



Course Manager's Winter Report February 2018

Winter is coming to an end, so they say, but it doesn't feel like that now looking out on 4" of snow. It has been a very wet season and it has proven very difficult to operate and achieve all our plans for the winter programme. It hasn't been a total waste of time, however, with several bunkers having been re-drained, along with the removal of the bunker on the left side of the 6th fairway. This work was necessary in line with the recommendations made by our Health and Safety expert. We have concentrated on what were some of the worst bunkers for flooding and/or slow drainage. There are still several bunkers that will require similar, or more drastic action to resolve problems and these will be prioritised for the winter programme 2018/19.

We have also been busy with tree maintenance around the course and many dead trees have been removed. We have had to do maintenance along our boundaries on request of the council due to overhanging trees and shrubs within our responsibility. This work will require further action in the next winter programme, but this is not an unusual activity given the size of the course and its adjoining properties.

All the fairways have been spiked to a depth of 20cm (8") to aid drainage as an ongoing programme. I am hoping to spike the tees to a similar depth before the season, although the weather is constantly trying to thwart my activity. The greens were spiked to 30cm (12"), which is the maximum I can achieve. This will be followed up with smaller and closer needle tinning as soon as possible to help close the larger hole created by the larger machine. It will also help to even out any irregular surface areas over the winter, as well as allow air into the surface allowing the greens to breathe. All this work is, of course, dependent on the weather.

We were hoping to achieve more but unfortunately the weather beat my efforts by creating conditions so wet, that it was proving very difficult, if not impossible, to operate without creating unacceptable damage elsewhere on the course.

Yorkshire Water are running behind in their planned operations by approximately 6 to 8 weeks and this has inevitably added to the delays. It is hoped that by early March they will have finished and removed all their equipment and materials from the compound. Unfortunately, they may still have to maintain a small presence due to conditions preventing them from completing the full reinstatement of the yard and access road. This work can only be finalised when the ground conditions and weather allow.

On the positive side, Yorkshire Water have created a new access road for the greens staff to operate from our compound. The old access road has been landscaped over with spoil from the YW project and a new bund/mound is being installed around the compound, which ultimately will be landscaped with trees and shrubs to hide the buildings from the course. We

also took advantage of the excess spoil to enlarge the area adjacent the 4th white tee area. This will ultimately become the enlarged back tee area, something that was greatly needed, as the present tee was proving to be too small and couldn't cope with the amount of play required of it. The area in question will need many months to settle and dry out before the finalised new extension can be created, no earlier than autumn 2018.

Over the next few weeks we will hopefully be topping up bunkers with new sand. As the playing season is almost upon us, and with the conditions being as poor and wet as they are at present, I hope that we have some dry weather ahead of us in order that the course can dry out asap to allow our preparations to take place. it is going to be hard month ahead to catch up, however, I know the green staff will do their best to get the course as ready as is possible for the season before Easter.