

Well spring has sprung finally, now we can get back to growing some grass. It was a bit of a rough winter for us in maintenance with all of the projects and the course conditions coming into winter. (I shouldn't complain too much, mom was still getting snow last week in South Dakota)

We came into this season with some damage on the greens and even though we were "spoon feeding" them fertilizer I knew we weren't going to see a lot of recovery through the winter months as the grass goes dormant. As we came into the end of season we were still dealing with our ongoing irrigation issues which made a lot of those areas look worse. To compound that issue when the weather started warming up, with a burst of growth, the added fertilizer and the buildup of salts from our irrigation water our greens began to grow in a "mottled" or "pocked" look which made the surface slow and bumpy. We are currently verti-cutting and rolling the greens to alleviate some of this. With the warmer weather and burst of growth we are seeing in the greens, we have begun plugging and sodding of the bad areas. This will be completed in the next few weeks to give us a full growing season to get them "stitched in".

Our tees fared the winter fairly well, the over seed worked out well to keep some grass on them. Now that the Rye grass has burned off I am seeing lots of new sprigs coming up on the tee tops. As long as our irrigation holds up and we have a decent growing season I'm confident that we will have good teeing surfaces for next season.

Lately, I have heard there were some complaints about not seeing the maintenance crew out working during the day. I will take this as somewhat of a compliment.

I know that in the past the maintenance crew started at 6:30 – 7:00am and worked during the day and through play many times. I have changed that policy. As any of you that live near the maintenance building might know, we start maintenance at 5:00am and most of my staff is finished at 1:00pm. I coordinate with the pro shop every morning so that we can work around play and try not to disturb your golfing experience. This not only enhances your experience but also allows my crew to have the course set up before play begins. This also allows my crew to get a full day's work in and be off before the hottest part of the day.

I also think that part of this perception is the fact that a lot of the detail work on the course has not been kept up with. I will admit that this is the case so far. Keep in mind that when I took over the golf course there were many major background and foundation issues that needed to be addressed. Control over the irrigation being a top priority, which will be an ongoing issue till the system is upgraded. Most of our clean up and detail will come this fall to prepare for next season.

I've also been asked to increase the frequency of my newsletters and add some photos so you can see our progression over the summer, so look forward to that.

Lastly, I want to thank all of our golfers for being diligent about cart traffic. I've seen a great improvement over last season. Just remember to be aware of where you're driving and remember grass doesn't do well when it keeps getting run over.

See you out on the course, John