



COURSE POLICY DOCUMENT

(reviewed June 2011)

Introduction

The purpose of this policy document is to set out details of the Management of the Golf Course at Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club (BMGC) which have been approved by the Management Committee and submitted to Members for their comments and subsequent approval.

When finally approved, the policy will be strictly pursued and any future proposed changes will not be introduced without full consultation with the Management Committee and Members.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Management Committee is responsible for the management of BMGC in all its aspects.

The Green Committee is responsible for the management of the Golf Course - financial, personnel, machinery and general management of the staff.

The Course Manager attends and advises the Green Committee.

The Secretary/Manager will establish management controls that monitor the policies set by Committees and ensure correct management practises are followed. Variations from budget will be notified.

The Secretary/Manager co-ordinates the BMGC Fixture List, giving consideration to work on the course. He will communicate all alterations and changes.

The Course Manager is responsible for the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects:

- ✎ planning maintenance schedules in relation to fixture lists;
- ✎ liaising with the Secretary/ Manager on any problem areas;
- ✎ machinery maintenance;
- ✎ planning and long term budgeting;
- ✎ schedules and records;
- ✎ personnel education - training, discipline, allocation of daily tasks;
- ✎ safety;
- ✎ fertilizers and chemicals;
- ✎ storage and safety;
- ✎ ecology.

Resources

Staff

The agreed staffing level includes the following:

- ⌘ Course Manager
- ⌘ Assistant Course Manager
- ⌘ 1st Assistant
- ⌘ Greenkeepers - (2)
- ⌘ Trainee/Assistant Apprentice Greenkeeper

Total complement = 6.

There is a commitment to training and education of green staff who are all encouraged to obtain City and Guilds Certificates in Greenkeeping to the maximum of their individual abilities. Staff are also encouraged to become members of BIGGA and to attend discussion groups organised by this Association.

Financial

The Management Committee are committed to the allocation of sufficient BMGC funds to achieve the policies set out in this document.

Objectives

The objectives will necessarily alter as years progress. The objectives for 1991 (the year of this original document) until 1996 are that this Golf Course should improve to such a standard that it is recognised as one of the best maintained and enjoyable courses in the South of England. This standard will be achieved for the major part of the year. It is not an attainable target to expect this for the whole year round especially during the winter months. It is not, and has no pretensions to become, a Championship Course, it is to be maintained in excellent condition for the enjoyment of members of all handicaps and their guests. Visitors are welcomed provided they satisfy the Club's criteria of membership of a recognised golf club and playing ability up to a minimum standard laid down by the Committee.

Timing of Work on the Course

Much essential work has to be completed before a certain time in the year. It will be the aim of the Course Manager, in regular discussions with the Chairman of Green and the Secretary/Manager, to plan this work well in advance so that the periods in which work has to be done, can be agreed taking into account the golf programme and communicated to members.

The Course

The Golf Course at BMGC was designed by H S Colt, a recognised golf architect of high quality golf courses, in the early 1900's. He applied his design skills to the use of naturally presented features of slopes, valleys and streams to provide an interesting and challenging course. At that time there was only light use of any golf course and the designer would be very surprised to observe the intensity of use of the Course today. Trolley ways between greens and tees do not

easily accommodate the wear put on them today and solutions to this problem have been sought and applied over the years with only limited success.

The Course is formed on soil series ranging from loamy humus to clay and generally overlaying a clay substructure. These soil conditions cannot themselves stand up to wet conditions and are prone to waterlogging in some areas which are all adversely affected by traffic caused by heavy use, particularly golf trolleys using the same pathways.

Compaction has occurred in many areas around the course, especially around greens and on walkways to the next tee. The policy being pursued is to relieve compaction by intense aeration programmes and to avoid further compaction in the winter months when the grass has stopped growing by preventing the use of trolleys.

Tees

The maintenance of teeing grounds has high priority. Cutting to a height no lower than 5/16", tining, scarifying and fertilising are all practised on a programmed basis. The use of grass tees throughout the winter is an objective which will be continued. These winter tees are worn through during the winter and have to be recovered during the summer.

Fairways

Cutting to a height no lower than 3/4" is to be continued. Fairways are vertidraind, deep tined, silt tined and scarified in order to improve the quality of the grass, discourage poa annua and encourage fescues. Certain fairways which have suffered during the two drought seasons of 1989 and 1990 will be treated by vertidraind, mole draining and overseeding.

Surrounds & Approaches

Normal cutting heights 1 1/2", aprons ?" - these areas also receive attention to improve the grass species.

Rough

Semi-rough will normally be cut to a height no lower than 2 1/2" and rough no lower than 5".

Greens

Annual meadow grass is the predominant species on all greens. The policy is to reduce this gradually and slowly introduce and encourage bents to dominate. This policy cannot be introduced too quickly and still maintain greens in a good state for play. Long term the objective can be achieved by continual programmes of aeration to create conditions for the healthy bacterial activity to break down the thatch into compost and to encourage the deeper rooting species of grasses.

The height of cut on greens is the responsibility of the Course Manager and depends on his reading of future weather conditions, upcoming competitions, the state of the soil etc. During spells of good growing weather the normal height of cut is 4 1/2 to 5 mm.

Grooming and verticutting will be applied to greens throughout the summer and also the use of pencil tines to encourage moisture penetration and the deeper rooting grasses.

A policy of minimum irrigation is being followed and any dry patches which develop will be treated with wetting agents.

The autumn and winter treatment of greens includes hollow tining, deep tining, vertidrainage, silt tining and scarifying.

Fertilisation

The policy is to use no phosphates. Organic nitrogen based fertilizers will be used with small quantities of iron and potash.

Top Dressing

Top Dressings are applied to greens at the rate of 10 tonnes per month during the playing season and 20 tonne loads in spring and autumn following vertidrainage or hollow tining. Total Dressings on greens approximate 100 to 120 tonnes per year. Top Dressings are about 80 tonnes of 80/20 sand loam mixture and 20-40 tonnes of double washed sand.

Drainage & Ditches

At BMGC the dispersal of surface water is of paramount importance. Many drainage ditches exist and all have to be kept clear of debris and silt. During the summer months growth on the banks is cut and cleared and later in the year the sludge is removed to ensure free flows of water and to prevent flooding as far as is possible. Other covered drainage on fairways has to be examined frequently and blockages cleared.

Temporary Greens

It is the firm intention that ongoing work to relieve compaction and reduce thatch will make the use of temporary greens less frequent. This will apply to some greens sooner than others

It is the responsibility of the Course Manager or, in his absence, the Senior Greenkeeper on duty, to decide on a day to day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into use.

Considerations are:

- ⌘ Is the normal green too soft to take foot traffic?
- ⌘ In frosty weather would footmarks damage the top crusty surface?
- ⌘ If the normal green is being worked on intensively a temporary green may be brought into use in order that the work may proceed more quickly with greater productivity.

Bunkers

Bunkers will be raked daily by Greenkeepers. They will be examined regularly for water retention and the drains kept clear. Terram will be used to maintain drains clear of silt and sand.

A rake will be provided for each bunker - two in the large ones - and all players will be expected to rake their pitch marks and footmarks. The rake will be replaced in and not outside the bunker.

Closing the Course

The Course may be closed on the authority of the Course Manager or, in his absence, the Senior Greenkeeper on duty, when unusual weather conditions have occurred and damage to the Course would result if play were permitted. Such conditions would exist if the greens were waterlogged, if the course was flooded and during severe frost or snow.

During a competition the Course may be closed by the Secretary/Manager, or an authorised member of the Committee supervising the competition if he considers that the greens have become unsuitable for play.

In winter months a decision to close the Course, or the use of the temporary greens will not be rescinded for the rest of the day.

In summer a decision to close the Course may be rescinded one hour after the conditions which closed it have ceased and after an inspection by the person responsible for the decision of each of the 18 holes on the Course.

Green Staff & Members

Work on the Course

The Green Staff will be vigilant so that they do not delay play unreasonably. However, work has always to be productive and is especially important at the beginning of the day.

All players are therefore asked to give consideration to Green Staff by not stopping their work unreasonably, particularly at the beginning of the day, and to realise that it is in their own interest to do so. A code of practise has been established to cover the subject and published on the notice board.

Complaints

Members and visitors may not complain about the conduct of a member of Staff nor about the state of the Course to any member of the Green Staff. Any complaint must be made to the Secretary/Manager who will investigate the matter together with the Course Manager. If they cannot deal with the complaint themselves the matter will be submitted to the Committee.

Machinery

The Course Manager will produce a rolling 5 year plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration, amendment and final approval by the Green Committee and the Management Committee for incorporation into the Club's financial plan.

The Course Manager has responsibility to keep himself up-to-date with developments in golf course machinery and to bring his recommendations to the notice of the Green Committee Chairman.

He is also responsible for the maintenance of all machinery in all its aspects - records of use, preventative maintenance, major servicing, adjustments, etc. He will recognise the heavy investment which has been made out of BMGC funds and prudently preserve these investments.

Irrigation

The overall policy is to use as little water as possible to encourage deeper rooting grasses to predominate. However, in almost every season there are times when rainfall is insufficient to sustain grass growth and needs to be supplemented. Water is also needed on demand to wash in fertilisers and other treatments. Therefore a guaranteed water source is essential for the maintenance of a golf course.

Water Supply

The main source of water at BMGC is the pond at the 12th hole which is fed from a stream originating in the forest. This has capacity to hold 40,000 gallons when clear of weed. When the stream dries out there is sufficient to last about three weeks. During the 1989 and 1990 drought seasons the pond was dry for 4 months. Watering of trees had to be stopped and water for the greens was very scarce. In 1990 the Committee decided to install a 30,000 gallon tank supplied from the mains to act as a reserve supply. The pond water, for which the Club pays an annual extraction fee, is still regarded as the prime source of supply both on account of cost and also because natural, untreated water is considered best for irrigation of the green, tees and approaches.

The System

The irrigation system is pressurised at 100 lbs/sq. inch in March when the danger of frost is past and is drained down in November. There are 134 sprinkler heads on the Course, each being individually controlled by a computerised programmer in the Course Manager's control. The programme is designed to bring sprinklers individually into use on a pressure balance basis - ie. one head at lower level is planned to come into use simultaneously with one at a higher level. The sprinkler heads are Toro geared heads - 4 heads to a green delivering 5 gallons/minute; one on each tee delivering 9 gallons/minute and ten approach sprinklers at 9 gallons/minute with a spread of a 40 yard diameter circle.

Financial Control

Long term budgeting: in September each year the Course Manager will produce a list of machinery, showing performance and notes on any problems which have shown up during the year. This will lead to a definitive spending budget for the next financial year for replacements and repairs which should be in line with the 5 year rolling budgets. These will then be discussed by the appropriate Committee for approval. Additionally the Course Manager will produce a budget for purchase of fertilisers, chemicals and dressings for the next year.

Quarterly review of actual expenditure, compared with budget, will be made and the Course Manager asked to explain any significant differences.

Ecology

In an area of the nature of Brockenhurst, with an abundance of natural woodland within the perimeter of the course, it is an important part of the Policy to preserve the natural habitat of birds, animals and flora on the Course. There is especially, the long standing herd of fallow deer resident on the Course and visiting herds of roe deer, The woodland cannot be left unattended - fallen trees have to be removed, invading scrub has to be cut back - this work carried out by volunteer groups, has the full support of the Management Committee provided such work is discussed with and agreed by the Course Manager before being carried out.

Certain animals - squirrels, rabbits, moles - do damage to the Course, have to be culled. Although not damaging the Course directly, there are too many magpies which attack the less aggressive birds and which also have to be kept under control. It is the responsibility of the Course Manager to address these issues.

Snakes - adders, smooth snakes and grass snakes are found on the Course, they are all protected species and must not be harmed.

Trees which affect the Course, particularly when overhanging teeing grounds and preventing the growth of grass, have to be lopped. On some occasions felling may be necessary. This work has to be implemented under the control of the Course Manager who always has to recognise the need for tree preservation and to ensure that any tree preservation order is respected. Tree planting will take place where and when necessary, with professional advice sought when conditions require.

Professional Advice

Notwithstanding the complete confidence the Committee has in the competence and technical knowledge of the Course Manager, it is the policy of BMGC to seek opinions and audits from the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) at Bingley, on an annual visit, as recommended by The R&A.

The Course Manager is also authorised to seek assistance from STRI for soil analysis or for any questions he may have of any abnormal happenings such as invasion of unusual fungi or pests.

No alterations to the architecture of the Course may be undertaken without full consultation with a qualified Golf Architect and approved by the Management Committee. Currently the Club has retained Mr J Hamilton Stutt for consultation on special call-out.

For relevant professional advice on course yardage, please refer to “The Golfers Sourcebook”, published by A&D Media Ltd, Salisbury, Wilts.

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Course Yardage Contacts

Better Methods	Luton	01582 758444
Brendan McGovern	Ireland	00353 4640639
Direct Golf UK	Huddersfield	08700 131010
Ducann Marketing (Strokesaver)	Paisley	0141 848 1199
Eagle Promotions	Caterham	01883 344244
Golf Sign Company	Wirral	0151 647 8081
Golf Tech GMBH	Surrey	01306 741881
Masters Golf Company	Bristol	01275 818190
Premier Golf Design	Ricksmanworth	01923 711771

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