

Greens Newsletter December

2020

Dear members hope you are all well and have had a good Christmas and wish you all a Happy and healthy New Year.

We are now gripped by the weather of deep winter with course restrictions a topic for discussion every morning by you and us the greenstaff. Please check the website before arriving to play, the website is updated every morning stating any restriction that are in place for that day and enables you to arrive prepared.

So why do we have restrictions? To protect your safety, turf and ground conditions. We have to account for you all to golf safely, ground conditions and weather being the main factors for consideration. On our part the Club has improved accessibility with paths, dry winter tee mats, anti slip materials on sleeper steps, post and rope traffic management and improved drainage. You can also help by staying to paths, avoiding areas that are roped off and keeping your footwear in good condition. The daily weather conditions are consistently monitored with restrictions altered when suitable.

Turf and ground conditions are then taken into account. Weakened winter turf growth and wet soft playing areas that will be badly damaged by buggy, trolley and foot traffic are monitored and restrictions put in place as these occur. Restrictions are staggered as conditions deteriorate or improve and we are always anxious to remove restrictions as soon as possible. Again the club has improved drainage to the course and are reviewing further drainage improvements to help.

Worm Casts. Along with the ban on effective chemical control of leather jacket grubs we also lost the chemical control of casting worms. Where one application of two products before the onset of winter controlled both grub damage and casting worms, we now have neither, relying on less effective more costly products. We have sourced products that have been effective against grubs but worm casts are and will be an ongoing problem. The problems casting worms bring are uneven playing surfaces, weed ingress, the capping of drainage by casts being smeared over the surface by foot, trolley and machinery traffic and the softening of surfaces. Impeding drainage and softening surfaces is never a great combination for a dry/firm winter course and answers the question of why our fairways are damper. Cultural methods of brushing and grass clipping removal with regular applications of iron sulphate and long term drainage improvements will help.

On a brighter note the weather is set dry and cold for the New Year and the current rainfall figures are 20% lower than last winter. Please be patient if we have temporary greens due to frost we will endeavour to have full greens returned as soon as possible.

Happy New Year to all.

Rob Mabb