

GREENS COMMITTEE SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER



Fellow members

I just wanted to update everyone on the course situation at present now that we have lifted winter fairway protection and started playing competitive golf again, something that I am sure everyone has been looking forward to.

It is a busy time with regards to competitions, but then again when is it not, with match play and then medals about to start and we have come out of the winter months with good grass coverage.

As mentioned by our match secretary the plan has been to have our early competitions as team events. This gets everyone in the mood for playing while not having to concentrate on individual scores, with the exception of the Bob Burns Quaich of course, and again allows a bit more time for the course to be at its best for individual medal play.

With that in mind I would just like to set a gentle reminder that albeit we have had some decent weather, which has got a lot of us back out there, overnight temperatures can still be cold and are not conducive for growth.

Kevin and his team have been busy maintaining the course, sanding and seeding areas requiring this, and will apply fertiliser when the temperatures are more appropriate to stimulate further growth.

As stated we are coming out of the winter period and Fereneze as a course we try to utilise our greens as much as possible throughout the winter and it is only when absolutely necessary that we make the decision to put in place winter greens.

Like everyone else I always prefer to play to full greens and it is just to mention that the extra wear and tear through winter can make growth and playability that bit later coming into Spring.

That being said we are in a place, course condition has plenty of grass coverage and the focus going forward will be to focus on speed and smoothness of greens once growth allows.

2nd Green

It is worth mentioning at this point the issues that we experienced during winter due to wear on this green in particular at walk off points.

I know the amount of time that this green was out of commission to members was frustrating and that has not been lost on the committee.

We have also been looking at options to ease the walk off points and after the playing season we have proposed to look at filling in the bunker. The plan is to create a smooth bank that will create a less severe approach to this hole and stop players walking on/off at the same locations. We had looked at various options and this was the preferred option which would be the least obstructive. It is hoped by doing this that there will be less wear and tear and allow the green to be in play more often through the winter months. This is only a proposal and we will post full details as and when any implementation of changes or work is to be carried out.

The issue with a temporary green is location and the terrain to make something playable. The committee have also been looking at various positions for a 2nd temporary green but it is hoped if the aforementioned changes are implemented then as stated there will be less need to use this.

Fairways

I had mentioned in the winter update that we have made some fairway adjustments and some tweaks to greens approaches and aprons.

The preparatory work was carried out throughout the winter months and I hope you can see the differences that have been made even at this early stage of the season.

It will take time to bed in and as I stated previously these adjustments will hopefully allow more playability and shot options especially around approaches to greens and for shot options.

I have summarised reports provided by Kevin to give you some details on general course specifications at present.

Summary of Greens Report – 20th March 2025 to 23rd April 2025

General info course status

From the 20th March until now we have recorded 55 mm rain.

Night temperatures have been low but sun has dominated keeping things firm underfoot we have been able to present the course pretty well earlier in the season (albeit still a bit early for masses of growth) we did lift restrictions on the 7th.

Focus has been made on sand and seed on fairways then and cutting/upkeep on all areas of the course.

Fairways are set at the shorter 16mm height with wider cuts on many holes.

Some collars/aprons have also been altered with shape and we have lowered heights on these from 12 mm to 8.5 mm. Green banks are also lowered from 22mm to 18mm.

Around greens we have overseeded all areas of greens followed by medium/coarse topdressing sand (15 ton).

Tees and greens have had a start of season granular feed. With moisture present were just waiting on consistent temperatures before things really get going.

We have already seen a colour response to the granular fertiliser on only a couple of days. We are 0.5mm off our typical summer height of cut on greens, once growth kicks in we will soon see any winter scarring fill in.

An outfield fertiliser will be applied to any areas worn through winter traffic (ends of paths, walk off/on areas to try and speed up recovery before it starts again this coming winter.

Greens cut twice weekly
Tees cut once per week.
Fairways cut once per week

Spring /summer plan

Summer granular fertiliser out on greens and tees. Once we get some warmth through the night, growth will kick in. Greens will fill in and we can lower heights, verticut and vibro roll to improve smoothness and speed.

Pitch marks

Please...if you make one, repair it!! As a club it is the golfer's responsibility to repair any made.

Ride on buggies

Utilise paths as much as possible and just be sensible when permitted.

Kevin Wilson
Head greenkeeper.

Pitchmarks/General course awareness

Just a reminder that the course is there for all players and we all want to play this in its best condition.

I won't labour the point but if you make a divot replace it, if you are good enough and keep hitting greens repair those pitch marks. We may not see exactly where we hit the green but try as best you can to trace where you believe you landed and repair any that you make. Even better repair two if you see them. All these things make a difference and help to keep the course in top shape.

Here's hoping for some good warm weather from now on and I wish all members the best for the season ahead.

As always I hope this updated you on the position at present and if you have any questions on course matters or have any ideas or suggestions then please contact any member of the greens committee or the secretary.

Stephen Richardson

Eddie Gilhooley

Ian McMillan

Greens Convenor/Greens Committee