

# May Update

## Greens

Our greens have improved immensely, these past few weeks. Grass coverage is good and the plant is currently healthy! There is still an amount of chickweed on some greens and the 12<sup>th</sup> is some way short of a reasonable surface as is the rear of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The surfaces in general are true although slow in pace, cutting height being 5.5mm at present which is deemed almost winter height. Greens are mown daily.

Installation of a new irrigation system has commenced and although excellent news, water available to the greens/tees will be sporadic at best for a short while. Hence, the importance of keeping the height of cut as high as possible; this will relieve some stress on the sward. Top dressing with sand fortnightly will help to keep the surfaces true.

## Tees

Most tees are in good shape, obviously the par 3 holes take severe abuse and recovery is difficult. The new tees have performed well, although 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> will always be problematic due to the environment that they have to survive in. All of these tees will be treated with 'kid gloves' and tee blocks will be positioned accordingly.

Tees are mown twice weekly with collars and approaches at 12mm, generally on Tuesdays and Fridays.

## Fairways

Currently, the height of cut is 14mm and we mow once a week, although twice weekly would be advantageous if resources allowed.

Herbicide applications will start in June for control of weeds.

## Bunkers

Sand depth will continue to be monitored and maintained. Many of the bunkers require drainage, however, this will not commence until late autumn and 'topping up' will be minimal in the interim period.

## Semi Rough/Rough

Consternation amongst members – my job description demands it from me apparently -and conversation topic of the moment!!

First cut of semi is 37mm height of cut and one triple width.

Next is the semi 'proper' – 62mm height of cut and 8 metres wide where possible.

Then 'Rough'.

The 'new rough' has been introduced for two reasons, both of which are in tandem with each other – resources and definition – and will be addressed accordingly.

Resources – Oak Park is currently awaiting delivery of a set of rotary gang mowers and new tractor with which to tow them – the suppliers are letting us down at present. This leaves the

maintenance department with one machine to cut the vast acreage of semi rough/rough on all 27 holes. Take into account that this area of the golf course requires a predominantly 'dry cut' and we, the green staff, are left with a mild headache!

Definition – on arrival at Oak Park one of the first areas noted was the large expanse of semi rough – it was almost never ending! Definition was most certainly required and still is. However, the 'rough' still requires maintaining and this is where our new machinery is vital, to maintain the rough at a height that is penal but not unjustly so and also to be aesthetically pleasing.

In the interim period, there may be some allowances made and I am led to believe that the left hand side of the 1<sup>st</sup> appears the greater area of concern?! – Even though the fairway must be 100 yards wide!

### **Irrigation**

As mentioned earlier, the irrigation project has started in earnest. Members may notice on their way around the course: red paint lines, flags and marker posts – please leave well alone!! Look out for irrigation updates on the notice boards in the clubhouse.

Next update will appear at the end of June.

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Course Manager