



Romsey Bowling Club

Message from Your Green Team

www.romseybowlingclub.com

Hi all Romsey Bowling Club 2024

The reason for this letter

On several occasions this past season some members have called in at the club while we have been working on the green and have said that they had no idea of what goes on regards maintenance and the amount of work that has to be done to keep our green in a reasonably good condition, therefore we thought it would be a good to explain what goes on throughout the year.

Our maintenance programme

About five years ago we started following the advice of a master green keeper (John Quinn of Bowls Central) this meant a major change to past practices. We had to stop using herbicides and pesticides and our fertilizers etc. are as organic as they can be. We were told to stop using sand top dressing, a practice that has been carried out at the club over many years resulting in an over sandy and inert soil making it difficult to maintain a consistent bowling surface throughout the summer. We do think we have now (we were told it would take five years) reached the point where we can start to move forward in terms of playing surface consistency but to achieve this we need to keep working hard on it.

Recurring problems

Some of the problems we are faced with year on year are localised dry patch (the big areas of dry crusty grass that can appear anywhere on the green through June to September) and Dollar Spot probably the most noticed disease (the little brown spots that appear mostly through mid June to September) and Fusarium. another fungal disease that needs to be kept an eye on. We don't have a permanent cure for these but the healthier we keep the green the more likely we are to reduce these fungal impacts.

The physical work

The green has to be cut three times a week (Tues/Thurs/Sunday). Mostly the heavy work is carried out on Sundays when we need to aerate the surface using our green master machine on about a monthly basis, which takes roughly two and a half hours each time. This helps with aeration and decompaction, we Sarrel roll (a roller with spikes on it) as often as possible, each time taking about an hour and a half, another way of getting oxygen into the root zone. Then there is the spraying of various fertilizers mainly on a monthly basis. All of these jobs are weather dependant, plus a host of other jobs like keeping the ditches clean and trimming the ditch edges and repairing green damage.

Damage to the Green

Although we get some bird damage and some worm casts on the green mostly late August through September, most of our repair work is repairing divots caused by bowlers (bungers) not bowling from ground level. Every time a bowl is dropped or thrown in some cases, it takes a divot out of the surface of the green. The divot takes about a second to be removed but it takes a couple of weeks for repairs to take hold, this is why we ask for the nets to be put down on roll up days whenever we think necessary. Please don't think this is all caused by our new bowlers, quite a lot of our senior bowlers are guilty of it as well. Why just nets for roll ups you may ask? Well the number of bowlers turning up on Tuesdays and Fridays has increased dramatically this season which is really good but that of course adds to the wear and tear on the green. We are not permitted to use nets for competitions and league matches. Please, all bowlers, work on your technique, no damage means no nets.

There are seven of us in the green team - Les Braybrook, Colin Stickells, Dave Freestone, Pete Athersuch, Phil Dennis, Don King and Brian Parsons. If any of you have any questions, please ask any one of us and we'll help if we can. If you are bowling indoors this winter good luck with that, otherwise winter well and we hope to see you all in the spring.

