

Longside Golf Club

Course Report 22nd January 2017

Introduction

Since the last course report (30th November 2016) we have experienced varying weather conditions, some very mild, some very cold and even some snowy! There have been many clear beautiful days with also some rather nasty wet and windy days too. The course remained at 18 holes until 7th December 2016 and has since been at 9 holes on the older side (8 holes during tree work at 14th hole), we did have a 5 day closed period commencing Friday 13th until opening again Wednesday 18th January 2017. The main difficulties in going back to a full course are holes 7, 11 and 12. On the whole there has been a great deal more golfing days this winter than last.

I have been asked quite a few times when I might utilize temporary greens. I am a believer of all year round proper greens and only going to temps under desperate circumstances. The thing is the areas that become unplayable first are fairways/rough etc. and not the greens and the majority of winter greens are prepared on fairways. The proper greens have not suffered (due to work carried out and Turf Hardener) and are in better condition than this time last year when they were not in use. Members are more pleased also to be playing real greens. Some things to consider going forward?

Recent Work

Areas beside 11th green and short left of 11th green have been filled; there may be a need to top these up in a few months.

Work commenced in levelling 18th tee bringing in soil especially to raise back end although due to either wet or frosty conditions this has ceased. It is my plan to drop everything else when conditions allow to recommence and complete this project.

Worn areas of tees (winter wear) have been hand dressed. This will continue as conditions permit.

A main play areas tree pruning program has been commenced and is now almost completed. Sandy Anderson and I started this and he has taken on the project himself freeing me to tackle other projects e.g. bunker edging. Sandy has done a fantastic job working through the whole course. Sandy also has come up with a great idea in using cuttings from willow trees to produce some trees to plant in the future in wet areas of the course e.g. 7th, 11th and 12th. Willows can withstand water. We will be planting a willow tree nursery away from main play areas.

We have also identified a few (4 or 5) trees in plantation between 1st and 17th greens which need to be removed.

I have started a bunker edging program and have now completed old side apart from 14th hole. It is my plan to commence new side this coming week. The arisings from this work will be used firstly to level depressions back left of 1st green and left of 18th allowing future ease of cutting maintenance. The rest of the arisings will be used to assist build of mounding to right of 11th green.

Iain Cairney and his guys have been working for a week at 14th hole. A terrific job in thinning left hand trees which will produce a better air circulation and assist in drying the hole. It is my evaluation that any drains put in in the past between tee and apron are not working so I will be attempting an aeration (slitting) program to see how this will help. I have been informed that no aeration has been done in this area at least in recent times. I will also be repairing the damage caused by the tree workers. Iain and his team will be back in a few weeks to work on car park trees.

A drainage contractor has been contacted to obtain a quote to clear the drains between 15th ditch and the 7th ditch. When cleared this will hopefully resolve the very wet areas at the 14th and 15th

On Friday 20th I took the opportunity to visit Lovies quarry just beyond New Pitsligo. This was to assess what sands etc. they have available. I have concluded that it would benefit us to use the same sand for top dressing, bunkers and divotting. By using the same my choice sand for all jobs we would be able to get delivery of 60 tonnes (which should fulfill our needs) for the price of last year's top dressing alone.

Iain Elliot

Head Greenkeeper