

# Greenkeepers Report

December 2019

Winter is well and truly upon us and with a very wet spell through autumn the course has thrown up a different set of challenges. Leaves, wetness, disease and managing wear.

As mentioned in my last report, white lines, ropes and hoops are all used to manage wear around the course and to control the amount of traffic going through wet areas that are prone to damage. Though most adhere to this there is still a minority that feel this shouldn't apply to them with total disregard about the damage they cause for everyone else that wants to enjoy winter golf. It's frustrating and shouldn't be accepted from the more courteous members.

This year we have had several chemicals that have had their licence revoked for use as a fungicide, typically they are of a curative nature so when disease is active a simple application would stop the development of the disease quickly, without these the control of disease, especially fusarium patch, the available chemicals are more preventative with little actual effect on the pathogens and it is also a much greater expense. We have been trying a more sustainable approach but have suffered some damage due to this but overall it has only been on a couple of greens. As mentioned before, during this time of year you would notice a lot more aeration taking place. This is vital for a number of reasons providing air spaces into the soil, allowing surface water to drain, establishing good root development, allowing for the breakdown of thatch and preventing conditions that disease thrives. Overall the Greens are keeping a good coverage and staying relatively firm considering recent weather patterns.

We are well on the way with the mole ploughing throughout the course what is again proving successful as additional drainage by shifting water quickly away from the main playing surfaces keeping them as dry as possible. We have also been excavating some existing drainage and replacing stone to improve its effectiveness with a few problem areas experimented with what seems to be helping. Also we have made a couple of small deep holes, down to the gravel drainage at the back of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> greens where water would sit what should help these areas. We are leaving them open so obviously, relief can be taken as with irrigation and other drainage hinderances.

There has been some confusion with winter rules again with the height of cut of the semi rough and surrounds, in my opinion to state that the semi is the same height of cut as the fairways thus allowing golfers to lift, wipe and place throughout these areas would remove this problem while winter rules are in place.

So, moving forward into winter we still have a lot to be done what haven't been forgotten, paths to be topped up, tree work to be continued and keeping things as enjoyable as possible.

I, on behalf of the greenkeepers, would like to wish everyone a fantastic festive period and to make many memories to cherish.

Jeff Taylor

Head Greenkeeper