

Yet another extreme weather update

Hello to all and I hope you are all coping with the latest weather extreme to hit us. With temperatures falling below freezing for the last week, coupled with the snow, sleet and rain which fell on Sunday has created some particularly dangerous conditions out on the golf course. We have greens which resemble ice skating rinks, paths which are more dangerous than a black run and small pockets of snow and ice (not native to Dorset I understand) in some of the shaded areas.

Towards the end of last week, into the weekend conditions were dry and frosty creating some picture-perfect scenes meaning we were able to remain open as it was safe to move around the course. We fully understand that it was far from perfect playing conditions but hopefully you were still able to enjoy the walk and some good company. This all changed on Sunday when some snow began to fall which then turned to sleet and then some rain. Although not a huge amount fell, all that did fall simply laid upon the frozen ground, therefore not able to soak away. This layer then froze through Sunday. This layer is still present as I write this on Tuesday afternoon, as crunchy and most importantly as slippery as it was on Monday morning.

Our trouble now is that the forecasts we currently have for the rest of the week is daytime high temperatures of 3 degrees, these temperatures are probably not sufficient to counteract the night time lows of between -1 and -4. Meaning we will of course be monitoring the conditions out on the course through the coming days but there is a significant chance the course won't be open until the weekend. This is obviously not what we want to do but unfortunately it is simply not safe to be out on the course in these conditions.

We also have some concerns regarding the change in weather which is forecast for the weekend. If the current forecast is correct then we are looking at potentially a quick thaw on Saturday with daytime temperatures up to 7 degrees leading to balmy temperatures of 13 degrees on Sunday coupled with significant rainfall. As we constantly say, we are completely at the weather's mercy and can't predict what will actually happen, but IF the forecast is correct there is a chance the course may need to be protected on Sunday. With a thaw occurring so quickly after a long period of cold weather there is the chance that the ground will remain frozen while the top layer will defrost. If this happens there is a chance of what is known as Root Shear. If anyone is interested, I have added a link below from the USGA website which explains and shows what could happen (copy and paste the text below into your browser) <https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/59/04/root-shear-on-the-golf-course.html>

We hope the forecast is wrong and once the ice has thawed, we can get back to some golf but until then please stay safe, maybe enjoy some Christmas shopping.....

As mentioned before there were some beautiful sights out on the course over the last week, I'm not a very good photographer but I think some of the scenes below were too good not to make great photos so I hope you enjoy. Looking forward to seeing you back on the course soon.

Your Greenkeeping team





