



# Greenkeepers Blog

## February 2023

Hello to you all,

It's probably a bit late in the year to wish anyone who we haven't seen around the course a happy new year, but the Greens Team have been incredibly busy throughout the last few months, so I must apologise for not having an update out sooner than this.

The early part of the winter was not very kind to the golfer or the greenkeeper alike.

With this said, we are blessed by the fact that we are situated on a beautiful sand base and unlike many of the surrounding courses, with the exception of some very hard frosts, we have been able to open for play and continue on with essential maintenance work around the course in order to have it in the best possible condition coming into the Spring and the start of the 2023 season.

The last few weeks, although quite breezy and chilly at times, have really dried out the courses from the excess rainfall we experienced in December and early January.

This has given us the opportunity to really push on with starting to fine tune the surfaces ahead of what will hopefully be another extremely busy and successful season for the club.

### Winter Works Update

#### **Tee box complexes**

The main project of our winter program this year, and one which we are very excited about, has been the construction of the new tees on holes 7 and 16.

This work commenced in early December, and although we had a week of severe ground frosts, the main earth moving, shaping and re-turfing was complete before we broke up for the Christmas break.

Darren Cotter, a vastly experienced Golf Course Shaper was brought in to carry out the bulk of the earth moving and shaping, assisted by members of our Greens Team in dumper driving and alignment of the tee platforms.

Our own team carried out all the other works involved, which included, lifting and re-laying of sod, installation of hardcore and finishing stone on cart paths, irrigation installation and the harvesting and planting of Marram Grass.

The complexes are settling in well and we have been working hard on them to get them ready for the start of the season for you all to enjoy.



*New 7<sup>th</sup> tee during construction*



*Stripping the old 16<sup>th</sup> tee*

## Bunker Renovations

We restarted the bunker renovation program which was put on the back burner last year, due to supply issues.

This winter saw us carry out 4 complete rebuilds along with a depth check and freshen up of all bunker faces throughout the course.



*Relocating of 16<sup>th</sup> fairway bunker*



*Sand scrape work at Barbers Pole*

## Sand Scrapes

We have added a couple more sand scrapes in areas of the course which were over grown and relatively unplayable and unmaintainable. These areas not only add to the aesthetic value of the course but speed up play also, as a ball can be found very easily.

## Sustainability

Sustainability has really become the “Buzz” word for golf courses in the last few years and we here at Rosslare are very aware of its importance in the protection of our golf courses and the environment.

All of the above projects have been carried out using materials either sourced on site throughout the 2 courses or recycled.

All sand, rootzone and sod has been recycled from the previous tee complexes and other out of play areas.

The only materials purchased for the tee box projects, were the irrigation components and stone for the cart paths.

The material for the bunker renovations (ECO BUNKER) is made from recycled Astro turf which has been removed from playing pitches etc. This itself is very in keeping with sustainable and cost saving practices as these bunkers now have a lifespan of up to 30 years, where a natural turf revetted bunker lasts 6-7 years maximum before needing to be replaced.



*Freshly revetted 6<sup>th</sup> greenside bunker*

## Winter Maintenance

We have carried out numerous maintenance and conditioning works on the surfaces of both courses over the winter.

Greens and approaches have been verti drained and pencil tined a number of times which allows air in around the roots, relieves compaction and promotes plant health.

Tees, walkways and other high traffic areas have also been verti drained while fairways have been sliced to a depth of 6 inches.

Ditches and Gorse bushes around both courses have been tidied up where accessible along with some tree pruning.

Maintainable areas of deep roughs have been cut and collected, followed by a spring raking to remove moss and dead plant matter. This practice helps us to promote the fine wispy fescues we all love to see during the summer.

Our **wetting agent** program for the season has already kicked off. Greens, approaches, tees and fairways have all had their first application in a bid to reduce the stress and damage that a long hot/dry spell can do the courses.

Although soil temperatures have not yet reached where we would like them to be, we have seen some considerable recovery on our main course fairways since we introduced dropping off into the rough a few weeks ago.

Our aim is to have all the surfaces in the best condition possible heading into to the start of the new golfing season which is just around the corner.

To this end, we aim to **overseed** greens and approaches early in April, once we get favourable conditions. This will help us keep the surfaces firm, fast and true throughout the season.

We are really looking forward to getting the new tee boxes and bunkers open for play, and hope you have as much fun playing them as we did building them.

I hope to see you all on the course soon enjoying all the hard work that our team has put in over the winter.

All the best for 2023,

Mark Doyle

Links Superintendent



*Verti draining new 16<sup>th</sup> tee*



*New walkway installation on 18*