

Cunliffe Bowling Green Maintenance Summary 2017

Verti-Cutting

The green was verti-cut on six occasions during the season at 4 – 5 week intervals.

Verti-Cutting on the Cunliffe green is done using a specific verti-blade cassette that fits into the Dennis Mower.

The aim of the process is in simple terms to take out any lateral side shoots which then allows the remaining grasses to grow upright and take the place of the side shoots the process also reduces the amount of thatch on the green of which also helps with better drainage, below is another way of putting it.

Verti-cutting, or verti-mowing, uses a machine fitted with blades that reach vertically into the turf canopy and are set to a depth where they can achieve their objective of cutting through lateral stems. The blades may also dislodge a small amount of thatch but should not penetrate into the soil or turf root zone

This process is quite labour intensive due to the amount of grass that comes out, to explain the box on the mower needs to be emptied after going up and down the green once, the grass then has to be emptied and distributed around the surrounds of the green and spread out due to the council not wanting it left at the green, once this has been done the green needs then to be cut to pick up what is left on the green, Alan, Irving, Eryl and Roger Richardson can testify to this and thanks go to them in helping on the days that this process was done.

The green will keep on improving if this process is ongoing season after season along with other measures.

Spiking

Spiking is done weekly during the playing season, and as and when the weather allows out of season.

It is again done with another cassette that fits into the Dennis mower and again is another good practice to keep doing, helping with drainage and controlling moss and encourage new grasses to grow.

Towards the end of the season Roger R. Eryl and Irving have been helping out with the spiking of which is usually done on a Friday during the playing season after Alan has cut the green.

Watering

May and June were very dry months with virtually no rain, which resulted in the green needing watering on a few occasions.

I know a lot of people frown when watering is mentioned (me being one of them at one time!) but the reality is that if a green is not watered before it gets bone dry it does not recover until the close season and not only that, all the good work to get the green in good condition is undone, and the local greens that were not watered, or

not watered until it was too late suffered for the rest of the season there after.

Watering is certainly not an easy option, or ideal doing it manually which is why I see an automatic system as crucial to the further progress of the standard of the green, and I still maintain that eventually the green will run without the need for it to be brown by cutting it to the bone.

Once it did rain in July it hardly stopped throughout July August and into September which again didn't help with the running of the green.

Fertilizing and Treatments

The green had a wetting agent and a liquid feed put on it in the 3rd week of May by Rob Eaton who we use for specialised treatments and procedures.

The wetting agent is like a gel that sits just below the surface to hold moisture to try to eliminate what is called dry patch.

In between I treat the green with liquid fertilizer and worm suppressants etc.

Rob Eaton then deep spiked the green with chisel tines at the end of the season and put an Autumn granular fertilizer on.

Cutting

The green was cut 2 or 3 times a week, in April, May and June it was cut at 5mm due to the very unusually dry weather, but once the rain came in July it was cut to 4mm and due to the continual rain was kept at that height for the rest of the season.

If an automatic watering system is eventually realised the aim would then be to cut it to 4mm all season.

The green is still being cut weekly into November due to the grass still growing quite vigorously with the recent warm weather.