



## **Fairway Overseeding October 2019**

**As a result of the ongoing issues on some of our fairways, which have seen large areas struggle to recover from the record-breaking drought last year and which continued into this Spring and Summer.**

**It was agreed that to give the worst affected fairways the best chance to recover, it would involve introducing new grass directly into the soil profile of the thinnest fairways by means of a mechanical procedure.**

**After researching the various makes/models of machine available to perform this task and also on the optimum timing of the operation it was decided to hire the Dutch manufactured seeder Vredo 216, along with a tractor.**

**Once discussions with the seed manufacturers' representatives on the type of seed and timing took place, it was agreed two cultivars of Dwarf rye grass would be best suited to our conditions.**

**To give us the best chance for successful germination and sustained growing conditions the sowing was to take place in the last week or two of September, depending on the availability of the hire equipment. An attempt to carry out the seeding any earlier in the year was to be avoided because of the excessive heat and lack of moisture.**

**This is a useful tip for any budding gardeners at home. The best time to overseed your lawn is late August/September even as late as November has seen successful germination.**

**The Vredo disc seeder we chose was designed to introduce a variety of seed type, sizes and rates (in our case 35g/m<sup>2</sup>) directly into the soil profile of the area to be treated by means of self sharpening discs, which cut a slit into the turf at a predetermined depth (in our case approx 15 mm.).**

**The seed is then fed via a hopper and tubes directly into the cut channel; a roller follows closely behind and closes the slit. The spacing of the slits is 35 mm apart and the working width of the machine is 1.6 metres.**

**The benefit of this procedure is the seed is then protected from bird activity and also from the elements. As the seed is approx 15mm in the soil when it germinates, it has already grown this length by the time it reaches the surface. This is important in helping the grass plant to mature and establish itself before the winter sets in, usually in our experience not until Jan-March which is typically our harshest period, Although 2009 was the exception with snow arriving on the last day of November and staying on the ground until Boxing day. Fingers crossed we don't experience the same!**

**Our seeding was due to take place on Monday 16th September, however as with all the best laid plans, mechanical issues with the equipment meant we couldn't begin until Monday 23rd September.**

**Ground conditions were very dry and compact from the long summer but otherwise perfect. Most of the areas that we prioritised were completed on that first day which included 6th, 8th and 9th fairways and the 4th approach.**

**Through Monday evening and Tuesday morning the dry spell broke with our first torrential rain we'd experienced in a number of weeks. Although this rain was very welcome for the seed already sown it would have a detrimental effect on the seeding left to be finished.**

**The Vredo doesn't perform as well when wet, as the tubes that feed the seed into the slits become damp and eventually block up and prevent the seed moving freely into the channels.**

**We did get some respite on Tuesday afternoon that gave us the opportunity to get most approaches seeded and also 2,16,14 and 18th winter tees.**

**More heavy rain on Tuesday night, meant the last remaining 12th fairway to seed gave us continual issues as large puddles had gathered in the low lying areas which caused the machine to block up again. As the hire period had finished and the lorry was waiting in the car park to collect the tractor and seeder, we finished the 12th more in hope than expectation.**

**We're now nearly 3 weeks since seeding took place and the majority of areas have had a successful germination including the 12th fairway despite the poor sowing conditions.**

**The first signs of germination were around the 7-10 day mark after sowing and the seed appears to be developing and progressing since this initial stage. A temperature controlled granular fertiliser with a makeup of 10-10-10 has been applied to the worst affected areas of the drought i.e. 6,9 and 4.**

**This will slowly release nutrients over the next 8-12 weeks to further enhance the new seed and existing grass. To also protect the new seed and to aid development we've had to put ropes up to keep the main traffic from buggies and trolleys off these areas.**

**The early indications are promising in the recovery of the worst affected areas, as the conditions have been perfect i.e. wet and mild with the soil temperatures still high.**

**Hopefully Mother Nature will be kinder to us next year and we won't suffer the same kind of Spring/Summers as we have done over the last two years, where there was very high temperatures and very little rain over long periods.**

**Richard Evans  
Course Manager**

**16<sup>th</sup> October 2019**