

Supplementary Ground Report June 2020

Impact of Flooding Events – Reinstatement Options

The re-seeding of damaged areas undertaken by Fine Turf in early April, has been adversely affected by the exceptionally dry weather over the last 8 weeks (only 3.5mm on rainfall was recorded in Manchester for the whole of May). Particularly badly affected are areas of the 18th extending from opposite the Clubhouse down towards the teeing areas, and then across to the 17th fairway either side of the newly formed drainage ditches and pond areas.

Inspections have taken place to identify 3 options to address the lack of, and patchy nature of re-growth:

Option 1: Lightly Rotovate, using chains, the hard-panned areas showing little or no re-growth, and apply a new thin layer of topsoil from our stockpiles held on the 6th. Then re-seed these plus other areas with only patchy growth. Further localised applications of seed may be required over the course of the summer to achieve a uniform dense sward.

Turf the bare slopes of the newly formed drainage ditches using the limited amounts available from the 15th practice area. This will reduce the risk of seed run-off and erosion of the slopes, and immediately improve aesthetics. The turf areas will require frequently manually watering.

Hopefully, rainfall forecast in early June will be sufficient to promote seed germination, but this will also be supported by manual watering by the ground staff when required. This option will require the purchase of additional seed at an estimated cost of £1650. This is the Ground committee's preferred Option and is supported by Gwynn Davies, STRI.

Option 2: Preparatory work for the hard-panned areas as Option 1, but purchase and lay new turf over all areas, rather than re-seed. This will provide quicker grass coverage, but will be more expensive and much more labour intensive for the ground staff. Also, laying large areas of new turf at this time of the year is not recommended and carries significant risk of it not establishing. It would also not be possible to play off the turf until the root system matured. It is estimated that over 2500m² of turf would be required at a cost of £8250.

Option 3: Continue manual watering by the ground staff and leave the areas to re-establish naturally over time. This may take until next Spring for a dense sward to be achieved. However, this would be at zero cost.

For all Options it is proposed to re-seed the newly formed slopes to the water hazard to the rear of the 17th green and the other bare areas between the two ponds on the 16th. This would be carried out during the August maintenance week.

Works completed in May

Following the easing of Coronavirus restrictions and the course being opened for play cutting frequencies have been increased. The Ground staff have worked tirelessly to return the course into excellent condition, despite unfavourable weather conditions.

Greens:

Cutting frequency has been increased to 3 to 4 times per week, at normal cut height.

Ironing has been restored to once per week.

Hole changes once per week.

Regular tining and top dressing with sand has continued supported by daily and night time watering

The greens are now in very good condition.

Tees:

Cutting limited to once per week at normal cut height to avoid excessive parching, whilst the exceptional dry weather continues.

Fertiliser was applied w/c 18th May, and this has been supported by hand watering.

Most tees are suffering from parched areas, but these should recover if we receive rainfall forecast for the first two weeks in June.

Fairways:

Cutting limited to once per week at normal cut height to avoid excessive parching, whilst the exceptional dry weather continues.

No treatment this month.

The fairways are now dry and in good condition, with the exception of the re-seeded areas on the 13th, 17th and 18th holes (see above).

Rough:

Cutting limited to once per week at normal cut height to avoid excessive parching, whilst the exceptional dry weather continues.

No treatment this month.

No condition / length issues.

Bunkers:

Raking currently twice per week. This will be increased to four times per week when competition play resumes.

All bunkers have been re-edged and rotovated to break up compacted areas.

All bunkers are now in good condition.

Practice Areas:

Cutting limited to once per week at normal cut height to avoid excessive parching, whilst the exceptional dry weather continues.

No treatment this month.

The practice bunkers need further work to bring them back to a satisfactory condition.

Other Areas / Clubhouse grounds

Strimming of re-growth of nettles/weeds around the base of trees, hedges and along buggy paths will be undertaken, as and when resources permit.

Work by the specialist Contractor to cut the grass slopes to the river bank and hedgerows remains stopped.

The Gardening Sub-committee have suspended bi-monthly meetings due to current restrictions. Dialogue on future plans is being maintained via "whatsapp."

If funding permits, it is still hoped to undertake landscaping of the corridor from the rear of the 17th green to the 13th white tee. Existing trees, vegetation, and in particular

landscaping around the 16th pond have been adversely impacted by recent events. This provides an opportunity to enhance the appearance of this area and improve the habitat for wild life. Now that the earthworks have been completed another evaluation will be carried out before the end of June, and current proposals developed further.

Volunteer gardener activities now have resumed, principally focused on tidying up areas around the clubhouse and car park, plus watering. Current guidelines for social distancing and safe use of tools etc are being followed.

The toilet unit, adjacent to the 8th tee, remains off hire.

The new “Blue Course” holes remained in play prior to playing restrictions coming into force. Discussions are on-going with Marketing on how best to promote the use of the short course as a means of attracting new members and in particular juniors.

