

# Course Report – Spring 2014

## **Introduction:**

The last of the winter storms are hopefully behind us at this juncture.

A brief review of the weather statistics for January and February in Dublin reveal a record amount of rainfall and record high winds over a prolonged period, for example, Dublin airport had its wettest winter since 1995 and the wind mean speed the highest since 1943.

## **Greens:**

The greens performed very well over the winter period with good putting surfaces and minimal disease activity. There was practically no need for the use of the temporary greens.

Tining and sanding of the greens has been completed in early March. We will shortly commence our summer programme of work. This includes overseeding with a fescue/bent seed mix and more regular sand dressings in keeping with a more sustainable regime for the greens. Our summer height of cut will be 3mm.

Greens are cut every day in the height of the season with regular rolling also carried out.

### **Tees:**

We had a good winter on the tees and they came through ok. For the first time we remained on the main tees throughout the winter months on the yellow markers.

Tees have been spiked and over seeded also using the fescue/bent seed mix and sanded. We will continue to overseed and sand through the summer.

### **Fairways:**

We have just completed the sanding of the fairways. 450 tonnes have been applied. This sanding maintains the drainage characteristics of the fairways and levels out playing surfaces after the long winter.

Overseeding of the fairways will take place during the early summer also using a fescue/bent seed mix. Right across our main golfing surfaces we are moving towards a more sustainable regime of maintenance and improved grass quality. Primarily by improved grass seed selection, increased aeration and top dressing and reduced fertiliser inputs. This is part of the integrated management system for the course we initiated last year.

## **Bunkers:**

Seven more bunkers have been completely renovated using the system we developed last year. New sand has just gone in and they will be ready for play in time for Easter.

## **Trees:**

As usual over the winter we planted our usual quota of trees and shrubs circa 30 in all. With some extra plantings due to the loss of some trees as a result of the storms early in the year.

## **Irrigation:**

This winter we completed the installation of an automatic watering system on 6 remaining tees. We now have 95% coverage across all our greens and tees. The majority of this work was carried out by our own staff.

## **Conservation**

**Bulbs & Wild Flowers.** As the Members might at the moment observe many hundreds of bulbs were planted last autumn. The colour they bring to the different areas is quite evident.

Two areas for wild flowers have been established. One at the front of the mens 5<sup>th</sup> tee and the second between the ladies and mens 7<sup>th</sup> tees. Wild flower meadows are quite difficult to establish but we expect some progress on them this year.

### **Water Harvesting:**

A rain water harvesting system has been installed at our workshop. Rainwater from the roof is collected and used to wash down our plant and machinery when the day's work is complete.

### **Conclusion:**

Every winter brings its own unique challenges. This year has been no different with very heavy rain and persistently strong winds. However, we are in a good place vis-à-vis the course with all our major spring renovations completed we can concentrate on producing top quality playing surfaces for the Members to enjoy.

Eddie Walsh  
Course Superintendent