

TOURNAMENT AGRONOMY PREPARATION REPORT

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Ladies European Tour
Buckinghamshire Golf Club
Denham Court Drive
Denham
Buckinghamshire
UB9 5PG
England

T: +44 1895 831028

F: +44 1895 832301

E: dgomez@rfegolf.es

W: www.ladieseuropeantour.com

In attendance: Veronique Smondack, President
Golf de Chantaco
Jean-Ignace Mouhica, Director of Golf
Golf de Chantaco
Guillaume Sallaberry, Head Greenkeeper
Golf de Chantaco
Diego Peñapareja, Greenkeeper Green Section
Royal Spanish Golf Federation/Ladies European Tour

Circulation: All of the above including:
Yvonne Cassidy, Director of Tournament
Ladies European Tour
Julian Mooney, Director Agronomy
Turfgrass Consultancy/Ladies European Tour
Mark Casey, Director Operations and The Solheim Cup
Ladies European Tour

Tournament: **Lacoste Ladies Open de France**

Tournament Date: 26-29 September 2013

Visit Date: 17/07/2013

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

INTRODUCTION

It was my pleasure to visit the Golf de Chantaco to complete my first course inspection in advance of Lacoste Ladies Open de France 2013. The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the condition of the golf course at Saint Jean de Luz (France) and identify any issues which needed to be addressed for the preparation of the course for the tournament in September.

The overall golf condition was good, with good grass coverage in all playing surfaces.

In due course Chantaco and LET should discuss the important point of course preservation and closure in advance of the event. Generally speaking every day the course is closed in advance of the event allows the turf to recuperate and recover as well as allowing greenkeepers uninterrupted access to the course to complete work in a more productive manner. Generally speaking for an event of this stature and considering the weakness associated with the course I recommend 7 days of course closure.

We would like to thank Jean-Ignace Mouhica and Guillaume Sallaberry for their hospitality during our visit.



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:

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

*** See the attached picture at the end of the report.

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 putting surfaces were in good condition on the day of the visit. Surfaces were firm under foot, with good grass density and smoothness was fine. We did not find any sign of disease.



Greens condition is the result of a good verticutting and topdressing schedule that is followed by the superintendent. However, as we could see in a green soil profile of Chantaco, topdressing of last hollow core aeration was a mix of silica sand and an organic amendment. We do not recommend this topdressing mix in order to not create different material layers in the soil profile; layering is an issue for water infiltration. When a straight silica sand topdressing schedule is adopted, using only silica sand is a must. For next autumn or spring, we also recommend deep hollow core aeration with vertidrain (14 mm tine diameter and 4 cm x 4 cm spacing) to improve water infiltration and to disrupt the hard pan that is created when aeration work is always making at the same depth.

Greens at Chantaco are a blend of annual meadowgrass and bentgrass, both species have different growth habits and it is necessary the use of PGR's and cultural practices like grooming and brushing in order to achieve a good smoothness of the surfaces.



There is a sprinkler head inside tournament green 15. We recommend a slightly change in green contour to place the sprinkler in the green collar and outside the green.



There were some bared areas on tournament green 5 that need to be re-turfed immediately.

The severe slope on tournament greens 11 and 12 will determine the Green speed for the remainder of the course during tournament week. If 9.5 feet is deemed the maximum speed on these Greens, then the remainder of the course must remain that same speed.

Schedule of fertilization and phytosanitary treatments of Chantaco was reviewed, adapted and implemented for the final preparation of the golf course for the Lacoste Ladies Open de France.

During the tournament week greens must be firm and without any spiking issue. Green's speed will be monitoring closely on the advance weekend. To achieve these goals we recommend to strictly following the next planning from now until the tournament:

- Tournament green 5 should be re-turfed as soon as possible. The main goal is to achieve total grass cover and established newly turfed areas.
- A granular fertilizer application with high K will be applied last week of July or first week of August.
- Weekly grooming (-1 to -2 mm.). Be sure to alternate direction every time.
- Regular light topdressings should be applied every 12 to 14 days going forward and this will help to maintain thatch levels. These light dressings could be carried out in conjunction with light aeration work such as micro spiking, micro tinning and grooming which will help surface aeration.
- Biweekly spoon feeding applying: 0.1 lb N/1000 sf. + Primo maxx 0.2 l/Ha + fungicides. Last application should be done the prior week of the tournament.
- Maintain a well balanced fertilizer programme avoiding flushes in growth and leaning off of the turf.
- Ensure sensible use of irrigation avoiding overwatering.
- Monitoring blade sharpness and set up.

At all times turf health should be the primary goal in the preparation for this event and daily checks should be carried out, monitoring such things as drought stress, disease outbreaks, over watering or any other issues which may occur.

Everything in this report should be carried out with care and should any factor not be correct or causing damage then the process should be halted or replaced depending on what is best at this time. All greens should be checked daily for stress, disease or any other factors that may affect the surfaces. The sooner things are identified and treated the better the chance of survival and recovery of the turf.

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.

Green Collars and Approaches

Greens collars and approaches were in good condition. Grass density was really consistent and surfaces were free of diseases.



Casting worms were a really concern in Chantaco but not anymore. Tea seed meal has been used for controlling and reducing casting worm population on green collars and approaches and the result has been incredible.

The only “negative” aspect was some broadleaf weeds encroachment in these playing surfaces. Solution is easy and the superintendent will spray for weeds as soon as possible.

We would recommend:

- Broadleaf herbicide treatment with 2,4-D, MCPA and Dicamba.
- Solid tine aeration (10 mm) and light topdressing at the beginning of September will be advisable if possible.
- Fertilization at the same time as fairways on approaches.

- Fertilization at the same time as greens on green collars.
- Monitoring blade sharpness and set up.

Generally speaking LET recommend that all Collars and Approaches receive the same frequency of verticutting, topdressing and nutrition as greens. **In Chantaco it will also be recommendable to receive the same frequency of fungicide treatments against dollar spot (*Rutstroemia floccosum*) as greens.** This helps to promote greater wear tolerance, resiliency and help to promote the bump and run style of shot preferred by our members.

Regular brushing or grooming with mowing will help on both approaches and green collars to ensure a tight sward.

Tees

Tee surfaces were firm, mostly level, free of diseases and with good grass cover. A topdressing program is carrying out to improve firmness..



We would recommend the following program:

- Two fertilizations: one at the beginning of August and other one at the beginning of September.
- Solid tine aeration, verticutting and heavy topdressing. Overseeding with a dwarf perennial ryegrass would be advisable.
- Preventative fungicide treatments for dollar spot at the same time as fairways..
- Monitoring blade sharpness and set up.
- Broadleaf herbicide treatment with 2,4-D, MCPA and Dicamba.

It would be appreciated if the tournament tees be saved for at least 2 weeks before the event so that they will be divot and blemish free for the tournament.

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

Fairways and Playable Rough

Fairways were firm under foot and with a relatively good grass cover. Dollar spot (*Rutstroemia floccosum*) pressure is the main concern for the preparation of these playing surfaces because it reduces little by little turfgrass coverage. Fertilization and fungicides are the most important weapons against dollar spot disease.



Fertilization was scheduled for the last week of August. We strongly recommend fertilizing as soon as possible to reduce dollar spot damage and severity. Fertilization will also encourage common bermudagrass growth and coverage.

Grass cover in some areas of **fairways 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9** is very poor. Thus, we recommend solid tine aeration plus overseeding with perennial ryegrass and topdressing in these bared areas to improve grass coverage.



Fairway 2 condition has improved due to the topdressing program that has been followed during the last months.

A semi-rough pass is in place and there is a very good definition between fairway, semi-rough and rough.



There is a big red thread (*Laetisaria fuciformis*) pressure on playable rough and new grass bunkers. So, it is highly recommended to make a fertilizer application in playable rough at the same time as in fairways and more than one fertilizer application in new sodded areas like grass bunkers and new bunkers contours.

We would recommend the following program:

- Fertilization, two different options:
 1. Fertilize with Floranid permanent (this fertilizer is the most common used in Chantaco) first week of August. It could be necessary to make a foliar fertilizer application with ammonium sulphate and iron sulphate the prior week of the tournament to enhance green color.
 2. Fertilize twice (first week of August and first week of September) with a 20-5-10 (or similar) fertilizer with nitrification inhibitor. This formulation is widely used in agriculture and price is very economical.
- Preventative fungicide treatments for dollar spot.
- Solid tine aeration plus overseeding with perennial ryegrass and topdressing in bared areas of fairways 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9.
- Lowering the height of cut gradually and increase mowing frequency.
- Monitoring blade sharpness and set up.

Bunkers

The renovation of bunkers has continued, creating a Colt's atmosphere in some green complexes. Sand depths should be checked in old and new bunkers to ensure a good consistence throughout the golf course.



From playability point of view, it is important that bunkers are adequately compacted. I recommend that bunker faces are brush on back raked to have firm smooth surface rather than a traditional raked finish which cultivates the sand and can promote plugging.

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.

Our recommendations are:

- All stones must be removed.
- All Bunkers will be clipped or edged where necessary to produce the lip and definition required for the event.
- Sand should be firm but not compacted and any drainage issues should be addressed and rectified before the event.
- **Extremely care should be taken to maintain sods of new bunkers contours, grass bunkers also. Fertilization should be implemented in these areas.**

Short Game and Driving Range

The greenkeeping program in this area must be increased and replicate all other surfaces on the golf course.

Chipping green is a big concern for the preparation of the golf course for the event. Its condition is the same as last year. Grass coverage is mainly common bermudagrass and dallisgrass.



Resoded is the best option but it is necessary to apply first a soil fumigant (Dazomet) in order to eliminate the existing grasses and the entire process will take a lot of time. Thus, we recommend for a short put in play:

- Pull out by hand dallisgrass.
- Apply Primo maxx at 0.5 l/Ha.
- Scalp existing grass with mowing.
- Verticutting aggressively in two directions.
- Overseeding with *Agrostis stolonifera*. Pre-germination of seeds will be very recommendable.
- Topdressing with silica sand and fertilize with a 1-2-1 ratio fertilizer.
- Watering with short and frequent irrigation cycles during germination and establishment.
- Mowing with pedestrian mower.

Machinery

- All the mower units were sharpened. It was really nice to show the big improvements in quality of cut and machinery maintenance in Chantaco. We would like to congratulate Christophe for his great job.
- A new set of bedknives for green triplex mowers should be purchased for the tournament week. Cylinders have to be grinding before installing new bedknives.
- For a tournament additional equipment will be required and hopefully our partner John Deere can assist.

Tournament Schedule

Task	Shift			
	AM	Number Employees	PM	Number Employees
Dew Removal – Fairways	✓	2	X	0
Course Set Up	✓	2	X	0
Greens Mowing	✓	2	✓	2
Collar & Approach Mowing	✓	1-2	X	0
Greens Rolling	✓	1	X	0
Tournament Tee Mowing	✓	1-2	X	0
Tee Mowing	X	0	✓	1-2
Practice Tee Mowing	X	0	X	0
Fairway Mowing	X	0	✓	2
Semi-rough Mowing	X	0	✓	1
Playable Rough Mowing	X	0	✓	1
Bunker Raking	✓	5-10	X	0
Divot Repair After Mowing	X	0	✓	4-6
Blowing	✓	2	✓	2
Miscellaneous tasks	✓	1-2	✓	1-2
Total		15-23		14-18

Advance Week Course Closure

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

I hope the information in this report is of benefit and if there are any issues which you would like to discuss further or questions which you would like to ask please do not hesitate to contact me.



LET Presentation & Mowing Graphic

