

Course Report – March 2025

Current Conditions

On a personal note, I would like to express my gratitude to the many members of all clubs who have extended their congratulations to my wife and I on the arrival of our second son, Arden. He was born on February 5th and has been thriving over the last 7 weeks. While adjusting to life with two children has presented its challenges, we are slowly settling into our new routine. It was also pointed out that Arden is an anagram of "Redan," providing a meaningful tie to North Berwick, which I find particularly special.



Figure 1: Arden Robert Ian Cruickshank – much cheerier than his dad...

In terms of course conditions, March has been dry, with only 4mm of rainfall recorded as of March 23rd. The low temperatures have resulted in minimal growth on the surfaces, which has contributed to the excellent performance of the greens in recent weeks. However, we anticipate a surge of growth once temperatures rise, which may lead to slower green speeds. To mitigate this, we plan to apply light foliar fertilizer when needed rather than granular fertiliser.

The topdressing program on the fairways has been successful, with 1,000 tonnes of sand applied over two separate sessions in December and February. Due to the dry weather and slow growth, some sand has remained on the surface longer than expected. As temperatures rise and with the introduction of irrigation or rainfall, this excess sand will soon be absorbed into the canopy.

Additionally, disease scarring from early winter is beginning to recover, and we expect full recovery once the conditions favour growth.

Maintenance Week

We were pleased to welcome Ken Siems and his son Jacob for the fifth consecutive year to inject sand into the greens. Over the course of two days, approximately 45 tonnes of sand were injected into the surface using their DryJect machines. This process creates a channel for the sand to be injected to a depth of 4 inches, helping to alleviate compaction and improve surface quality. This was the cleanest finish we have achieved post-maintenance, and it reinforces the effectiveness of a less aggressive early spring approach, which avoids recovery delays.



Figure 2: Dryject on the 1st green before (left) and after (right) a brush and roll.



Figure 3: Dryject on the 1st green before (left) and after (right) a brush and roll.

During the maintenance week, we also hollow-cored heavy traffic areas around greens and tees. Using a demo machine from Baroness to collect the cores, we achieved an exceptionally clean finish. These areas will be overseeded and topdressed. All tees have been disc-seeded with BAR Ultrafine 60, a fescue/dwarf rye mix known for its quick germination and superior wear tolerance for high-traffic areas like tees.



Figure 4: Gary hollow tining the area between the 2nd green and 3^d tees.



Figure 5: Rick using the Baroness Core Collector



Figure 6: Keith disc-seeding tees with the Vredo.

Winter Projects 2024/25

We have successfully completed our winter projects in preparation for the start of the season. The last five bunkers built were given additional time for turf rooting and will be back in play ahead of the Burns Shield on March 29th. The naturalized area to the left of the 4th and the bank left of the 6th tee will be hydroseeded once temperatures are favourable for germination. These areas will take time to establish and may not look fully “finished” for a few years.

Shed Extension Update

The exterior of the shed extension has been completed, and the interior concrete slab has been poured. Over the coming weeks, the internal brickwork and two rooms will be constructed, followed by the new internal wall for the welfare facilities. Unfortunately, we encountered an issue with the cladding ordered for the extension, as it did not match the existing building. Our contractors, BBP, have taken responsibility for this error and will reclad the North and West elevations at their own cost, ensuring a consistent aesthetic across the building.



Figure 7: The exterior of the Shed Extension from the Children's Course.



Figure 8: The interior of the Shed Extension.

Borehole Update

The drilling of the boreholes has been completed, but due to soft rock movement underground, the contractors, Hydracrat, were only able to drill to a depth of 50 metres, rather than the expected 80 metres. While this was anticipated, the delay in consent to drill has impacted our timeline. Despite this, Hydracrat is satisfied with the results, noting a good buildup of water. The borehole well-heads will be covered over with a manhole cover and will have the surrounding area shaped to tie in with the surroundings. The next phase will involve installing a new tank at the start of 2026, with plans to connect the boreholes to the tank, allowing us to utilize our own water source for irrigation starting early 2026.

The area around the boreholes will be tidied up as the silt dries up. We attempted to remove the worst of the silt, but it proved particularly challenging as it was still very wet.

Rainfall Chart

As of the 23rd^h of March 2025.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	80.0	20	26.2	48.1	39.6
February	51.0	66	33	47.2	16.2
March	24.0	19	78.4	73.6	4
April	3.0	41	34	98.4	
May	69.0	48	24.39	98.8	
June	38.0	24	43.6	34	
July	39.5	36	48	46.8	
August	44.5	21	37.4	71.6	
September	39.5	67	50.4	36.6	
October	155.0	56	152.6	72.6	
November	23.0	94	89.54	26.6	
December	109.0	23	108.4	49.8	
Total	675.5	515	725.93	692.2	59.8

Kyle Cruickshank
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