

COURSE COMMITTEE



UPDATE FOR MEMBERS

STAFF

Our staff are working really hard at present to ensure the course is prepared well for weekday and weekend social comp rounds, as well as keeping up with the usual spring growth at this time of year. A few heavy rains over the 6-8 weeks have meant that our rough areas are flourishing.

We are really pleased with the impact Chris Neville is having on our course work practices and Chris Atkinson and Joe Fiske-Kealy are doing a great job supporting Chris. Joe is continuing to show great progress in his first few months in the apprentice role.

As well as lots of positive comments about how neat the course is looking, it was pleasing to hear a member note last weekend that they have never seen so much of the course mown before. A testament to the time that Chris, staff and volunteers are currently putting into the course.

We welcome Steve Lee and David Ivey to the Course Committee.

KEY ITEMS TO NOTE

- **Our greens will be cored on Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd November.**
- **1st tee will be closed from 11.00am Sunday October 31st to allow greens renovations to begin.**
- **The resurfacing of the 5th fairway has been put on hold. Our 8th & 17th fairways are too immature to be used for sprigs at this stage. Our immediate focus instead will be on establishing our new tif tuf nursery area, which means we will be fully self-sufficient for sprigs from next season.**

GREENS

- Our greens have shown significant improvement over the last few months but Chris assures me there is a long way to go to improve the sub surface soil structure.
- They have been great to put on over recent weeks and we look forward to improved surfaces once they recover from renovations.
- Our greens will be cored on Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd November. The coring will be a heavy core, using 5/8 inch (15mm) tines. We will be top dressing with a coarse sand to maintain drainage capacity in the holes so the greens will be pretty rough for a couple of weeks. Short term pain..... These works will begin Sunday afternoon with a de-thatching process before the coring begins.
- We are mindful that competitions might be starting again soon and some key events need to be caught up on but the process is required and unavoidable.

19th GREEN

- The 19th green is coming along really well and is pretty much ready for play.

- The Tuesday volunteers will be tidying up around the back of the 19th over the next few weeks and some levelling works will be completed to the front of the green so it will be ready for play, if required, in 3/4 weeks time.

MACHINERY

- As outlined at the AGM, we are looking to build the capacity of our machinery profile with an aim to increase our efficiency and effectiveness in course. Since our last Member's Report, the following items have been purchased.
- A new, smaller spray unit has been purchased, which will be used mainly for greens, greens surrounds and teeing areas.
- A new tow behind blower has been purchased, and was delivered last week. This will help us to quickly blow greens off before mowing, tidy up tees and greens surrounds and will be particularly useful to tidy up cores when fairways, tees and surrounds are cored.
- We have purchased a Procore machine which will allow us to do our own coring (greens, surrounds and tees) at any time, and not be locked in to hiring machines within limited time frames.
- We have purchased an MDX utility vehicle that will be useful as a third vehicle. It can tow a range of units around the course and be used as a tipping vehicle when required.
- Thanks to Denis and Steve Jeffrey who have helped out with a range of repairs over the last months or two. Denis has also fitted some headlights to our greens roller for those early starts.



FAIRWAYS

- The resurfacing of the 5th fairway has been put on hold. Our 8th & 17th fairways are too immature to be used for sprigs at this stage. Our immediate focus instead will be on establishing our new tif tuf nursery area, which means we will be fully self-sufficient for sprigs from next season.
- Members will be starting to see the benefits of the fairway coring that was completed 3/4 weeks ago. The 10th, 3rd, 6th & 18th fairways are feeling much softer, taking in more water and with the fertilisers that are being applied to all fairways, they really starting to respond.
- Chris aims to core all fairways before Christmas. Our new blower will help to minimise the disruption to play for members. The holes will be left open to maximise water penetration and allow the couch root to grow and establish new root systems.
- The 8th and 17th fairways will be solid tined and top dressed as required.
- All fairways have been fertilised in the last two weeks.

- Wheel tracks on the 17th fairway will also be addressed over coming weeks now that temperatures are starting to increase and the couch is starting to move.
- Further sprays have been applied in the last week to remove toad rush, poa and broadleaf weeds from our fairways.
- Broadleaf sprays have been applied into rough areas as well.
- All of the weed on the practice fairway is now under control and the area will be cut close to normal fairway height. Trenches between the various couch plots will also be backfilled.

TEES

- All of our teeing areas will be cored and top dressed in coming months. Again, this will allow water to penetrate the surface and encourage the grass to develop deeper, stronger root systems.
- This process will provide minimal disruption to play and soften and improve our teeing areas.

CARTS

- Cart drivers are reminded that when travelling from the shed to the clubhouse and return, the expectation is that you follow the path beside the 3rd tee to the 6th tee then follow the asphalt path past 3rd green, 4th tee & 1st tee. Thanks for your co-operation.
- Black lines will again be painted around the front of greens to designate where carts are not to travel.
- On the 11th hole, carts will soon be re-directed to the left of the green, following the 'ditch' around to a turning area near the 12th tee. The pathway that has been worn to the right of the green will be re-grown to improve the aesthetics of the hole and to stop balls going out of bounds.
- A proper cart turning area near the 8th tee will be established over the next few months, with carts coming up the 7th redirected through the trees a little earlier than is currently in place.
- In the coming months, carts will also be re-directed to the left and rear of the 4th green to join up with the path on the 5th tee. This pathway will require some minor earthworks in a couple of spots.
- The car parking at the shed area has been formalised a little to keep cars at a safe distance from the practice area.

IRRIGATION

- General Committee has made a substantial investment into our irrigation system over the last few months. We have added variable speed controllers to our two pump stacks, replaced the mainline from the pump shed to the oncourse system and have installed safety valves to stop the system from over heating at any stage. Additions have been made to the pump priming set up and Chris has reprogrammed some decoders to have our system up and running at full capacity. A seal has also been replaced on one of our main stacks.
- Chris has reprogrammed all of our irrigation set up to maximise its efficiency and effectiveness.

- Treated water from the Coliban Treatment plant is being used on a regular basis as a supplement to the river water.
- We have a full water allocation for this season.

TREES

- Many limbs and some trees have been removed over the last few weeks.
- Reasons being they impact play, provide unwanted shade, have horizontal growth, add significant time to course management and are growing under dominant species and will never prosper.
- Further suckers will be removed from some rough areas around the course to allow healthier trees to flourish.
- Planted trees have continued to be watered to ensure success
- Course Committee is continuing to identify areas for further planting that adds colour to our course but doesn't impact with shade or by taking moisture away from fairways.

GARDEN BEDS

- Thanks to Owen for his continued work on the 9th tee garden bed. It is starting to look great.
- Thanks also to Tim Doye for his work on the 17th tee garden bed tidy up.
- With planted areas such as between 1st & 3rd greens/4th tee and around the 19th, we are looking to spray weeds/grasses out, apply a thick covering of eucy mulch and plant more colourful ground covers and cascading plants to both beautify the area and reduce future maintenance. This area will be a focus area for the next few months.
- We have discussed asking members to help out with providing and planting ground cover plants from their gardens for this project. Spreading daisies, pigface and other succulents would be ideal. If you are able to help out with some cutting, or propagating cuttings on our behalf, please contact one of the Course Committee. We can organise for hoses to reach this area for planting and establishing purposes.

COURSE CARE

- Members are reminded to carry a sand bucket with them for every round.
- The best repair method is to find the divot, lay it flat back on the hole, step on it to get dirt to dirt contact, then top dress with your sand bucket and smooth over so it doesn't affect other golfers.
- Please carry a pitch repairer each round. The best repair method is to try and find all of the original grass cover and bring that back to the surface, then level the area. Just lifting up the dirt and smoothing off the surface doubles the time taken for recovery.

VOLUNTEERS

- On behalf of members, the Course Committee would like to thank our group of volunteers who come out each Tuesday morning and on weekends to complete a range of tasks around the course.

- Our on-course volunteers complete somewhere between 30-50 hours/week and their work allows staff to focus on course maintenance and projects. A massive contribution.

FEEDBACK

It's always great to receive constructive feedback from members as we look to continually improve our course for you.

We have hundreds of sets of eyes on the course each week and we are happy to consider and follow up suggestions/observations from members.

Your Course Committee is Course Superintendent Chris Neville, Jan Walklate, Sean O'Connor, Fred Kath, Chris Beames, Steve Jeffrey, David Ivey, Steve Lee and Lex Johnstone. As your representatives, queries, suggestions and ideas can be fed to the Course Committee via these people.