



Pleasington Golf Club

Greens analysis and Improvement Plan

July 2022



Current Greens Situation

- Having consulted with many Members over the last 2 months we all agree the greens aren't playing as well as we would like them to
- This is NOT because we are mismanaging them
- This is because we are purposely cutting them longer than we have ever done before
- We are doing this, as this is the expert advice we have been given, to help long term improvement
- This is causing some short-term issues
- This quick presentation explains the analysis done, explains the grass issue, and what we are doing about it NOW and in the medium term
- Please do take time to watch this presentation
- If you have any follow questions please email them to Peter Bedford at pgcstrategy@gmail.com



Independent Assessment

- Pleasington has hired Gordon Irvine to analyse greens and implement a short & long term improvement plan
- This is a summary of his findings & plans, & an explanation of where we are and what we need to do. **These are not excuses just expert opinion which we think it is right to share**
- 4 greens are well below the standard of the other 14 and all in the first 5 holes, giving a poor experience and first impression to the golfer



Gordon Irvine
Course Consultant & Master
Greenkeeper

Very
Good

Greens 4 & 6

Very good grass mix
Firm
Smooth roll

Good

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18

Good grass mix
Small amount of
“chatter”

Average

1 2 3 & 5

Poor grass mix
Poa struggling
Too much “chatter”



Key Findings



- Gordon Irvine
- Course Consultant & Master Greenkeeper

The greens currently are good but need a significant improvement to be "great"

We have 2 main grasses – meadow Grass (Poa) and bent grass

On 4 greens the Poa is very weak and does not live well with the bent producing a poor putting surface

The predominance of the poa on all the other greens (except 4 & 6) causes some bumpiness, snaking (weaving side to side) and reduces pace

Attempts to improve the Poa (water, fertilisers) causes softer surfaces and more uneven growth as bent then grows more

Cutting below 4mm harms the bent grass especially new seedlings





Poa	Bent
Prone to many diseases	Very resilient
Shallow roots (1 inch) – needs lots of water meaning greens can get soft	Deep roots (3-5 inches) – not as much water, keeping playing surface firmer
Susceptible to weather extremes and dies off	Copes with most weather and will go dormant but not die off
Produces seed heads causing “chatter”	Doesn’t seed
Fast growing – slows greens over day	Slower growing – greens pace maintained
Needs lots of expensive fertiliser	Doesn’t need lots of chemicals
Dies off each year	Perennial plant
Easily stressed during mechanical work (cutting, rolling etc)	Copes well with mechanical work
Likes shade, poor drainage	Doesn’t like shade – needs good drainage

Grass Key Differences

- Gordon Irvine
- Course Consultant & Master Greenkeeper



The painful dilemma!



Gordon Irvine
Course Consultant & Master Greenkeeper

Easiest way to increase speed & reduce bumpiness is to reduce the height of cut lower than 4mm (as we have always done)

BUT..... reducing the height of cut below 4mm harms the bent grass and allows the Poa to thrive, meaning we never make long term improvements



What do we do?



Short Term Plan make the greens better



Review & gather data daily & take corrective action



Keep thinning the sward to improve pace and reduce bumps



Lots of small light Sand dressings to increase smoothness



Double or even triple cut greens to improve smoothness & pace



Use the iron to help smoothness and pace



Focus on "6 feet and in" plan to ensure shorter putts are as perfect as possible



Review pin positions with much more care



What do we do?



Long Term Plan for all year round better greens



Change seeding focus to only September & October & also introduce some fescue seed as even more disease resilient



Buy only the best seeds to improve quality & germination



Intensively seed holes 1, 2, 3, & 5 in September & October



Continue to seed other greens with bent / fescue mix



Don't cut below 4mm



Drainage in all 16 greens that need it



Remove as much shade as possible near greens



Summary



"My understanding is that the advice to move to bent greens has been in place for over 15 years! With the other great changes to the course, now is surely the time to make that commitment. I am very confident that if the plan is stuck to, the greens will improve significantly in both the short and medium term"



Significant room for improvement especially on 1, 2, 3, & 5



Other greens also need to be better



We MUST stick to the plan if we want better greens



We MUST increase short term actions to improve greens



Focus on high quality Autumn bent fescue seeding



Put drainage in all 16 greens that need it



Remove as much shade as possible near greens

