



## **Course Report – April 2025**

### **Current Conditions**

Spring always presents its challenges, and this year is no exception. In April 2024, we recorded 100mm of rainfall, followed by another 100mm in May. In contrast, as of today (Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May) in 2025, we have only received 71mm of rain.

Due to the limited rainfall, we've been relying heavily on the irrigation system each night. However, we are now at the point where we must prioritise the primary playing surfaces—greens, tees, and approaches. Our irrigation tank holds 250,000 litres of water, and a single 3mm application to these key areas uses approximately 190,000 litres. This leaves limited reserves for other parts of the course.

To manage resources efficiently, we've been targeting high-impact areas such as landing zones, pinch points, walkways, and high-traffic sections. We're also implementing selective hand-watering to support turf recovery where most needed.

This prolonged dry spell has further highlighted the limitations of our current irrigation infrastructure. In response, we are planning significant upgrades for 2026. These include the construction of a new 750,000-litre irrigation tank and the installation of two boreholes to provide a more sustainable water source and reduce our reliance on the mains supply. We also plan to upgrade the pump set, allowing us to irrigate the majority of the course in a single night.

Additionally, we are working closely with a professional irrigation design firm to enhance system efficiency and improve overall coverage across the property.

The winter of 2024/25 was relatively mild, leaving the course mostly unaffected except for a few patches of disease scarring, which have since recovered. The first few months of 2024 (January to April) were cold and wet, with an average temperature of 6.8°C and 267mm of rain. In contrast, this year (as of April 21st) has been slightly cooler, with an average temperature of 6.4°C and significantly drier, with only 71mm of rain. Despite the early season sunshine and warmth, cold nights and occasional frost into April have limited growth. While we are not actively chasing growth for recovery this year, warmer conditions are necessary for several reasons:

- Divot recovery on tees and fairways.
- Definition of all surfaces for both the team and golfers.
- Full recovery of areas turfed over winter.
- Recovery of heavily trafficked areas, such as pinch points at holes 4 and 13.

To manage growth, we use a data model called Growth Potential (GP), which indicates the turf's ability to grow, primarily influenced by temperature. GP helps predict growth under current or forecasted

conditions and schedule practices like fertilising, irrigation, or aeration to optimise turf health and appearance. A GP below 50% (0.5) suggests insufficient growth for recovery, while a GP above 50% indicates suitable growth for recovery. Based on previous years' data, we do not expect consistent “good growth” until mid to late May.

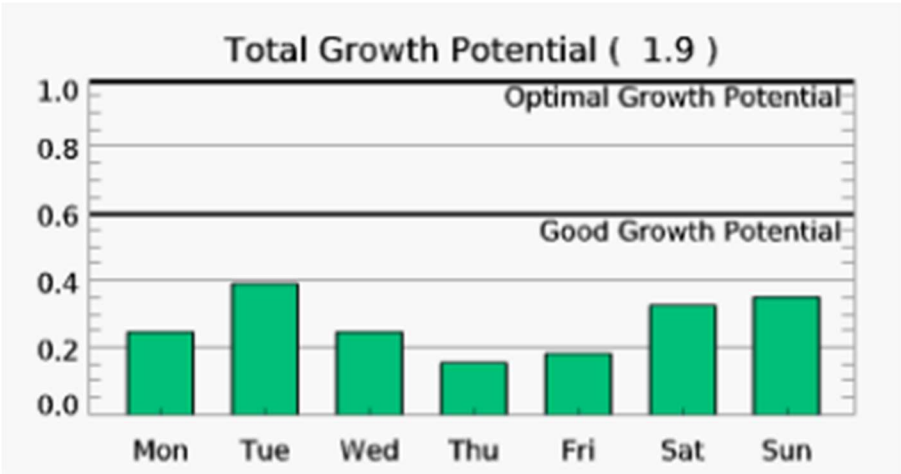


Figure 1: Growth Potential for the week starting the 21<sup>st</sup> of April – not much growth expected.

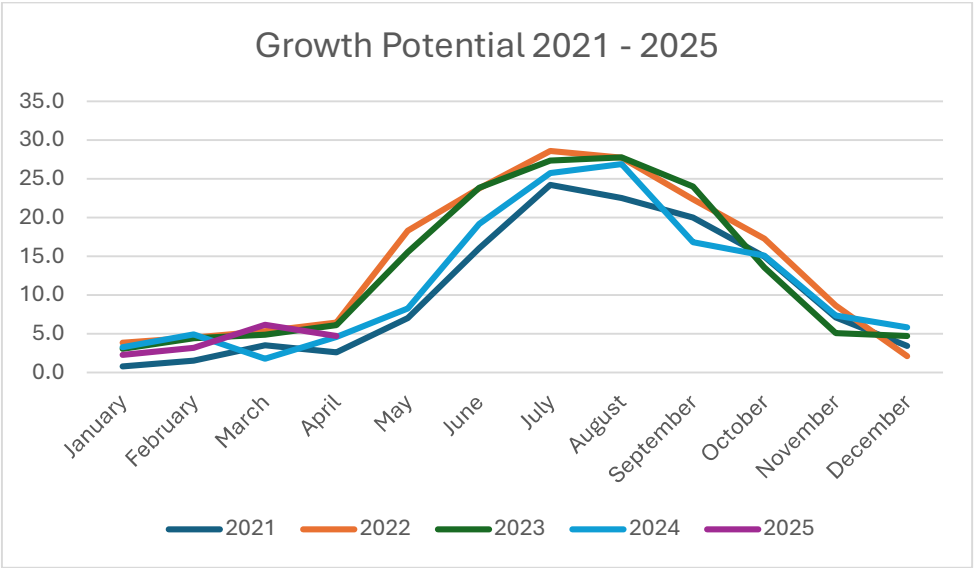


Figure 2: Growth Potential data from 2021 to April 2025.

Additionally, we measure actual growth versus GP by collecting clippings from the greens daily, using a model called Turf GvX (Growth vs. Expected Growth). Over the past year, we have identified a Growth Ratio that ensures optimal surfaces with minimal growth. If the Growth Ratio falls below our target, we apply fertiliser to align the number; if it exceeds the target, we may need to cut more to manage the extra growth. This model has proven beneficial in producing quality surfaces early in the year.

With this in mind, it's important to note that different grasses start growing at different times and temperatures. This is quite evident at the moment with some of the ryegrasses and bents on the greens starting to grow both vertically and laterally, with the fescue still sitting fairly dormant. The Poa seedheads have started to come out as well.



## Fairway Refinement

The fairways have been a long frustration of mine, especially visiting other local courses and seeing how tight their fairways are by comparison. We used a tractor mounted rake on the 13<sup>th</sup> fairway as a trial to see if this would help to refine the surface better. It did a really good job of raking a lot of the lateral growing grasses up before being cut with the fairway mowers. We then repeated this process on the 1<sup>st</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> fairway and the length of some of the lateral grasses was quite substantial. We have now raked over half of the fairways on the course and will be finishing the other half over the next week. We will try and do this as much as possible to refine the fairways as best as we can.



*Figure 3: The 1<sup>st</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> fairways after being raked with lateral grasses over 5 inches long.*



*Figure 4: The 1<sup>st</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> fairway being cut (left side) following the raking (right side).*

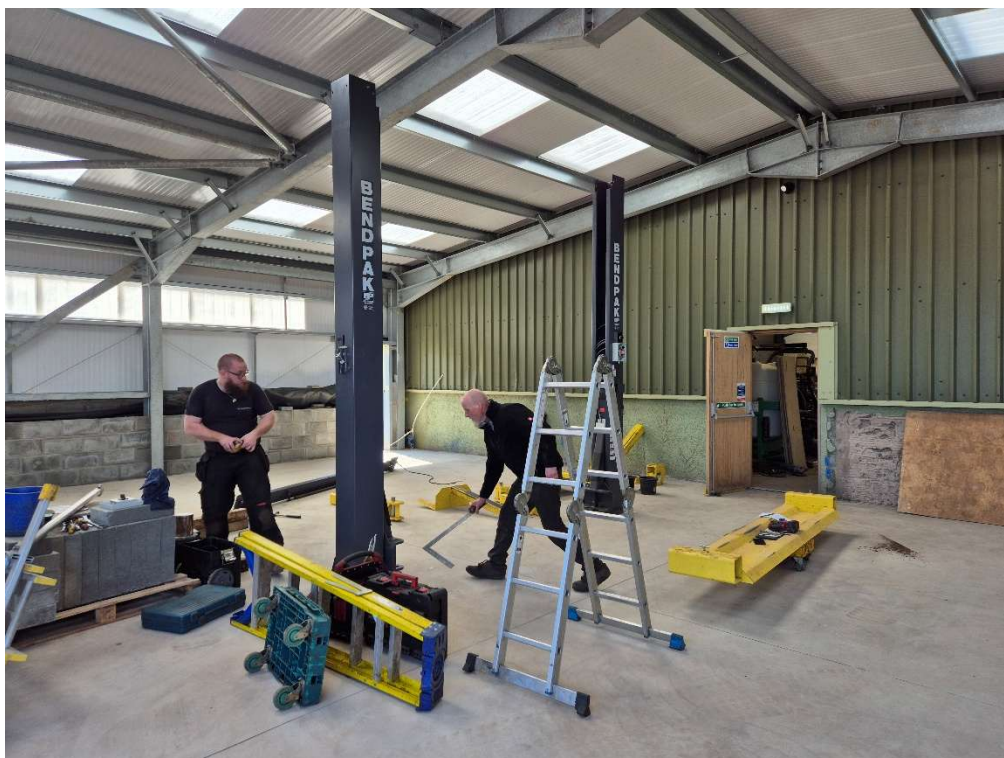


## Shed Extension Update

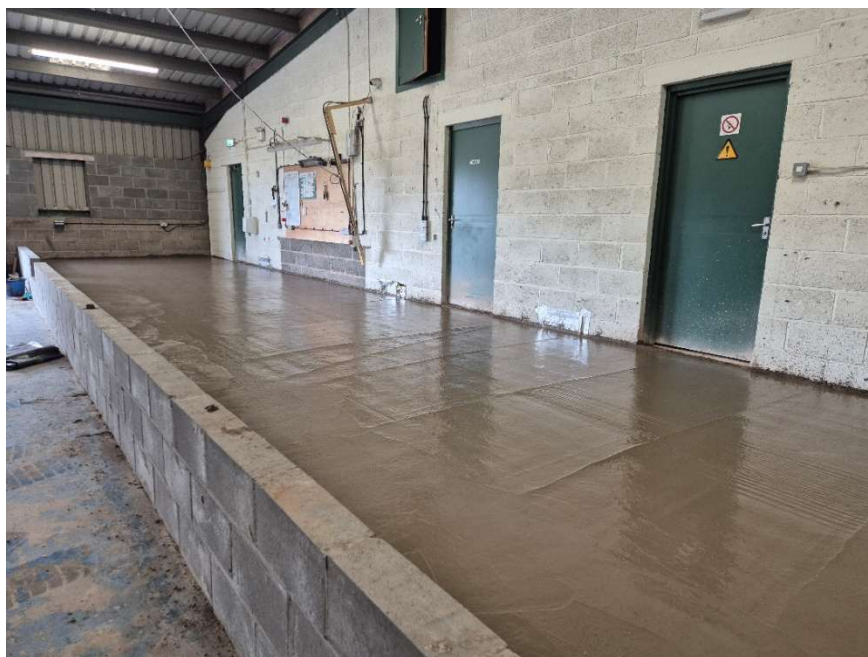
The Shed Extension project is progressing well, currently 20 days ahead of schedule. The Workshop is awaiting finishing brickwork before the office/grinding room roof can be installed. We have partially moved into the workshop with the grinders going into the Grinding Room and the 2-Post being installed. The new welfare facilities wall construction began with the concrete base poured on April 11th. Once the Workshop is completed and handed over, contractors will focus on the welfare facilities, estimated to take six weeks to complete.



*Figure 5: The Grinders in their new home.*



*Figure 6: The 2-Post lift being installed in the Workshop.*



*Figure 7: The new extended Welfare Facilities floor after the concrete was poured.*

### **Divot Boxes**

The new divot boxes and bottles were introduced in time for Burn's Shield on April 29th. Members have long desired the ability to replace their own divots with sand on the course, and we have now provided a solution. It is encouraging to see many members using their divot bottles to assist Alan and Laura (our Divot Squad) in filling divots on the course. While not compulsory, we encourage as many members as possible to use a divot bottle during their rounds. Reytsot Golf, who constructed the Divot Boxes, are working to repair the lids that were damaged in strong winds and should be back in place over the next couple of weeks.

### **Staff Update**

Tim Naylor joined us on April 14th for the summer season. Tim, 29, comes from the Royal Melbourne Golf Club, where he has worked for the past few years. Despite a cold and wet first week, Tim is settling into life and work in Scotland well. We look forward to working with him this year, and please be sure to say G'Day if you see him on the course.



## Rainfall Chart

*As of the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 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	8.4
April	3.0	41	34	98.4	6.8
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	71

**Kyle Cruickshank**  
**Course Manager**