

Review Greenkeeping 2019

1. Divot bag system- worked to a very high standard throughout the year- only one failure. Bag and divot mix availability very good.
2. Compressor- after belt replacement very reliable and now that re-set switch is external this problem should be solved.
3. Clean-out of collection pit at club cleaning area- this attended to in a timely fashion all year
4. Course markings- GUR, OOB, hazards etc. All markings maintained to a high standard without input from me. This is a key area and shouts out to members that the greens staff are "on the ball"
5. Greens- Standard throughout the year was excellent. A little damage early in year due to overly aggressive brush in of sand post hollow coring but this was subsequently well managed and throughout the year the greens were excellent.
6. Approaches- Greens staff did an excellent job here again. A lot of innovation and work went into these to a standard I had not seen before.
7. Fairways/ First Cuts- Again a lot of initiative and hard work was put in here. The striping of the fairways, the definition between fairway and first cut and first cut and rough was excellent and the look and improved presentation that resulted from this again was excellent.
8. Tees- In general these were also maintained to a very high standard throughout the year.
9. Practice Area- Again this was maintained to a very high standard throughout the year. If I have a gripe it would be that a closer eye could be kept on the divot mix bins on the main tee and also on the sand levels in the bunkers at the bunker practice green.
10. Winter Greens- Here also there was excellent work done on these to prepare them for the winter season and there anticipated use during greens surrounds project. Council has agreed that preparation of winter greens in the fairway is the preferred option for the future. The policy should be to only continue with constructed temporary greens where the fairway option is not available.
11. New Green-sod recovery area- The maintenance of this was greatly improved and is close to being of good enough quality for our low volume needs.
12. Disease Control/ Grub Control- Again both of these were done to a very high standard. We had practically no bird damage and the occasional fungal disease outbreak on the greens, though inevitable, was very well managed.
13. Tree Mulching- It is well documented that this was an excellent idea and the extension of it to numerous new areas was regarded as an outstanding improvement by members and DC extended it to an area through fourth gap on LHS also to great effect. An excellent enhancement of the course.
14. Project Management- almost all of the targeted projects were completed with the exception of the path ends, the Sportsbond in 12A bunkers and the final well drilling. All of the exceptions were for valid reasons.
15. Presentation of Course for all major competitions including the Pierce Purcell GUI competition, visiting Captains etc.- In all cases the course was presented to a very high standard and was the subject of universal praise on all occasi

16. Buggy Shed- This area became extremely untidy and dusty during the year and we were a bit slow to respond to this due to confusion over whose area of responsibility it was. Area was eventually cleaned out and a drainage hole cut in back wall and drain installed. This area should prove less of a problem when the entrance is tarmacked but it needs to be regularly checked for cleanliness.
17. Bunkers- these have been presented to a very high standard throughout the year and the new maintenance regime introduced has proved very successful. Yes, in very dry periods we will struggle a bit to keep sand on some of the faces but when the green surrounds project is complete this problem should be considerably reduced. It should be noted in a winter, of sometimes biblical rain, we have not had a single face wash-down nor a single bunker with ANY water in it, even directly after storm level rain. This project has been an outstanding success judged by any reasonable standard.
18. 'Own Goals' Last but not least there were very few what I have named 'Own Goals' that is knocked over trees, holes opened in the ground and left that way for weeks, oil spills not dealt with immediately, unmarked worksites, fallen trees unmarked, new turf not watered and protected from drought etc. All these situations provide opportunities for members to criticise the greens staff and undo the goodwill built up with all the hard work throughout the year. I am happy to say that there were very few of these incidents this year.

Conclusion

We have now reached a very high standard of greenkeeping in general, one that I personally feel is close to being as good as it gets. The challenge now is to maintain these standards. The old cliché holds true" it is very hard to get to the top but is even harder to stay there" So it will require persistent diligent, dogged determination to maintain these high standards. So that is our next test. Can we continue to deliver these standards week in and week out?

Henry Doran
January 2019.