

13/12/2016

Greens Report



Aaron Cachia
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT



Greetings all,

What a year it has been at BGC. Extreme weather patterns with some mornings under 5 degrees in winter and days near 40 degrees with violent storms tagging on the end.

This year has seen the course settle in to a change of regime even more, with some areas surprising me with how far they've come along in the short time.

The redevelopment of the 8th and 14th tee complex has which I believe has changed the tone on these holes to the betterment of the course.

This year has also seen young Jeffrey Guan take out the Club Championships in great fashion. Jeffrey the champion has also represented the Bexley GC name outstandingly with his win at Stonecutters Ridge and as a formidable opponent in the Junior Pennants. On behalf of the maintenance crew, congratulations to Jeffrey for his golfing achievements to date. We are sure you have a bright golfing future ahead.

With all the change, for me and my team, the biggest prize is being told by many long-time members, how happy they are getting around the course now. Our work is centred on presenting the golf course in as good a condition as possible for the membership. I know my guys are always striving to get the course that little bit better each time.

I and my team wish to thank the members for their support through 2016. The understanding of the ever-changing conditions faced and the work going into the course has been humbling. We are all appreciative of the kind words you all have to say to us with the work being done, and I personally thank you all for giving the guys the praise they deserve.

I also wish to thank all of those members who have given their time to assist the course staff in various areas such as, coring greens, concreting, clearing sticks, branches and rubbish, etc. your time is a massive contribution to us all. So thank you very much.

On behalf of the Bexley GC maintenance crew, have a very merry Christmas and happy New Year. We hope it's a safe time for all with plenty of great times to be had. We look forward to continuing on the forward steps in 2017.

Gotta Love Bexley...

Aaron Cachia

Course Superintendent.

Greens

- Greens aerated with 8mm needle tines.
- Hand watering regime has increased to account for hotter days. Especially through afternoons.
- Preventative fungicide and insecticide programs are being employed to match favourable climatic conditions. i.e. high humidity, warmer night time temperatures, higher UV index, higher percentage of soil moisture
- Increasing root health through the greens is being targeted with aerating, strict water management, nutrient management, grooming, dusting, etc. these practices have all had positive results on the roots. A root depth assessment has shown an increase of approximately 50mm at the point of highest density. There are some roots down to approximately 200mm but these are in random spots.

3rd green has been performing inconsistently compared to all other greens. A sample has been sent away to the AGCSA lab for assessment of Nematode numbers, as well as a visual root health assessment being carried out every few days.

The samples have come back with positive results for plant parasitic nematodes. At this stage, the population is close to the threshold. This means we will continue to monitor the health of the green without chemical treatment. Avoiding chemical treatment straight away enables me to maintain the health of beneficial soil organisms for a longer period, thus aiding in the plants defence against the harmful nematodes.

There is a greater amount of Kikuyu encroaching into the greens. This needs to be stopped before losing a percentage of greens surface. Some practices that will be employed over the next few months will be probing around the greens to determine where the greens rootzone finishes, edging the greens with a path edger, applying a selective herbicide to the kikuyu/couch runners, reseeding the edges with Bentgrass seed and topdressing. This process will cause injury around the greens surface and may look unsightly at times, however this needs to be done to maintain the green edges properly. There will be a select few greens done at a time over the next few months.

Tees

- Wetting agent applied to all tee tops
- Works on the 14th tee have progressed. Currently,
 - Fence erected with netting installed
 - Garden cleared and tree roots removed where possible
 - Sub base and surrounding gardens shaped
 - Irrigation installed
 - Drainage installed
 - Allocated pathway area is being shaped and compacted
 - Rootzone soil is being spread
 - Santa Ana couch ordered for Monday 19/12 as the tee top grass. (same grass as 2 and 8 tees)



Fairways

- Effective use of growth regulators has presented a tighter playing surface as well as enabling a reduction in mowing time and frequency

Roughs

- Mowing has increased to match growth rates.

The area running along the left side of 17th fairway has been marked as preferred lie. This is bordered by green stakes with a white top. This area has been cored and fertilised to work towards increasing grass growth.

Bunkers

- Practices being employed to soften bunkers.
- Drainage works currently on hold to allow all focus on completing the 14th tee

A number of concerns have been raised about the spreading of stones into the bunkers. This occurs when heavy rain washes the bunkers out. Any stones in the sub base are washed down and dispersed into the sand causing it to go through the bunkers. Unfortunately this is a fault with the design and construction of the bunkers which is unavoidable without removing all materials down to the sub base and installing a liner material/new sand.

The Previous Month

- Course maintenance practices are being employed to match climatic conditions
- Repaired issues with greenside sprinklers with tee/fairways sprinklers currently being sorted out
- Cleared branches RHS 1st hole
- Cleared the RHS 16th sticks and branches in conjunction with working bee volunteers
- Currently clearing the "Bexley Triangle" on the 15th hole with a small amount of branches left and mulch being spread over the bare ground to reduce weed germination
- 14th tee works progressing well with the area nearly ready for turf laying.

The Month Ahead

- Continue maintenance program
- Complete 14th tee complex
- Complete clearing/ mulching LHS 15
- Move commemorative plaque at main irrigation Dam