



Course Update - March 2024



2023's winter was probably one of the most difficult winters for the team, the persistent wet weather from March 2023 onwards has made producing and keeping the course open for play extremely challenging. 2024 hasn't started any better with considerably more rainfall in the first three months of the year than previous years, even exceeding 2023's level by nearly 100mm! These weather conditions not only effect and disrupt course playability for members but also has a major impact on general course maintenance, effecting spraying, drainage and aeration work. But we would like to say a 'Thank you' to everyone who has helped minimise damage by respecting the course restrictions, as frustrating as they may be.

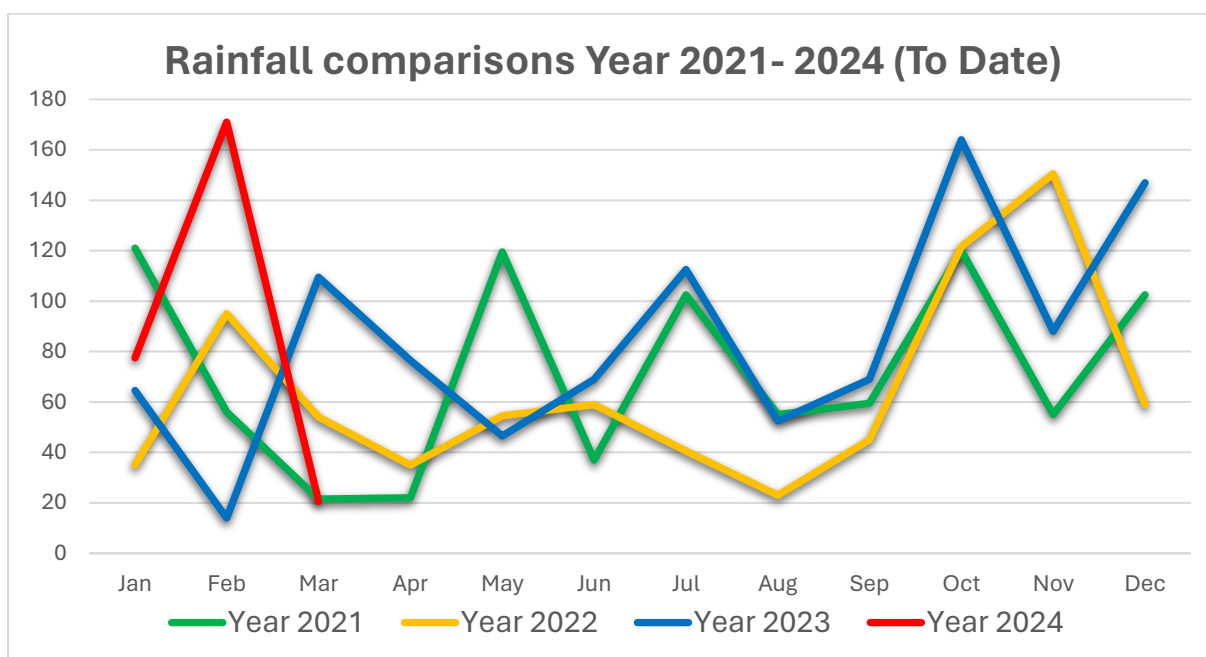
Rainfall Data

Total Rainfall for **Year 2023** was **1013mm = 40.52" = 3.38ft**

To put this in context 1mm of rain on 1m² equals 1 litre of water, so it's a considerable amount of water over the whole size of the golf course.

It's not been a great start to the year 2024 with rainfall totals to date (End of March) standing at 269mm this is a third of 2023 year total in three months.

Month	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024
Jan	121	35	64.5	77.5
Feb	56	95	14	171
Mar	21.5	54	109.5	101
Apr	22	35	76.5	
May	119.5	54.5	46.5	
Jun	37	59	69	
Jul	102.5	40.5	112.5	
Aug	55	23	52.5	
Sep	59.5	45	69	
Oct	120	121.5	164	
Nov	55	150.5	88	
Dec	102.5	59	147	
Year Total	871.5	772	1013	356.5



Agronomist Report

Our agronomist visited the golf course on the 12th of February 2024. Despite the wet conditions the course was generally in good condition, with the progress to date heading on plan.

Report conclusion:

The weather since October and throughout February has been one of the most difficult periods for golf course managers and members. The constant periods of heavy, prolonged

rain have hindered projects, delayed aeration and drainage work and closed almost all courses across the country.

Despite this the course was presented in reasonable condition and Paul and his team have managed to build new paths, install drainage, repair bunkers on numerous occasions and implemented aeration whenever possible.

As temperatures improve and growth resumes many of the stressed and worn areas will recover rapidly.

The main concerns are.

- *Drainage.*
- *Poor rooting on the greens.*
- *Potential damage from disease and insects during the spring*

Greens

Greens Drainage is still an issue for us to remain on main greens during the inclement weather so temporary greens are having to be used much more than anticipated. Drill and Fill work was completed on 5 more greens in November, but this process has its limitations, also the difficult weather conditions have also made routine scheduled aeration work unable to be completed at certain times as well as planned spray programmes, so therefore its likely to see the impact of this with the risk of increasing scarring from disease or weakened turf and some wet unstable areas. Fortunately, spring is fast approaching so damage should grow out once conditions improve, and maintenance can be carried out.

- Greens have been hand mown at 5mm when growth and surfaces dry enough to cut.
- Greens rolled regularly to smooth surfaces, when conditions allow and able to travel around the course with machinery.
- Regular hole Changing and the use of 2nd frost/temp hole on front of greens have helped with wear and surface damage.
- Penetrants and Bio stims applied when surfaces firm enough for the sprayer and window to spray.
- Fungicides applied at the first available window, some damage from disease is visible, the products effectiveness has been hindered with small optimum dry spray windows and wet surfaces, and the wet warm/mild conditions are perfect conditions for disease pathogens. Today's fungicides are more preventative than curative due to the lower amounts of active ingredients.
- Dew brush and swishing of worm casts to remove dew and debris.
- Chisel Tine aeration worked carried out when surfaces stable enough. Deep aeration is planned when the surfaces are stable enough as deep aeration in wet conditions can destabilise surfaces.

- Organic matter tests are showing that we are heading into our target regions, we currently stand at 7-7.5% in the top 25mm and I'm aiming to get to 5.5-6%.
- Trialled a machine to improve green drainage through de-compaction (Vertiquake) monitoring results on the 13th Green.



Planned Greens maintenance when conditions allow worked planned:

- Verticut depth -2mm x two directions
- Vertidrain 19mm tines depth 250mm-300mm
- Hollowcore 6mm tines
- Top dress and Sweep and Fill Brush
- Overseeding with All Bent seed (once ground temps rise April)

Tees

- Matts for Par 3's has remained in use while ground conditions so poor once growth recovery evident and drier conditions they will resume play back on the tees.
Regular matt brushing
- Tees height lifted to help protect surfaces going into winter.
- Surfaces Brushed to disperse worm casts using new Redexim Top Brush 6000
- Regular tee divotting implemented.
- Spray Iron sulphate/ Sulphomex/Lawn sand and penetrant to aid some worm control.
- Markers moved daily. Some tees we put the markers together to control wear.

Planned Tees maintenance.

- Vertidrain
- Scarify to a depth 5mm using the new machinery purchased (Redexim Verticut)
- Top dress and brush the material in
- Overseed tees

Approaches

Target this season to improve the quality of the approaches to a higher standard so should the need arise for temporary green's the surfaces will be in better condition.

- Approaches have been hand mown to a height suitable during the wet weather shaping is still ongoing but will be in place for the season. Heights will be lowered gradually.
- Worm prevention similar to the tees has been trialled. A soil conditioner product has been purchased to trail over the next few weeks (Purity/Oregano T) and will be monitored.
- White lines have been sprayed to stop traffic walking on these areas and it is proving effective.
- Brushing of surfaces when conditions allow.

Planned Approaches maintenance.

- Vertidrain
- Scarify to a depth 5mm using the new machinery purchased (Redexim Verticut)
- Hollowcore 7mm tines
- Top dress and brush the material in
- Overseed approaches



Fairways

- Regular Brushing to keep surfaces clean, improve cut quality.
- Debris blown regularly.
- Spray Iron sulphate and penetrant to aid some worm control/ limited results, brush more effective when ground conditions allow machinery.
- Aeration work behind due to weather conditions.
- Fairways mown when conditions allow machinery.
- Shaping and definition will resume once mowing more regularly.

Rough/ Semi Rough

- Leave mulching.
- Playing areas mown when conditions allow.

Bunkers

The bunkers have spent a lot of time over the last few months as GUR or out of play, as is very difficult to get bunker consistency with the weather we have been experiencing. The conditions were so poor there was little point spending the man power for the work to be destroyed over night, but when conditions allowed a lot of effort has been put into the bunkers to help improve the quality with the purchase of a new rotivation machine.



Trees

When ground conditions were against us for other course maintenance, we made use of the time and did removal of dead trees, trimmed up low overhanging branches and dealt with storm damage. The chippings were then used to top up paths and borders.



General

Lots of other general work and projects has been going on behind the scenes, despite the horrendous weather conditions. The 18th Visitor Entrance Path was stripped of astro turf and resurfaced with lighting installed.



The 16th Approach Area drainage inspection and pipe installed, pipe breakthrough from irrigation system repaired.



The 10th Approach/Fairway area, drainage installed and linked up to a chamber and into the outlet on the 11th



The 10th/ 11th /12th Path Installation has been almost completed, this project is still ongoing due to other project commitments, and wet weather conditions preventing material been taken down to the site.



Staff

We would like to welcome Malcolm Mitchell to the team, having previously been a head green keeper his knowledge and experience will enhance the team massively.