



GOLF COURSE REVIEW

Prepared by

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MEETING SUMMARY

This month's meeting focused on the summer presentation standards of the course and boundary areas. In addition, we evaluated the agreed agronomic plan which is felt is working very well with no change required for the coming two months.

The afternoon concluded with a meeting with Pauline, giving general feedback on observations made during our extensive walk of the course.

Meeting Contributors

Pauline Mooney – General Manager

Paul Ryan – Head Greenkeeper

Gerry Byrne – Director, STP (Ire) Ltd

Executive Summary- Key Findings

1. **Golf course** playing corridor very good with all key areas above expectations, particularly impressive are greens conditioning and bunker presentation.
2. **Machinery investment** continues with the purchase of a Toro 3100 Sidewinder which is used for banks of greens and semi-rough. This machine is the industry leader and demonstrates the resorts drive for perfecting and improving cut quality.
3. **Greens** are in very good condition, the softness reported in the May report was addressed through successive sand topdressing and vertical mowing. KPI scientific performance testing carried out with surfaces passing all tests.
4. **Approaches and green surrounds** are very good, excellent colour definition and sharp mowing lines.
5. **Tees** improved month on month, however a supplementary feed will be required in the coming weeks to push growth further.
6. **Fairways** good, good density and coverage, further liquid nutrition spraying is planned in the next week to push growth for the coming 6 weeks.
7. **Rough** greatly improved, under full control and presenting well. Impressively, no weeds evident.
8. **Bunkers** amongst the best presented I have seen this year, superbly edged and raked for play – well done Paul!
9. **Landscape** excellent, Paul carrying out waterway edging with hedge cutter. One area raised is the boundary encroachment of trees and branches which he would like to address. This is fully supported as it would improve presentation and light to the boundary rough.
10. **Maintenance yard and shed** very clean and tidy, all machines presented to a very high standard. The wash bay is also clean and excellently maintained.

Golf Course

Greens

Greens have improved over the last two months as Paul worked to address the softness reported in May. Successive sanding and vertical mowing to thin out the sward was carried out and the result is faster firmer surfaces to play on. Additionally, Premium grade wetting agent was used which distributes the water molecules throughout the profile of the sward resulting in a consistent presentation of grass. ProWet Evolve® is the leading chemical used for this and most encouraged to see it being used at Tara Glen.

As we are into the summer months we continue to focus on surface smoothness, firmness, moisture, core sampling and speed. These four important indicators are scientifically measured with a clegg hammer®, TDR® 350 Moisture Reader, Core Sampler and Stimpmeter®.

Clegg hammer

The Clegg Hammer® is a steel golf ball which is dropped from a nominated height through a cylindrical tube and readings sent to the electrical rating calculator. We drop the steel ball at 9 locations of the green, divide by 9 and the firmness is given.



Clegg hammer reading at 86 which is above average for Poa Annua Greens and an improvement of 3 points since May

The Clegg firmness scale reading results are as follows.

Clegg Value	Description of firmness	Ideal
Over 130	Hard and unreceptive. Ball impacts and continually bounces forward. No control from well struck shots and hardness increases. Frustrating to all level of golfers	Not ideal, risking extensive turf loss
100-130	Very firm. Ball impacts and bounces on, checks, and then rolls out. Well, struck shots need to be positioned correctly. This is a true test of ball striking and accurate play	Ideal tournament setting for parkland play and links summer standard.
80-100	Firm. Ball impacts, bounces forward, checks, and suddenly stops. Good control for a well struck shot but less control if no spin	Ideal parkland greens Tara Glen GC
70-80	Receptive. Ball impacts and stops after 1 st bounce or spins backwards.no foot printing Such surfaces are flattering for average play	Average Spring / early summer Parkland
60-70	Soft. Balls stop dead and leave pitch marks. Foot printing becomes evident to make surfaces uneven	No- described as parkland winter surfaces

Moisture Readings

We took readings from 9 locations of the 7th green and the target range is between 20% and 30%. Below 20% would indicate dryness and a need to improve on wetting agent applications and above 30% would highlight over watering and a need to reduce.



Moisture average reading of 26.2 demonstrating an excellent moisture management is in place

Stimpmeter® green speed readings

The Stimpmeter has been used for many years to measure the speed of greens. It's a one-meter steel rail with a notch which allows a golf ball to drop as the rail is raised on one side. Three balls are rolled on a flat surface over and back with the average of both sides measured.



Stimpmeter reading of 9.5 is perfect for members play

Core sampling

Arguably the most important test as we review what is happening below the surface from both an oxygen and rooting standpoint. We look for a clean profile with no black layering and rooting in excess of 75mm. Thankfully the rooting is excellent and importantly the rootzone is clean and well oxygenated.



Very healthy rooting

As we are well into the summer period, the focus remains on regular sand topdressings, judicious fertilisation, wetting agent applications and disease protection. Daily mowing and weekly ironing are also recommended to ensure green speeds remain at or above 9 feet.

Recommendations;

- Continue sand topdressing and apply every two-three weeks
- Vertical mowing to continue
- Nutrition to be applied through liquid forms as they are healthy and only need top-up.
- Wetting agent applications to be applied monthly.
- Trace element package to be applied monthly to include Primo Maxx plant growth regulator at .3 litre.
- Preventative fungicide a judgement call by Paul but be careful of the disease Microdochium which can affect surfaces in August / September.
- Mowing daily to remain at a height of 3.00mm and turf iron at least once weekly if possible.

Green surrounds and Approaches

Are presenting very well with strong colour and density.



Premium quality presentation of banks of greens

Tees

Tees have greatly improved since May with prescribed fertilisation applied, resulting in an uplift of colour and growth. The fertiliser will however run out over the next couple of weeks and a further granular will be required to carry them to the end of the growing season.



Tees good but schedule another high nitrogen application over the coming weeks

Fairways

Fairways continue to present to a very high standard with excellent colour and growth. Given the poor soil nature, gaining high density swards is extremely difficult, however, Paul is improving on this year on year with the help of outside contractor, Mark Harris with an agreed spraying programme. This programme is set to continue with two further sprays planned before the end of the growing season.



Very good colour definition

Rough

The rough is presenting very well, under full control with no issues to contend with. Impressively Paul has managed to spray all weeds in recent weeks resulting in a clean presentation finish.

Bunkers

The presentation standard of bunkers at Tara Glen are the best I have seen at any club this season. Paul and his crew have an extremely strong attention to detail of regular raking and edging and I applaud them for achieving such high standards.



Sharp quality of presentation – well done Paul!

Yard and Machinery Shed

The yard and machinery shed remains very tidy with all machines washed and fully serviced. The resorts investment continues with the purchase of a Toro 3100 Sidewinder which will ensure quality mowing of greens banks and semi-rough. It is most impressive to see such high quality cutting equipment at the resort with the results seen throughout the course.



New Toro Banks Machine

Landscape

Paul has carried out an enormous amount of mowing of the waterways and boundary where possible and within legal limits of hedgerow maintenance. In addition, he sprayed total herbicide to tall grass boundary area to ensure ball retrieval is made easier.



Most impressive boundary spraying and waterway maintenance



Superb floral arrangement at the 1st

The one area of concern which Paul raised was the encroachment of the trees/branches to some boundary [2nd / 5th and 8th] areas which is restricting light and affecting maintenance. These boundary areas is recommended to be cut back using a registered tree surgeon contractor with all branches chipped or removed. This will significantly improve light and air into the areas and subsequently improve grass condition.



Branches encroaching onto the golf course affecting light and growth

SUMMARY

The golf course is in the best condition I have seen since we have been involved with Tara Glen. Paul's attention to premium presentation detail can be seen in every area of the playing corridor and I wish to credit him and his team for their collective drive to achieve such standards. The club can be assured of great playing conditions for the remainder of the season.

Our next visit is due in September where we look towards sanding of fairways and aeration of Greens and Tees in preparation for winter.

Gerry Byrne
Director
Sports Turf Practitioners
July 23rd, 2024

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