

The committee recently commissioned a report from a golf course consultant, Alistair McConnell of 'Golf Course Consultancies', for an expert and independent assessment of the course. These are some brief details of his background and the experience he brings to an advisory role:-

- Greenkeeper at St Andrews for the Open Championship and other major events
- Course Manager at Redcar, Ralston, Cawdor and Moray Golf Clubs
- Building of a new 18 hole golf course
- Manager on the European Tour overseeing the preparation of courses in the UK, Sweden, Germany and Portugal for professional events
- Director of a Grass Technology and Advisory Design business
- Fine Turf advisor to Corfu Golf Club, Salgados Golf and Porto Golf
- Advisor to Glasgow City Council on synthetic pitch surfaces and ground maintenance for all public courses in Glasgow.
- Constructed the Dundonald Links Golf Course which now hosts the ladies and Gents National Professional Tournaments
- Designed course extensions in the UK and Europe.
- Now semi retired but providing golf course consultancy

## **Report on Pumpherstons Golf Club**

Report from Alistair McConnell of 'Golf Course Consultancies' following an on-site meeting with Russell Scott and Stan Cook:-

### **Observations**

Following a prolonged dry spell there were several areas on greens and tees where grass coverage had been lost, grass density was rather thin and there was no great root depth in certain areas. This had been caused by

- Irrigation irregularities in sprinkler coverage
- Heavy compaction on surfaces
- Thatch layer was quite dense along with a black layer of organic matter which sand built greens are prone to.

At the time of the visit all greens had been sprayed for disease control and all surfaces were presentable and of an even standard with little disease spores anywhere and only a few small spots of moss in the grass sward and this could be expected following the recent wet spell and surface compaction which was also causing water to lie on greens 7 & 13 during very wet spells.

Tees were also suffering from compaction and thin grass density, again due to irrigation irregularities and root structure.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Greens**

- Scarify all greens to remove some thatch and help create small seed bed in the surface.

- Early October hollow core all greens and remove cores. If possible micro tine all greens to give extra holes for space to allow seed germination.
- Over-seed all greens, using Creeping dwarf rye grass on the worst affected areas and wetter greens such as 2<sup>nd</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> to give a quicker recovery and a thicker sward of grass on surfaces.
- Deep solid-tine all areas with a verti-drain and repeat in early March.
- Apply a good Autumn/Winter fertiliser along with an application of seaweed to help germination.
- Apply Roca Stem weekly over a three week period to help firm surfaces and help with de-compaction and add one application of T-thatch to further help.
- Do not apply top-dressing until the Spring of next year.

These measures should help with improved thatch and black layer levels and reduce the need for Fungicide applications.

### **Tees**

- Tees need to be treated in a similar manner without hollow tining, use only solid tines.

These are the recommendations which are felt would help in the overall course improvements without the use of expensive fungicides, but by using better aeration and using products which are now available to help staff.

### **Pumpherstons Golf Club – Programme of Greens and Tees renovation 2018**

As we do not currently have an aeration machine or verti-drain, these machines had been booked for hire previous to our site meeting and as such we had to tie our work into these bookings. Following the meeting with A Connell the following work has been carried out or is scheduled for completion:

#### **Week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October**

- Scarify all greens, double cut and brush to remove all debris.
- Hollow core all greens and fringe cut, remove all cores and tidy.
- Over-seed all greens and brush seed in.
- Fertilise all greens.
- Solid tine all tees then cut to tidy.
- We started to micro tine greens to give extra holes for the seed but this was causing severe surface disruption and as such we stopped this process to avoid unnecessary damage to greens .

#### **Week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> October**

- Over-seed all tees and fertilise all tees.
- Verti-drain all greens. Continue with this machine out to the edge of all fringes and extend at the sides of the wettest fringe, 2, 10 & 12.
- Cut and tidy all fringes.
- Verti-drain our wettest tees, 3, 4 & 17 to try to create a drier playing surface.
- We did not spray the greens because of the high winds towards the end of the week.

**Week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> October**

- Spray all greens with seaweed and Roca stem.
- Cover all bare areas on tees and surrounds with a sand and seed mix. Rope off any large treated areas to help protect them.
- Verti-drain walk-off areas at 4, 5, 8 and 14 to try and create a drier surface.

**Week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

- Spray all greens with seaweed and Roca stem.

**Week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> October**

- Spray all greens with seaweed and Roca stem.
- Spray all greens with Iron.

This covers the recommendations in the report until we have to verti-drain and top-dress next Spring.