

## Rickmansworth Golf Course

### Golf Course Report MAY 2015

<b>Rickmansworth Golf Course</b>	
<b>Work Activity: Course Report</b>	
<b>Date: 15/05/2015</b>	
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*With our first major renovation work undertaken to the turf surfaces during 2015 now complete, we are now in the process of getting our spring/summer work to the Golf Course into full swing.*

#### **GREENS**

With our winter aerifying program complete, we have our maintenance regime into full swing. Significantly, the greens were deep tined on 3 occasions through winter of 2014/2015, an increase & a solid step into having firmer surfaces despite some heavy periods of winter rain.

We have lowered our height of cut incrementally over the last 6 weeks from 6mm down to our summer height of 4 mm. Mowing frequency is now daily.

Another change to the winter & spring program that is also resulting in smother & faster greens was a policy of regular rolling as a substitution for mowing. In this way we could leave the grass plant healthy, but maintain smoothness & roll

The greens have also received their granular & soluble fertiliser application. Soluble feeding via the sprayer will continue through the summer as required. Other spray applications will be the application of wetting agents to aid water penetration, better water retention in potential drought situations & reduce instances of “dry patch”

Verti-cutting and Grooming of the Greens surfaces will also take place during late May / early June; this is performed to manage the top surface and assists in the removal of seed heads, which can be a problem during this period & removal of lateral growth & surface “thatch”. Another “quality” improvement we have been working into our routines is the regular spot spraying & hand removal of weeds in the greens

#### **TEES**

Aeration frequency & depth was again increased during the previous winter period & we are now into our regular mowing routines. We have also endeavored to increase the seeding & dressing / divoting program. Last winter the white, yellow & red markers remained on the main grass tees all through, except for the 9<sup>th</sup> which occupies a particularly wet & shaded area surrounded by trees. To cope with this additional winter wear & continue to show good quality into the summer is pleasing to see on all the tees.

There has been a split policy with regard to the fertiliser application routine; with granular slow release style products applied to the smaller & par 3 tees that take the most wear & damage, while using a soluble program to all others. All tees have also had a selective herbicide application. The elimination of the weeds has not been as rapid as we would have hoped for, but this was due to a very dry & cold April. They are slowly dying back, but these products need warmer & damper conditions to be transported throughout the target plants system hormonally to achieve best performance.

We will continue to work through the program of install astro turf cover to the sleeper steps, although this is more likely to carry on after the main summer mowing programs quieten down.

### **FAIRWAYS / APPROACHES / COLLARS**

Works to the approaches & collars have been pretty much duplicated to that of tees with regard to aeration & selective herbicide application, although feeding has been by the use of soluble products. Again we are now into weekly & 2 x weekly mowing regimes. Selected areas of fairways have also been soluble fed & sprayed with a selective herbicide, although this needs to be expanded to further areas over the coming weeks. At the moment it is regular mowing that is taking place. We are now into our summer routing of “cross cutting” in a striped pattern as opposed to our winter “block cut” appearance. The stripes perhaps give a better summer presentation, although the winter pattern is more practical in reducing wear & tear from turning in wetter & low growth conditions.

### **BUNKERS**

Many were topped & renovated in 2014.

We are always looking to improve others and a plan remains in place to continue for the future.

Bunker maintenance is on-going as sand moves constantly.

Can we ask, when you rake a bunker, can you try and rake by pushing the sand as opposed to pulling it, as over time, we always find the sand mostly at the back of the bunker, as people tend to pull the rake on their way out.

But as I said, sand moves, so hence we are always working on the Bunkers. Other regular work is the strimming of the edges to remove overhanging grass & give a neat appearance. All bunkers are currently being treated with a total herbicide to remove weeds & grasses, although we do endeavor to remove as many as we can during routine raking

### **OTHER WORKS**

During the winter period many areas of invasive scrub & trees were cleared to assist with speed of play, ease of locating potentially lost balls, but also to assist with local issues of improving turf quality on fine turf areas e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> Green.

The longer rough has also been topped off, but will be allowed to grow up again as part of the established course nature & layout until it is topped again at the end of August. Currently a total herbicide application is being made to all tree bases. This does give a clean & neat appearance, but also allows stray balls to be more easily spotted & does benefit the trees in not having to compete for moisture & nutrients with weeds & grasses at the base.

**PATHS** – Probably the most significant & visual change will be the improvements to the paths at 15<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> areas Some groundworks & preparations were made early in 2015 & shortly these will be completed & the paths re surfaced.

**SUMMARY**

**Our main priorities throughout the last season were perhaps in establishing a better base of aerifying & “ground works” to deliver better quality in poorer weather conditions & improved quality for the main season. We have also tried to develop & install a little more quality into the routines for presentation; We hope to continue ensuring our blue print delivers Rickmansworth Golf Course to play 12 months of the year for your continued enjoyment.**

**Regards**

**Green Staff**