



Greens and Course Report – January 2016

The Club experienced varied weather to start 2016. A wet start was followed by high winds, snow and frosts, again with high winds and finishing with more rain. With massive swings in the temperatures throughout the month changing from minus degrees centigrade in to double figures. Altogether this has produced a course worn around the edges, it's lovely and green for this time of year and although we have been closed for a couple of days, when we have been open lots of golf has been played. As we move forward in to February, which is traditionally the coldest month, fingers crossed it doesn't live up to its tradition and passes quickly so we move into March and Spring.

Following the further postponement of the verti-draining scheduled for the 18th January, a new date has been selected and it will be Monday the 8th of February which again will be weather permitting. This operation is being under taken to reduce deep compaction resulting in improved drainage and root development. There will be disruption to the surface of the greens but the long term benefits out way the disruption in winter. The importance of deep aeration cannot be over emphasized as it aerates the profile to a depth of 8 inches, counteracting the compaction that has occurred over the previous year from foot traffic, maintenance traffic and consolidation of saturated soils. Without enough air in the soil the health of the grass plants will suffer as a strong healthy plant needs strong healthy roots to flourish. Temporary greens will be used until the surfaces return to playable conditions.

As the tree population on the course matures we have an annual ongoing operation of light tree pruning, this is achieved by lifting the tree crowns by the removal of the lower branches. The four main reasons

- Improves light penetration allowing finer grasses to thrive
- Improves access increasing speed of play and mowing preventing damage to machinery and preventing injury to the operator
- Aesthetically enhance the tree by creating a balanced lower crown and overall shape.
- Promotes upward growth and reduces invasion of other tree space.

The evidence of the benefits of restrictions around greens is becoming visible with the majority of the wear diverted away from greens surrounds, although wear adjacent to paths is substantial we are attempting to minimise further wear by over dressing with sand to aid drainage and prevent slippery surfaces. Restrictions around the course may not be to everybody's liking but as we have seen so many courses neighbouring ours have had to shut or play on much shorter courses. The old redundant path to the right of the 4th tee has been dug out and is in the process of being back filled with soil prior to over seeding in the spring this will tidy the area for the future. The fairways have retained there definition benefitting from an application of Iron to help enhance colour and keep any Moss under control followed by a single cut around there perimeter. The Verti-drain has also been busy concentrating on the softest and wettest areas of fairways. The semi-rough has been regularly brushed to stand the sward and improve presentation.

This winter is proving to be a good year for moles with a high population at present, trapping has become more frequent, if any traps are seen to be removed please could they be passed onto any members of staff as they do get tampered with by curious members of the public. Our biggest headache at present is the damage from Magpies who have taken a real interest in the 8th green as well as the greens on the Warden Hill course; they are feeding on Leather Jacket grubs and chaffer grubs and create a lot of damage stripping back the turf. The work shop has been busy when the weather is too inclement with production under way creating a new set of tee markers and broken tee boxes. Winter maintenance of the machinery is carried out and any on going repairs carried out.

South Beds Rainfall 2016

