

TOURNAMENT AGRONOMY PREPARATION REPORT

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

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Tournament: **Lacoste Ladies Open de France**

Tournament Date: 4-7 October 2012

Visit Date: 26/11/2011

Please refer to this report when planning maintenance in advance of the 2012 edition of the Lacoste Ladies Open de France.

INTRODUCTION

Firstly, I would like to start by thanking the attention received by all the people who are involved in the golf course preparation for the Lacoste Ladies Open de France 2012.

I would like to highlight the big social, economic and environmental effort that they are making to improve the golf course sustainability.

The golf course condition has improved due to:

1. The excellent agronomic program made by Julian Mooney. Particularly, the greens' cultivation and fertilization program.
2. The grounds staff has followed more than 80% of that program.

There is still much work to do which we highlight these three points:

- Keep on working on Julian Mooney's program.
- Send a RFEG technician for the fine tuning of the machinery and to teach the golf course mechanic. Mower blade sharpness is very poor. So, the grass is more prone to fungal infection and weeds encroachment. There is also a lack of smoothness in the greens.



Picture 1. Torn and bruised grass.



Picture 2. Low mowing quality on fairways.

- Purchase a new boom sprayer. The current one is very small and applications take a lot of time.



Picture 3. Current boom sprayer. Very small for broadcast applications.

TOURNAMENT HEIGHT OF CUT

All tournament height of cut (HOC), with the exception of greens must be in place no later than one month in advance of the tournament. The following was agreed between all parties present:

Greens	-	3.5 mm
Tournament Tees	-	9.0 mm
Green Collar	-	9.0 mm
Apron	-	9.0 mm
Fairways	-	12.0 mm
Semi-Rough	-	25 mm (one width of the three cylinder mower only)
Playable Rough	-	50 mm

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND SUBSEQUENT SUGGESTIONS

The greenkeeping items we reviewed on the golf course and discussed post course inspection are listed below:

Greens

The firmness of the greens has improved, since the last visit, due to the aeration and topdressing program. The profile of the rootzone looked plenty of new material visible following the hollowcoring.



As we have mentioned mower sharpness is very poor. As a result, turfgrass leaves look torn and bruised, affecting adversely ball roll.

Greens perimeters are compacted due to wear and traffic from course equipment. Greens are cut with a triplex mower. It could be a solution do a double clean pass with a walk behind mower instead of a triplex.



Picture 4. Compaction on green perimeter.

We have a big concern about *Poa annua* population on the greens. These greens will be under stress this summer due to summer stress and anthracnose pressure (Dr. Vargas). It is recommended following a preventative fungicide program based on:

- ✓ Treatments every other week during the summer at low rate.
- ✓ Rotate active ingredients with different FRAC codes to avoid resistance.
- ✓ First treatment: Azoxystrobin 1,5 l/Ha. Second treatment: Propiconazole 2 l/Ha. Third treatment: Azoxystrobin 1,5 l/Ha...
- ✓ Spray volume: 600 l/Ha.
- ✓ Correct timing and application of the products is key and great care and attention should be taken.

We recommend to strictly follow the aeration and topdressing program given in the first visit.

- It would be advisable to aerate greens perimeters with a pencil tine to encourage root development and strengthen the surface.
- To avoid diseases we recommend following the preventative planning.
- Follow the fertilization program.
- We would recommend an aggressive grooming and topdressing program repeated weekly depending temperature.
- Increase mowing frequency to improve ball roll.
- We do not recommend reduction in height of cut during the summer. The main aim is not to stress the plant, improve density and stop moss proliferation.

At the end of advance week Greens will need to be treated with: Spoon feed of Fertiliser + Micros + Primo, Wetting agent and Fungicide.

14 days prior the event place all hole locations around the immediate perimeter or front of Greens. This will help preserve likely tournament hole locations for the event. At this point repair all high and low hole locations throughout all Greens.

Repair ball marks on greens every week but pay additional attention to this task 14 days prior the event.

Practice Greens

- All practice greens must be prepared the exact same as greens on the course in the lead up to and during the event to promote consistent conditions throughout the facility.

Avant Greens (Green Collars and Approaches)

- It is recommended that all Collars and Approaches receive the same frequency of Aeration and Topdressing as Greens. This will help to promote greater wear tolerance, resiliency and help to promote the bump and run style of shot.

Tees

Tournament tees have been overseeded and protected with a net. To improve surface levels and to guarantee a nice player stand, we would recommend:



Picture 5. Tee platform covered by a net for protection.

- ✓ Follow the cultivation and topdressing program. To improve surface levels it is a good option: hollowcoring + deep irrigation + roller + topdressing.
- ✓ Increase mowing frequency and blade sharpness. This will reduce weeds encroachment and improve grass coverage.
- ✓ Dollar spot pressure is very high. Dr. Nikolai's researches show that is possible to reduce disease incidence following these recommendations:
 - Spoon feeding applications every other week.
 - Increase mowing frequency.
 - Remove dew in the early morning.

LET tournament Tees should be reserved a minimum of 1 month prior to the advance week. This allows time for the regeneration of turfgrass in advance of the event. Tees may require overseeding with a fine textured high quality dwarf perennial ryegrass. A weekly brushing will improve tees condition.

If time and resources are limited we ask that treatments are focused on LET tournament tees only.

Fairways & Playable Rough

Fairways program has not been followed at all. Fairways have been aerated but only some fairways and landing areas have been topdressed. Those topdressed areas have improved significantly.



Picture 6. Fairway aerated and topdressed. As a result, surface improvement.

Picture 7. Profile of a not topdressed fairway.

There is a huge dollar spot pressure on fairways.

We would recommend:

- ✓ Follow the cultivation and topdressing program.
- ✓ Improve the quality of cut.
- ✓ Spoon feeding program. It almost impossible to do a spoon feeding every 15 days with the actual equipment. So, we recommend the purchase of a new boom sprayer.
- ✓ Fungicide program with Clorothalonil (5 l/Ha) every 21 days.

A weekly brushing will improve fairways condition.

Bunkers

This area is still a major cause for concern in the preparation for the tournament because there is not a consistent sand depth and infiltration is very poor.

Bunkers perimeters have been edged and now are clearly defined. New sand has been added. Now, it is important to adjust sand depth avoiding fried egg during the tournament.



Picture 8. Bunker edged and with new sand.

We recommend for the future a full renovation respecting Henry Colt's design and philosophy. Using the same sand and drainage system in all the bunkers.

Bunkers present well in preparation for the event. Our biggest preparation related concern will be:

- ✓ Evenness and consistency of sand depths
- ✓ Contamination from stone
- ✓ Potential 'fried egg' lies
- ✓ Potential for water holding in the event of heavy rain

All Bunkers will be clipped or edged where necessary to produce the lip and definition required for the event.

Design

There are a lot of natural areas all around the golf course. These areas allow a reduction in labor costs, fuel and resources.



Picture 9. Natural areas at both sides of the fairway.



Picture 10. Natural area at the right side of tees.

Advance Week Course Closure

- LET and Chantaco must agree on the appropriate level of course closure in advance of the tournament to help preserve and recover the golf course.

Staff

- All Greenkeepers are required to work the advance weekend of the tournament. The purpose of this is to implement the final recommendations of the Tournament Director, Chief Rules Official and Agronomist as well as completing a full mowing and maintenance schedule.

Finally I would like to thank for your time and hospitality during my visit and wish you every success for the tournament and the future.

If you have any questions regarding this report please contact me.