

Kingsknowe Golf Club

GOLF COURSE UPDATE

1: Here is a brief description of the work that has been carried out in the past 5 weeks since Billy Hudson started at the club as Head Greenkeeper:

During the lockdown period we took the decision to graden the greens (deep scarification) with 3mm wide blades at 25mm spacing going into a depth of 12mm. This removes at least 15 % of the surface and great way of removing organic matter (thatch) from the greens. The reason this work was carried out was test results we had done by STRI (Sports Turf Research Institute) showed that the thatch levels were at 13% in the top 20mm. Ideally they should be no more than 6%. This work was followed by an application of 20 tonnes of sand to back fill the groves. Since then we have verti cut twice and applied another two light applications of sand, so far we have applied 34 tonne of sand. We hope to carry on the light applications of sand to start diluting the thatch on the greens and improve surface firmness and drainage.



At present we have an issue with dry patch on the greens. We have now started a monthly wetting agent programme to help with the hydrophobic soil to get a more uniform surface. This is more prevalent when you have periods of wet winters and dry springs. So far this month we have had only 7mm of rain compared with our average 52mm.

The greens at present look white, this is due to the annual meadow grass seeding. This happens every year when the plant is under stress due to the weather, seeding can make greens slow and bumpy. Over the next week we will be grooming the greens to try and remove as much of the seed as possible. We will also be ironing the surface to obtain better ball roll.

All the new tee signs have been cemented into place.

We have sprayed 18 hectare (180.000sqm) of selective herbicide on tees, semi rough, green banks, tee bankings around bunkers, certain fairways and rough. This has killed of patches of daisies, dandelions and creeping thistles as well as long grass areas behind greens and around tees. We used a different chemical to take out the thistles, dockens, brambles and hogweed.

We have changed the way fairways have been cut. We are now block cutting. We have also invested in brushes to sit at the front of the cutting unit, this will help with a cleaner cut and better presentation. We have introduced a 3.6 metre band of semi rough around the fairways. We've borrowed a terra rake from a neighbouring golf course. This helps pick up lateral growth for better cut, definition and presentation.



All bunkers have been edged and trimmed, any overhanging lips removed and weeds removed. At present we are in the process of topping up bunkers where needed.

The hedge along the 3rd and 6th has now been cut, this hadn't been done for a few years so there was a fair amount of debris to clear up afterwards. The hedges at the clubhouse have all been cut back, all clippings removed as well as the leaves and rubbish from around buggy shed.



Billy Hudson, Head Greenkeeper

2: Second Green Damage

As we return to golf you will notice some damage to the 2nd green. Unfortunately this was caused by a leak in one of the hydraulic hoses on the greens machine while being cut. As soon as it was noticed the staff took all the required action to minimise last damage. It will look unsightly in first few days but this will gradually disappear as work continues on the green. The staff member is particularly disappointed as it was something completely outwith his control.

3: STRI Report & Testing

We have had our 2nd visit from the STRI and we have updated the work required to get the greens to the standard Billy would like to achieve. This has been detailed in the previous parts of the report. We are awaiting the tests results on areas examined which include firmness, pace, ball roll and moisture content. Once we have received these we will then publish these to members to show progress being made. Should any members wish to discuss the results or what we aim to achieve please let directors know. We have also included a link to provide further information.

<https://strigroup.com/growing-the-game/>

Marc Cairnie
Greens Convenor