

December 2021.

This is my report as the greenkeeper for Ringwood Bowling Club.

This report reflects my thoughts and views and not necessarily those of Ringwood Bowling Club

Greenside Up



WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

December 2021

The last couple of bowling seasons have been can we say 'challenging' for all at Ringwood Bowling Club, to say the least

The green has not had so many 'uses' as normal, so it should have been easier to maintain. Well that assumption is partly correct, but it was also more difficult for me to become fully motivated!

The green maintenance has been largely unchanged, still going down the organic route. Well that is until this autumn, when very uncharacteristically I decided that the green would benefit from a good topdressing. So myself and Mel Barret applied 4.5 tonnes of top quality dressing and spent a lot of time dragging, brushing and generally working the topdressing into the green surface. Maybe we tried a little bit to much, as just after we suffered from a disease problem from which the green is only now recovering. My thoughts are by working a high contact sand based top dressing, the 'sandpaper' effect reduced the sward's resistance to disease. But maybe it was just a bad year for Microdium Patch!

I ordered a new multi use machine, primarily to use as a disc overseeder. This was very late being deliv-

ered! But I did manage to sow 30kgs of seed, and germination has been excellent. All good? Oh no, I am not happy with the quality of the seed / grass, and am currently in 'discussion' with the supplier. I maintain that although the seed mixture was sold as suitable for use on bowling greens, it is not the top quality that I expected. What ever the outcome I will be sowing a further 30 kgs or so in early March.

Otherwise I will continue with the usual winter work of daily switching the green; a bag, 22.5 kgs, of Sustain fertilizer every three weeks and in between 2.5 litres molasses + 1.5 litres Bolster + 2 litres penetrant wetting agent. Why molasses? Well combined with the wetting agent I am hoping it will wash in and ant leatherjackets will ingest some. As they do not have a liver, they are unable to process molasses and they either come up to the surface where the birds will ingest them or die in the root zone. It has been difficult to get the timing right to allow enough, but not to much rain, was the molasses in!

Monthly aeration is still key and as is mowing every 5 days or so. Currently I am mowing at 10mm, next month down to 9mm, February

to 7 mm, and so onto an green opening height of cut at 6mm.

I am planning on taking a different approach to rolling the green in 2022. It is usual practice to start rolling when the green opens, but this year I am planning on starting regular rolling a month or so earlier. Why? I just think it may well help in improving the 'tight hand / bendy hand' that Ringwood is well known for. Not cure it, but maybe some improvement.

I am sure that we are all looking forward to a more usual 2022 bowling season. But already the B&D have decided on only three rinks of 4 players for the Saturday pm leagues, so we will all have to see how this season unfolds.

Lastly I would like to thank Mel Barret personally for the help and assistance he has given me over the past few months. He has helped keep me motivated and is usually a cheerful face in the mornings. Also a thankyou for Neil Richmond for trimming the hedges, to a very high standard, and he was ably assisted by Mel. Well done

