



GOLF COURSE REVIEW

Prepared by

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Sports Turf Practitioners (Ire) Ltd

Meeting date – 25th June, 2025

Contributors;

- **Pauline Mooney – General Manager**
- **Paul Ryan – Course Superintendent**
- **Gerry Byrne – STP [Author]**

MEETING SUMMARY / KEY OBSERVATIONS

As we enter into the critical months of the playing season, we carried out a comprehensive walk and review of the course. Weather conditions remained favourable in the last two months with intermittent rainfall and good growing temperatures. It is most pleasing to report the golf course to be in very good condition with all agreed agronomic programmes carried out.

Greens are particularly impressive, disease free and deep rooting. They will sustain the expected high traffic over the next two to three months.

Tees are behind in colour as Paul sprayed to remove weeds. Fertilisation is applied and a quick pick up is expected.

Fairways very good.

Bunkers excellent as always, recently topped up with sand and edged.

Paul mentioned the 180-degree digger cannot be certified for use from a health and safety standpoint. Understandably this will need to be replaced in the coming weeks with an excellent 2nd hand replacement identified for purchase.

Machinery maintenance remains to service schedules with machines presented in a very clean manner.

The course walk concluded with a meeting with Pauline, giving general feedback on observations and recommendations for the coming two months.

Golf Course**Greens**

Greens have had significant treatments in recent weeks with over 50 tonnes of sand applied to smooth surfaces and improve green speed. This was applied in conjunction with vertical mowing which removed training grasses and created a more upright growth pattern.

Chemical applications included plant growth regulation products, wetting agents and water-soluble fertilisation.

Finally, granular fertilisation was applied to create sustainable slow-release growth which will withstand high levels of play.

As green surfaces have settled, we resume our performance testing to evaluate turf firmness, moisture retention, speed and rooting. These are the fundamental KPI's and give an objective indication of green quality.

The measuring tools used are Clegg Hammer®, TDR 350 Moisture Reader®, Core Sampler and Stimpmeter®. These tests were taken on 7th green.

Clegg hammer®

This tool is a golf ball shape steel bolt which is dropped from a designated height through a cylindrical tube with readings sent to an electrical rating calculator. We drop the steel ball at 9 locations of the nominated green, divide by 9 and the rating of the firmness is given.

The purpose of firmness readings is to ascertain whether a need for additional grooming / sanding is required. As results remain good, no additional inputs are required.



Clegg hammer average reading at **89** which is nicely within industry standards

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
70-80	Receptive. Ball impacts and stops after 1 st bounce or spins backwards.no	Average Spring / early summer Parkland

	foot printing Such surfaces are flattering for average play	
60-70	Soft. Balls stop dead and leave pitch marks. Foot printing becomes evident to make surfaces uneven	Not ideal - described as parkland winter surfaces

Moisture Readings

We took readings from 9 locations with 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 **23.5%** - Perfect moisture levels and credit goes to the quality wetting agent used **Pro – Wet Evolve®**

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.



9 feet 3 inches feet Stimpmeter reading – very good for members play, lets aim for **9.6** for the coming weeks

Core Sampling

Sub-surface testing is carried out using a standard core sampler to remove material below the surface for evaluation. The key focus is to check on rooting and any indication of Anaerobic black layering.

The grasses grown at Tara Glen GC is predominately Poa Annua / Bent which has a tendency to be surface rooting. The challenge for Paul and his team is to create deeper rooting through annual aeration and solid tine. The industry norm root depth would be 50 -75mm depth and clean of any black material. Rooting is excellent with strong development to over 75mm.



Rooting at **75mm** which is most encouraging for the time of year, plus surface density

Agronomic recommendations for coming weeks;

- Mow height agreed at between 3.00mm -2.8mm, with cutting schedules held in line with growth patterns. Green speed aim at between 9.5 – 10 feet.

- **WSF, PGR, Iron and Stressbuster® monthly**
- **Verti-cut to remove trailing grasses to continue bi-weekly. Groomer attachments engaged on tri-plex mowers when possible.**
- **Top-dress to compliment vertical mowing.**
- **Turf iron to smooth surfaces.**
- **Wetting agent to continue on a monthly basis.**
- **Disease protection to be applied at the first sign of attack.**

Paul mentioned the difficulty in applying sand or carrying out disturbance works over the prime summer months. This is totally understandable given the short playing window for visiting guests. If works are missed, it will not impact on the yearly programme but may slow surfaces a little as we cannot remove surface density.

Green Surrounds and Approaches

Performing very well following early summer fertilisation. Colour and growth is strong. Paul is introducing a hand mower cut around each green to give a shoulder presentation to the green collar, a very good introduction and upgrade on the presentation standards.



Collar cut to green surrounds

Tees

Tees were recently treated for weeds and are behind in colour. Fertilisation was applied in recent days and a quick uptake and colour response is expected.



Weeds sprayed and fertiliser applied

Fairways

Fairways continue to present to a very high standard with excellent colour and growth. The new spray contractor has settled into his duties of monthly spraying of water soluble fertiliser and plant growth regulator products. Colour and growth is under control



Fairway presentation

Bunkers

The presentation standard of bunkers continue to impress with sand top-up carried out in recent days plus monthly edging programme.



Consistent presentation of Bunkers – always premium quality

Additional**Ditch lines**

Fully treated with a total herbicide which will address any access vegetation and ease of ball retrieval.



Treatment continues to remove access vegetation during the summer months

Lake / Stream works

Members will note the settlement at the 9th lake area. Paul mentioned it has worked exceptionally well in recent weeks, particularly following heavy rainfall.

Most impressive is the wild flower mix which can be seen with an abundance of bees actively feeding on flowers. As we are striving to improve our environmental responsibilities, this will certainly add to the clubs footprint.



Wild flower meadow at the 9th

New 180 degrees Digger

In recent years, Paul has mentioned the health and safety issue with the use of the clubs 180 degree digger. It has come to pass that it will no longer be passed as fit for purpose certification and must be traded-in.

The digger is a must have for not only the course but the resort grounds. Primary functions are;

- Crushing duty for skip, ensuring long life and less repeat rentals over the course of a year
- Loading sand for top-dressing / bunker sand and saving on additional machinery hire when outsource sanding is applied to fairways
- Ditch clearance
- Pallet off load for site deliveries [essential]
- Ditch clearance
- Storm clearance with timber debris on road network

- General timber work

On a positive note, Paul secured very favourable pricing for the proposed digger with excellent trade-in for the old unit. The newer unit will have a long life span for the Resort as it is only periodically used and will not accumulate long hours.

I would anticipate it will serve the Resort for up to 20 years. A worthwhile investment.



The old unit which is no longer fit for purpose vs. quality second hand digger

SUMMARY

It is most pleasing to report on an excellently maintained golf course under the leadership of Paul and his team. The playing corridor is excellent and a credit to all.

We are entering into the key playing months and Paul is prepared for the increased level of play and members / guests can look forward to a fantastic summer of golf and premium playing standards.

My next visit is due in August to review the summer conditioning and begin autumn plans.

Gerry Byrne
Director
Sports Turf Practitioners
June 26th, 2025

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