

## Course Report – January 2018

### Introduction:

The last three months of 2017 has seen us focus on improvements across key areas of the course.

### Greens:



In line with our greens grass species enhancement programme we over seeded again in autumn using the top rated cultivars of fescue and bent. We used the vredo disc seeder. The results can be observed as continuous narrow lines of new grass plants across the greens.

### Tees:



All our tee tops were aerated and over seeded with a rye/fescue mix and top dressed this autumn. With just aeration and top dressing taking place on a monthly basis during the winter.

### **New Tees:**

New tees were constructed and landscape improvements carried out at the mens 5<sup>th</sup> tee and ladies 3<sup>rd</sup>. The tees were constructed to USGA standard with the turf imported from specialist growers.

### **Fairways:**



Height of cut of the fairways for the winter is 20mm which is giving us good grass cover. We are liquid feeding the fairways during the winter period every four weeks to maintain this sward density. This feed is a low nitrogen and iron sulphate mix to trickle feed the plants as our weather patterns are giving us growing temperatures throughout most of the year.

In October all our fairways and approaches were vertidraind to a depth of 10" at 12" centers.

### **Approaches:**

In 2017 we embarked on an improvement programme to all greens approaches.

On most holes we doubled the size of the approach's and installed irrigation on five of them. This year we will continue with the irrigation installation programme. The more intensive management of the approaches includes hollow tining which was carried out in December and more frequent feeding and top dressing.

## **Bunkers:**



As part of our ongoing bunker improvements we carried out further membrane installations on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> greenside bunkers. This has proved to be a very successful bunker lining technique in delivering consistent quality of bunker playability in all-weather events.

We are also resanding fairway bunkers over the winter period.

## **Machinery:**



In 2017 as part of our upgrade and replacement programme of course machinery we took delivery of a new Toro machine. This is a state of art tee and approach mower, delivering superior quality of cut and presentation.

### **Workshop:**



In order to better secure our machinery workshop and yard we created an expanded concreted compound surrounded by 2.4m high security fencing. As part of this project we levelled and resurfaced the avenue up to the workshop

### **Conservation:**



As part of our secure compound project we built a wash down cleaning area for the machinery and sprayer. The waste water from this work is fed into a reed bed pond that is constructed using Norfolk reeds (*Phragmites Australis*). These plants filter the contaminated water as it passes through its root mass with the result that clean water reenters the aquafier.

### **Trees:**

As part of the course enhancement programme we will be planting some new trees and shrubs and replacing those that have failed. Trimming up of tree branches that are too close to the ground has commenced in earnest.

**Flowers:**

2,500 daffodil bulbs were planted in November in new areas at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ladies tee and at the 18<sup>th</sup> tee.

**Training and Development:**

The S.T.R.I. continue to offer advice and support across all the areas of course maintenance.

Two members of our greenkeeping staff, Seamus Walsh and David Callagy, with the support of the Club are continuing their greenkeeping education at Elmwood College in Scotland and Teagasc in the Botanic Gardens.

**Conclusion:**

2017 was a formative year in course maintenance and presentation where we set new standards across many key areas. We look forward to further achieve those objectives in 2018

*Eddie Walsh*

*Course Superintendent*