

## BROOME MANOR GOLF COMPLEX SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

### OVERVIEW AND WEATHER PATTERNS

After 105.5mm of rain in August, the second highest month in 2020, following 141mm in February, the golf course has recovered from its previous drought stressed conditions. Although ground conditions are now dry, the golf course is green with grass is growing in many areas.

With temperatures set to reach the high 20's this week (beginning 14 September) we will not be seeing the same stress on the grass from evaporation or transpiration (water loss from the leaf) as we would in the height of summer.

As sun light hours shorten from 17 hours 40 minutes on 15 July to 13 hours 47 minutes on 15 September, the sun is now lower in the sky and this has an effect on wind generation and over night temperatures.

This means we do not need to rush to irrigate stressed turf. Changing the holes today we can feel good moisture levels in the profile.

On a separate note, we are experiencing substantial animal activity on the golf course. Turf damage around areas on the extension are proving troublesome and unsightly.



The turf damage comes from a three pronged attack. Initially turf is weakened by the insect larvae feeding on the roots and new shoots of the turf. Secondary damage comes from Badgers scratching around for the insect larvae. The third attack then comes from birds pecking deeper into the exposed soil feeding on the larvae.

The picture on the right shows Badger damage on the surround of the 4<sup>th</sup> green. The picture on the right is a Chafer Grub taken from the damaged area. For more information on [Chafer Grub](#).

Currently there is no approved Insecticide for the control of Chafer Grubs and Leatherjackets in Amenity turf. We are, however, about to start trials with a new product essentially suffocating the Grubs. This combined with an with organic compounds to help re establish root white hair development. Badgers are protected by Law, see the legislation here [Protection of Badgers](#), We are, therefore, unable to touch the Badgers so the best form of control is to eliminate the food source.

## **Greens**

Autumn renovations began this week under clear blue skies and perfect temperatures. Greens were cored using 10mm hollow tines at 2" spacings and a depth of 3-4". The cores were then collected, the greens brushed fed then watered before dressing with fresh sand.

Dry weather and good late summer temperatures have kept the greens firm in good general condition. It is essential to preserve good grass cover and healthy greens as we move into the autumn months.

The programme of autumn winter maintenance begins in October with a deep tine using 10mm solid tines at 2" spacings and depths of a maximum 10".

## **Tees**

The majority of tees are in great condition, with good colour and grass over. Regular divoting from our volunteer help has certainly made a difference with good germination from the divot mix. The plan for the tees is to solid tine the tees, sand dress and feed with an autumn granular fertiliser to ensure good health as we move towards the autumn.

## **Collars / Approaches**

For the first time we have hollow cored the collars and approaches. The aim this year is to improve the look and quality if these areas and have, therefore, increased the maintenance practices accordingly. The collars and approaches will also be sand dressed in line with the programme for greens maintenance.

## **Fairways**

Fairways continue to improve, with most being of an acceptable standard. The middle section of the 1<sup>st</sup> remains one of the weaker areas, although responding well to additional inputs of the past few months.

## **Bunkers**

This month the focus is on the next phase of bunker renovations, following the success achieved with the rebuilding of the greenside bunkers on the 18<sup>th</sup> earlier this year. The beginning of October will see work start on rebuilding the bunkers of the 1<sup>st</sup> greenside bunkers a contingency of the 12<sup>th</sup> greenside bunkers depending on available funds.

The plan is as follows,

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Green

To reduce the left bunker by approximately 1/3 in width by removing the left side of the existing bunker. This will have little, or no influence on approach shots, or line of play. The top of the remaining structure will be modified to soften the face for easier maintenance and resilience to drought stress and wear. The bunker will be dug out and new drainage installed tapping into existing approach drains.

The right hand bunker is more influential despite being slightly off the line of play. The mounding and high sand line presents a strong feature to the hole. Removing the feature or reducing too much could leave a negative influence on what is a challenging approach shot.

Like the left bunker, the proposal is to reduce the sharpness of the top and back of the bunker mound for improved mowing and resilience to stress and wear. The sand part of the bunker will be moved away and slightly left, shrinking and reshaping more closely to match the shape of the left hand bunker, while ensuring it remains in keeping with the rest of the green mounding and still presents a hazard.

#### 12<sup>th</sup> Green

The left hand, of the two bunkers, is more influential on play. The plan is to reduce the bunker in size by removing the far third of the structure. This will have little influence on the shot or hazard providing it remains connected to the mounding around the green.

The right hand bunker presents more work as the contouring behind needs modifying. The plan is to fill in the existing bunker and construct a new bunker approximately 20 yards down the right side of the approach. A walk off needs to be improved by reducing the mounding as it retreats from the green.