



Northop Golf Club

March 2023

The course has been very dry for the time of year with both fairways and rough being cut during February.

The feedback from visitors and members continues to be very positive and we start the new season in a very strong position.

There has been a considerable amount of work carried out on the course during Jan and Feb.

We will highlight some of these below.

The new golf season is nearly with us.

Let's hope the current cold snap is only short lived and therefore doesn't impact our golfing plans for March.



Danny's Course update: Spring and the beginning of the main golfing season is on the horizon.

We've been busy throughout the winter months with various projects and general maintenance of the golf course. If you've continued playing throughout the winter months, you will have noticed that more winter tees have been added. There has recently been a program on replacing the steps to the 12th and 17th tees. This work has been carried out by Woosey and Dave and I'm sure you'll agree they've done a great job. Ant has also refurbished the all the ball washers; with his efforts these now look as good as new again. Work on the bunkers is currently ongoing, they're being edged and trimmed. The bunkers will be topped up with sand once the winter has passed to avoid any extra compaction.

Work on the 2nd tee and 5th tee, path/ fairway will continue in March so we can get these areas in play as soon as possible, it's been too wet throughout the winter to run materials to these areas.

December and January didn't fail in delivering some extreme weather to us offering unexpected challenges in the process. The prolonged frozen period we had in December was extremely frustrating for both golfers and us the Greenkeepers. It was disruptive to our winter disease defence program restricting us from spraying the greens. This followed by another 4 weeks of unfavourable weather, strong winds and snow set us back. Several greens have struggled in this period, but the majority have done well.

I have received the soil analysis and nutrient report from a test taken by an agronomist from Terra Lift. Our 1st test was taken in August 2021 and the results from October 2022 are very encouraging. We're making good progress in reducing the organic matter layer and increasing microbial activity. We have raised the pH and the most noticeable improvement is an increased Calcium / magnesium level which offers many benefits.

The greens in general have performed well throughout the winter, the water percolation has improved significantly. We would often see large amounts of standing water on greens 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17 & 18 after steady downpours. This winter we have only really had standing water on 1 & 14. Our continued program of liquid aeration with added mechanical aeration will continue to improve the greens along with the physical removal of organic matter and the use of bio stimulants.



The Project 2023 calendar has been proposed by the Greens Committee and approved by our directors.

Please see our agreed priorities below.

The Greens Committee consists of 6 club members (Steve Bowden , Steve Boden , Jim Burton , Mike Thompson, David Evans and Andy Scott) Danny O'Neil our Head Green Keeper and Matt Pritchard our General Manager.

We have a vacancy for a further member to join us.

If you are interested, please have a chat Matt, Danny, or Andy.

Moss is still present in several greens, but we have now reduced this by around 60%. We have been able to put hole placements on the right of the 1st green and left of the 11th throughout the summer and winter. I wouldn't have said this would have been possible so soon looking at where we were last winter, there is still some way to go but I'm confident we will continue to see large improvements by this time next year with a focus on removal in March.

Greens maintenance week is pencilled in for the week commencing Monday 20th March, we will try to carry out our work with as little disruption as possible but would be very grateful if you allow us priority if playing during this week as the more efficiently this work is carried out the better for everyone. I am planning to carry out a deep scarification if conditions allow followed by an overseed, top dress and granular feed to aid recovery.

The continued efforts by several volunteers are evident on the right of the 2nd, 5th & 7th, the left 6th and 17th tee to name a few. Clearing overgrown areas of bramble and unwanted vegetation. They have also planted a large quantity of daffodil bulbs, which we look forward to seeing and will enjoy in the coming weeks. Andy, Steve, Jim, and Mike your help is much appreciated.

I am pleased to share our project calendar for 2023 which consolidates on the progress made during 2022 and will see the complete of a numbers changes commenced last year. Please see later for full details and our progress so far.

I would like to also thank everyone for following trolley restrictions throughout the winter and those who have taken trolleys back on in recent weeks and continued to keep them off the closely mown areas. Damage to the course is minimal throughout the winter and that is largely down to members efforts.

Could I finally add a polite but firm reminder that everyone repairs their pitch marks regardless of where your ball finishes. If it pitches on the green, please look for one. We are seeing large numbers of unrepaired pitch marks.

Overriding Priorities for 2023

1. Continue to Improve the overall health and conditions of our Putting greens.
2. Completion of all ongoing projects ie 1st tee, 2nd tees and new 5th tee and hole layout changes.
3. Enhance the overall standard of course presentation / definition.
4. Improvement of Drainage through Mole ploughing and other maintenance activities.
5. Commence a rolling Greenside Bunker improvement program.
6. Introduce a Tee improvement plan.
7. Further Roll out of Winter Tees

Greens Committee Project Calendar 2023

	Hole	Timing	Comments / Next steps
Provide additional covered Machinery Storage Area	-	Feb-23	Completed
Spring Greens Maintenance week	-	Mar-23	w/c 20th March
Install Additional course seating / benches	-	Apr-23	simple 'park' benches being made ready by early Spring
Spring - Mole Ploughing Fairways to help drainage	-	Apr-23	
Autumn Greens Maintenance week	-	Aug-23	wc 29th August
Autumn - Mole Ploughing Fairways to help drainage	-	Sep-23	
Bunker improvement program	-	On going	Focusing primarily on Greenside bunker in 2023 , all bunkers currently being re edged.
Agree Final tee positions are on 1st Hole	1	Jan-23	Done , White tee to remain on new tee , yellow tee to move back to old white tee
New steps for 1st White Tee.	1	Mar-23	
Install 2 nets in the Trees to the right on 1st Hole	1	Mar-23	Poles erected Jan 23 , Furthest net is now in place 2nd one will be installed in March.
Install Net by 1st Tee	1	Mar-23	
Reinstall / new winter tee for 1st hole	1	Oct-23	
New tees on the 2nd Hole (both yellow and white)	2	Jun-23	Extended plan to reshape and returf all tees on this hole. All tees to be cleared , shaped and top soiled
Create soak away into woods to clear path after heavy rain	2	Mar-23	This will be actioned during the work in the 2nd tees
Upgrade current winter tee to new standard	4	Oct-23	
New Men's tees on 5th Hole - to right of 4th green	5	Ongoing	What are next steps - access on to tee , OOB markers , rough to left of tee , finish path etc -
New Winter tee on existing white teeing area	5	Mar-23	Will be used as a yellow tee option during the season to protect new tee from excessive wear.
Upgrade current winter tee to new standard	6	Oct-23	
Repairs nets to the right of the 7th Tee	7	Mar-23	To be completed during March 23
Install Winter tee	7	Feb-23	Completed
Install Winter tee	8	Oct-23	
Dig Drainage channel into main ditch on 11th	11	Oct-23	To clear flooded Path at lowest point of ridge
Replace steps to yellow and white tees	12	Mar-23	Completed
Dig soak-away to front right of 14 Winter tee	14	Nov-23	To prevent paths flooding on 14th
Replace steps to white tee	17	Mar-23	Completed
Replace sleepers supports around white tee	17	May-23	WIP : to include removing self seeded grasses with Mini digger , reedging areas
Install Winter tee	18	Feb-23	Completed