



DOWNSHIRE
GOLF COMPLEX

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ACTIVE

11/10/19

Downshire News Letter

Hello All Golfers

I thought it would be helpful with autumn on our doorstep to let you know what we're doing at Downshire on the course this coming season.

6th Fairway Bunker

The fairway bunker on the right of the 6th will shortly be filled in and grassed over, there are a couple of reasons for this.

As we don't have fairway irrigation at Downshire any particular high points on the course can become dry and barren and although we've kept seeding and top dressing, with the trees sapping up any moisture the face and run off are unplayable, it's a battle that we're not going to win. However... the bunker no longer serves it's purpose of protecting the green as that is now done by the trees also on the right that in recent years have grown significantly. It does mean there will be a period of time that a significant sized area will be marked as play prohibited but free relief can be taken. We feel that this work will also improve the aesthetics of the hole from the tee.

New Flags

We are in the process of ordering new tournament flagsticks and cups for the course. Thank you for your patience with this I know it's been a bit of a talking point especially after the new rules of golf were introduced allowing golfers to putt with the flagstick in. Sorry for the delay.

The "F" Word

No not that word! The F word we're talking about is Fusarium, the disease that blighted our greens this past winter and early spring.



Fusarium Patch

Hopefully a lot of you have more of an understanding of what Fusarium is with the information that we passed on to you last winter but for those of you that don't a quick recap.

Fusarium is a bacterial disease that populates the top 2-3 inches of the greens surface. Most courses at one time or another have small outbreaks of it especially those with Poa annua grasses. It results in ugly scars on the greens and poor playing surfaces. With the wet and mild winter we had and with very few frosts, like other courses in the area, Sherfield Oaks being hit the hardest Fusarium had perfect growing conditions.

Unfortunately there is no curative sprays or treatments that can be used after Fusarium sets in so all we can do is take preventative measures to reduce the risk. We've upped our measures this year which are as follows:

September

We have just sprayed the course this week with a fungicide called Instrata which acts on the fungal pathogen inside the plant at its early stage stopping mycelia growth.

W/C 16th we'll be fertilising the greens to boost growth, the fertiliser will also reduce the PH levels of the soil making them more acidic and hostile to Fusarium.

October

W/C 7th the second fungicide will be used called Heritage, Heritage is a systemic fungicide which means it attacks disease infection from within the plant. This is a very important one as Heritage is regarded as a leading fungicide against Fusarium.

W/C 14th Fertilising the greens again to improve sward health and reduce PH levels

W/C 21st solid tining. We contemplated hollow tining for a second time this year especially as the improvement to our greens after the first time was so dramatic. However we have now decided to opt for solid tining due to the depth of penetration being better. The main problem with our greens is the lack of surface drainage, something we're working on. The solid tines will go to a depth of 20cm which we will leave open to improve airflow, reduce compaction and aid surface drainage. This will be slightly disruptive for a few days whilst the holes close up but we feel this is the best course of action.

November

W/C 4th this will be our final spraying of fungicide. At this time we will be using Medallion fungicide which gives long lasting protection through the colder months. It targets disease pathogens on the leaf, in the thatch and at the soil surface.

W/C 11th Fertilising greens for reasons already listed.

December

W/C 2nd Depending on weather conditions we may tine the greens again for the same reasons as before.

W/C 9th Fertilising for the last time before spring. With barely any growth this is only to address PH levels and boost sward health.

Everything listed above in this schedule is weather permitting and some treatments may be carried out on one of the weeks either side if forecasts are not favourable for the week we have planned.

As already mentioned this is a much heightened course of preventative actions we're taking this year and although we can't guarantee that we'll be Fusarium free this will hopefully reduce the impact of any major outbreaks.

I'd also like to ask our golfers to please ensure they clean their shoes after playing elsewhere as to combat cross contamination from other courses. Thank you.

Hopefully this has been informative for you. Please do not hesitate in coming to me or dropping me an email if you have any questions about the works we are doing or if you have any suggestions for the course, I'd be happy to hear them.

Happy Golfing

Simon
General Manager