carried out successfully and recovery is progressing nicely.

In recent days we have seen the air temperature during the day increase with some fine sunny days, however temperatures at night have still been dropping very low and we are still experiencing regular frosts which is keeping the soil temperature down. This is resulting in still very patchy growth and in many areas no growth at all. As is always the case at this time of year the different grass species present in the **OC** greens are growing at different rates and as a result uniform growth and smooth ball roll is difficult to achieve. Regular grooming and brushing is being carried out in an attempt to combat this issue.

The irrigation system is now live and fully primed. To prepare the courses for the season ahead and to help prevent stress to the turf, wetting agents have been applied to the greens, tees, aprons and fairways of both courses to help retain moisture in the rootzone, but applying irrigation water at the moment is not ideal as this is applied at night whilst temperatures are low, and the temperature of the water being applied is still low adding to the problem of low soil temperatures.

Weeds in the form of daisy and clover are beginning to flower around the courses and selective herbicide is being applied to control this. Timing of these applications is key as the chemical works systemically and requires consistent growth to move effectively through the plant. As soil temperatures increase more wide spread control will be achieved.

The new bunkers on holes 1, 5, 6, 12 and 18 of the Old Course are now open for play, I hope you will enjoy the challenge these improved features provide. In some areas the cutting height is not yet at the desired level so as not to cause too much stress to the newly laid turf.

Andrew Howarth