



GOLF COURSE REVIEW

Prepared by

Gerry Byrne
Director

Sports Turf Practitioners (Ire) Ltd

Meeting date – 13th August, 2025

Contributors;

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

MEETING SUMMARY / KEY OBSERVATIONS

As we enter into the final weeks of the key playing period for the course, we reflect on the premium playing conditions delivered by Paul and his team.

Greens and bunkers are most impressive and whilst tees and fairways are a little behind, this is understandable as we have had prolonged periods of hot dry weather. This weather pattern has sparked an increase of play; however, this has not impacted on turf quality due to the intense off-season agronomic works, particularly with additional sand applications and aeration.

As we now enter into the autumn period, we look toward aeration of greens which is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3rd. Additionally, sanding of fairways [dates to be decided].

Paul is also proposing to create a grass bunker at the back of the 7th green, in an effort to hold balls from travelling into the hedgerow at the back of the complex. This is supported.

Additional Items for discussion at this visit was hedgerow cutting, golf balls exiting the boundary into adjoining properties, and fairway sand spreader purchase justification.

Golf Course**Greens**

Greens have performed above expectations for the key summer months with smooth playing conditions. Paul has focus to not impacting golfers with any disturbance works with chemical applications applied during the early mornings. This has worked well with only standard cutting and bunker raking duties carried out during play.

To objectively rate green surfaces, we continue scientific 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 very good, no additional inputs are required.



Clegg hammer average reading at **90.2** an improvement from 89 in June

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 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	Not ideal - described as parkland winter surfaces
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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 **28.5%** - Perfect moisture levels – no change to watering schedules

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 6 inches feet Stimpmeter reading – very good for members play

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 has dropped back a little suggesting aeration needs.



Rooting at **60mm** which is less than June result and suggests aeration needs

Agronomic recommendations for coming weeks;

- Mow height agreed at 3.00mm into September
- Aeration planned for September 3rd with core size at 13mm, depth at 75mm and spacing at 2.5cm
- Sanding to fill excavated holes
- Over seed with Cristal Blue Links® at a rate of 7 grams
- Zeolite to all raised areas to improve moisture retention
- WSF, PGR, Iron and Stressbuster® for September but under review thereafter.
- Turf iron to smooth surfaces.
- Wetting agent to continue on a monthly basis.
- Disease protection to be applied at the first sign of attack, apply prior to aeration to protect surfaces during disturbance works.

Green Surrounds and Approaches

Performing very well following early summer fertilisation. Colour and growth is strong. Paul is recommending the construction of a grass bunker at the back of the 7th to hold golf balls from going into the hedging. This is supported, however, will be

difficult to achieve. He is meeting local contractor Gary Flood and we agreed, additional material will need to be imported to deliver the required result. To stabilise the ground, it is recommended to use subsoil to track and firm, then complete the shape with free draining topsoil.



Investigate the possibility of constructing a grass bunker at the back of the 7th green

Tees

Tees are a little worn which is to be expected following such a long season. Fertilisation, aeration, sanding and seeding is planned with a high grade ryegrass called Pro 365® which is supported.



Tees a little behind with extensive autumn renovations planned

Fairways

Fairways continue to present well for the time of year. They are a little drought damaged which is understandable given the low rainfall levels in recent weeks. All agreed agronomic works are carried out with a liquid fertilisation due in the coming weeks.

In addition, sand topdressing is planned as part of our ongoing drive to improve surface playability, particularly in the shoulder and winter months.



Fairway presentation very good for end of season

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

Landscape

Compliments to the team on the delivery of beautiful landscape works throughout the golf course. The flower and shrub arrangements are most impressive and ahead of many courses throughout the country.



Excellent shrub and flower beds

Additional

Hedgerow Cutting

We spoke at length at the hedgerow cutting programme and have agreed that no works will be carried out during the months from March 1st to August 31st. This is a legal requirement with the only allowance being for health and safety reasons as determined by Paul. The importance to adhere to government restrictions is paramount.

Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and related legislation. It is illegal to wilfully destroy, injure, or mutilate the eggs or nests of wild birds, or to wilfully disturb a bird on or near a nest during the breeding season. The breeding season, particularly for hedge-cutting restrictions, typically runs from March 1st to August 31st.

Key points about nesting bird protection in Ireland:

- **Legal Protection:**

All wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected under the Wildlife Act.

- **No Disturbance:**

It's illegal to disturb a bird on or near its nest, especially when eggs or young are present.

- **Hedge-Cutting Restrictions:**

Hedge cutting and other vegetation destruction are prohibited during the nesting season (March 1st to August 31st).

- **Importance of Hedgerows:**

Hedgerows provide vital nesting and foraging habitats for many bird species.

- **Exceptions:**

There are some limited exemptions to the hedge-cutting restrictions, such as in the ordinary course of agriculture or forestry.

Additional

Fairway Sand Spreader Justification

As part of our agronomic programme, over 600 tonnes of sand is applied annually to the fairways. The cost of spreading from an outside contractor is generally 7.50e per tonne[4500e].

Unfortunately, the contractor who applies the material is no longer willing to travel from Dublin to Tara Glen, resulting in Paul trying to secure a loan of Courtown GC own unit. This is not ideal and will have a short shelf life.

Paul has agreed a price with the Dublin Contractor to buy his Second Hand Spreader at a very reasonable cost. The payback will be 5 years and the life

expectancy for the spreader would be over 20 years. The purchase is very much supported.

Golf balls exiting the Boundary

Boundary issues on golf courses are becoming increasingly problematic, particularly with improved golf equipment and balls. In some cases this necessitates the installation of expensive boundary netting to protect neighbours from any damage.

Recently a golf ball exited the property and broke a car window and whilst no body was hurt it has raised a question of how well protected you are at Tara Glen.

It is generally felt that you have very good neighbours and very little boundary issues, however, this can change quickly, if balls become an increasing issue.

One suggestion is to be proactive and consider offering membership to boundary neighbours and welcome them as part of the Tara Glen GC Community. This may avoid any issues, should they arise in the future.



Golf ball exiting the property and breaking car window

Security Bollards

Paul has worked hard in recent weeks to install security bollards at all boundary exit roads. They are most professional and will act as a deterrent against any intruders.



Security bollards installed by Paul

SUMMARY

As we are set to close out the key playing months of the season, we reflect on an excellently maintained golf course.

Going forward, we have a large body of work to bring us through the autumn period which is planned and will be delivered in a professional manner.

I wish to credit Paul and his team for delivering the agreed agronomic plan for the summer months. The works was delivered with true professionalism and passion for the club.

My next visit is due in October to review the autumn schedules and begin winter plans.

Gerry Byrne
Director
Sports Turf Practitioners
August 16th, 2025

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