

HAZLEMERE GOLF CLUB

Conferences Weddings & Private Functions



Hazlemere Golf Club - Course update April 2010

Background

This is the second course update and in addition to outlining course projects we have incorporated some of the questions asked by members during the course of the past month. Copies of this update will be emailed, posted on the board in the player's corridor, posted in the pro shop, posted on the web site and displayed in the club house.

White Tees

A reminder to all - White tees are on the course for both social and competition golf as from April 1st.

Pin Position Guides

A pilot scheme will be in place as from May 1st. Sheets will be available from the pro shop showing pin placement in one of four grid positions (A, B, C or D). Feedback will be welcome from both members and visitors. The small flag system on the flagsticks will also be maintained.

150 Yard Markers

All fairways, excluding par 3s, will have 150 yard markers. Currently the 1st, 10th and 16th are without markers. The 150 yard markers denote the distance as the crow flies from the marker to the middle of the green.

Bell on the 1st

Replacement unit has been ordered (club house end).

Water Fountain by 12th Green

The replacement drinking fountain button has been received and will be fitted in the next few days and the fountain will be turned on.

Winter Mats

12th The new mat is now in situ.

6th It is proposed to replace the old mat with a new one and site in the existing position once the ground has been levelled.

10th It is proposed to position a new winter mat on the back corner of the lower white teeing ground in front of the flower bed. Access will be by a new separate pathway to prevent wear and tear. This option not only clears the front pathway trolley/buggy access without damage to the mat but also adds yardage to the winter course keeping us well within the 100 yard rule.



Course Improvement Plan

Jane Doyle and Russell Lucas will be issuing dates for the course audit. It is envisaged this will take place over 3 separate dates, each covering 6 holes, and involve a cross section of members to provide small but balanced working parties.

Course Activity

Top Dressing - Greens and Tees

What is Top Dressing, Why is it necessary and When should it be applied?

Top Dressing is a mixture of sand, soil and peat sterilised by heat treatment applied mainly to greens and tees. The process requires dry conditions to enable it to be quickly and easily dispersed into the ground rather than form clumps on the surface. This application not only encourages leaf development but helps smooth out the bumps and hollows caused by frost and footprints promoting a faster and truer surface.

Top Dressing is applied throughout the growing season, monthly for greens (April to September) and twice a year for tees (April and September) obviously dependent on weather conditions).

Each green requires a 5 man team (and half a tonne of top dressing), 1 ferrying the mixture, 1 applying the mixture from the top dresser attached to the tractor, 2 brushing in the mixture and 1 cutting the green after the brushing.

After top dressing the greens/tees need to be watered, ideally by rain but otherwise by the green staff.

All greens have now been top dressed and weather permitting the tees will be done in the next ten days and the greens top dressed again twice in May. The pars 3s, because of their heavier usage are top dressed by hand and seeded.

What are the white patches on the greens, how are they treated and when will they recover?

The white patches are caused by a fungal disease (Fusarium or Snow Mould) which occurred when the course was covered for an extended period by snow and ice blocking out light and air preventing photosynthesis.



The process of treatment which requires dry and unfrozen conditions was further hindered by the adverse weather conditions.

The greens have been sprayed with fungicide and fed nutrients. This spoon feeding has increased in frequency during April from monthly to weekly. The rate of recovery hinges on soil/ground temperature rising to around 14C, current soil readings are at 10C. If temperature rises the next 3-4 weeks should see an 80-90% recovery and hopefully 100% by end of May.

During the last 10 days we have been experiencing big temperature swings, with highs of 14C+ during the day and frost during the night preventing both top dressing and cutting.

Cutting

What is the frequency for cutting greens, fairways, fairway surrounds and semi rough? Why were the greens not cut last weekend?

Greens are now cut daily (increasing from every other day) and this will continue daily through to September/October dependent on weather (heavy rain and frost prevent cutting). The cutting height has dropped from 5 mm to 4 mm and will reduce to 3 mm over the next few weeks dependent on night time temperatures.

The greens were not cut over the last weekend because of the frost on both Saturday and Sunday mornings.

We should also be aware there is a time restriction on cutting the greens nearest the Amersham Road before 7.00 am, following complaints from some residents, processed via the local council. The greens staff commence at 6.00 am and cut 2,3,6,7,13,12,5,4,1,10,11,17,16,18,9, putting green, pitching green, 8 and 14 in order to comply but it does provide a race against time to get round before the early morning golfers.

Fairways are cut to a height of 15 mm, twice a week and sometimes 3 times if heavy growth.

Tops of tees, green surrounds and fairway surrounds are cut twice a week.

Semi rough is cut on an ongoing basis to a height of 50 mm both to speed up play and prevent a build up of dead grass.



Watering

How often are the greens watered?

The greens are watered “on demand” to keep them alive. Temperature and location play are an important part to the frequency and intensity of the watering. For example heavily water the front 9 on a Monday and back 9 on a Tuesday, backing up with manual watering and wetting agents to increase absorption rates.

There are a couple of other factors to be taken into account. The automatic irrigation system is no longer operational as the wiring has failed and needs replacing. The underground pipes are plastic and badly worn and prone to leakage (welding joints) and the pop up sprinklers which are gradually being replaced by newer models. The water tank is mains fed which makes the water be sterile and extremely cold, too cold at present to be used in anything but the heat of the day.

What can the members do to help?

Obviously the course audit will identify areas where member’s working parties will play a vital role but for all members and visitors there are basic housekeeping tasks which should be part of their daily golfing routine.

Raking Bunkers after use: all bunkers are surface raked daily to remove any footprints and deep raked once a week (nine on Tuesdays and nine on Wednesdays). It is up to each and every golfer to leave the bunker as they would wish to find it and to remind those who may have forgotten.

Repairing Pitch Marks: we all know the consequences associated with pitch marks left not repaired, damage taking weeks to recover can easily be avoided by golfers repairing pitch marks immediately on reaching the green. Help by repairing others which may have been unintentionally overlooked.

Greens Committee
22nd April 2010