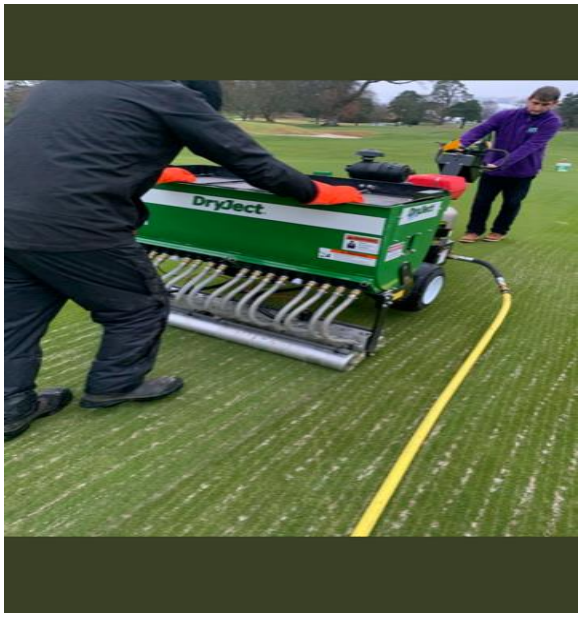
1832

Maintenance Closure

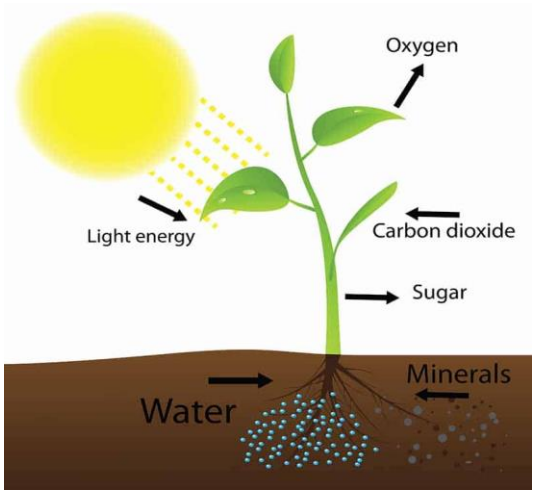
Our necessary greens maintenance program will commence behind the final group at 3pm on Sunday 7th March, with the course remaining closed until the first tee time on Wednesday 10th March. This closure will allow the greenstaff to carry out the vital operation of over-seeding pure fescue and top-dressing sand in the most efficient and timely manner possible. Over the period of two days, we will be injecting 60 tons of sand and 500KG of fescue seed to our putting surfaces.

As most of our members will already know through our weekly connect correspondence and social media outlets, we trialed a Dryject sand injection process on the 18th green with the objective of measuring firmness of the green both before and after. The data has shown that the 18th green has improved in firmness quite substantially. Therefore, we have taken the decision to extend the Dryject to the reminder of our 1.5HA of greens.



We have received favorable feedback on the progress we are making on our greens, this is due to our commitment to reduce organic matter (OM) by diluting with sand and over-seeding with fescue and bent to replace the less desirable grass species. As we reduce OM in the rootzone we hold less moisture which will then give the fine grasses the competitive edge over poa annua and coarse ryegrass. This is in no way a vanity project, fescue and bent is synonymous with the firmest, truest, and smoothest greens found anywhere in the world. We are very lucky in that these poverty grasses are very much at home on the links, we just need to provide the conditions for them to survive and thrive.

Ahead of the sand injection our team will be pot-seeding fescue in holes created by our pedestrian aerator. After the sand injection we will move over the greens again with our dimple seeder which will be followed by more sand. This process ensures maximum benefit from both the sand and the seed and as the surfaces heal, I am confident we will see real tangible benefits in playability. The healing time is entirely temperature dependent. Therefore, we will experience some level of disruption which will temporarily affect ball roll. As soon as we receive the required spike in temperatures our nutrition plan will make maximum use of the weather ensuring that this healing process is as quick as possible.



While we can push grass growth with gentle nutrition to heal the putting surface, it will be some time before we see the fruits of our labour in terms of seed germination. I tend to look at pot seeding as money in the bank, this will be entirely temperature driven and we let nature take its course.

Maintenance closures are never popular and as your Course Manger I completely understand why. However, I have carried out these tried and tested practices many times over the years and golf courses have improved in a sustainable manner as a result. As we further reduce OM to acceptable thresholds and make inroads to our grass species improvement program, I am 100% confident you will see a real difference in speed, smoothness, trueness and most importantly consistency.

Darren McLaughlan, Course Manager