### Weather trends

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Peton</td>
<td>West Kilbride Golf Club, Ayrshire</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Links</td>
<td>Course Manager plus five</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ian Buckley</td>
<td>De Vere Northop Country Park Club</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Parkland</td>
<td>Head Greenkeeper, plus three groundsmen and one mechanic (250 acres to look after)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Holt</td>
<td>Burford Golf Club, Oxfordshire</td>
<td>Midland</td>
<td>Parkland</td>
<td>Head Greenkeeper plus four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Day</td>
<td>Saunton Golf Club, Devon</td>
<td>South West and South Wales</td>
<td>Links (36 holes)</td>
<td>Course Manager, plus ten, plus a mechanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Lucas</td>
<td>Royal Blackheath Golf Club, Eltham, London</td>
<td>South East</td>
<td>Parkland</td>
<td>Course Manager plus seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Moore</td>
<td>Scrabo Golf Club</td>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>Course Manager</td>
<td>plus four</td>
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1. In your experience what changes to the regular weather patterns have you noticed over the last 10-15 years?

- **The winters are definitely a lot warmer and wetter. We get very little snow in this area because of the gulf stream.**
- **Winters are a lot wetter, but we have also had a lot of rain in summer in recent years. We used to have three to four days of snow at a time, but now it's much milder.**
- **There have been very definite changes in the last four or five years in particular. We don't seem to get winter now, although there is some frost and a little snow and there is a lot more rain. I have never known a winter like this for floods in the area.**
- **In this part of the world we tend to get colder springs and now warmer winters up until Christmas. There are cooler temperatures in April these days.**
- **We have lost our traditional seasons and we now have warmer summers and winters.**
- **Winters are wetter and warmer. We used to get a lot of hard frosts in Northern Ireland, but we don't seem to get them now. We get a bit of snow after Christmas usually.**
The early feeding has been affected and now we put a bit or iron on, partly for cosmetic purposes to keep people happy. Cutting in early spring is a bit less and the height of cut remains up for a bit longer.

Cutting regimes are now lasting 10 months whereas before it was more like eight. In November and March we originally cut once a month, now it is more like two or three times.

We have upgraded the irrigation system around the greens and introduced a watering system on the tees. We have also put in a few more laterals on the greens and done some deep aeration, also using a drill and fill machine.

In the last five years we have redone the main drain through the course and improved the drainage at the top end of the course, known as the gulf pit. We have added irrigation to high wear areas.

Fusarium has certainly got worse over the years. Years ago we didn’t really see any in winter.

We have cut greens almost weekly this winter, whereas before we could go weeks without cutting when it was very cold. I don’t use feeds in winter, apart from seaweed to harden off the greens.

Milder means you have more cutting to do. I have cut greens almost weekly this winter, whereas before we could go weeks without cutting when it was very cold. I don’t use feeds in winter, apart from seaweed to harden off the greens.

The warmer winters mean that there is a lot more play now and the season is extended to 12 months. Many come to play on our course from the Glasgow area when their courses are closed. Global warming has also seen a big difference in tides and we spent £100,000 on storing up the edge of the course because of coastal erosion, using armoured rock, some of them three and five tonne pieces.

We have worked on the drainage a lot. The drains that were in were very old and they were also covered by ash, which had gone solid, making it difficult for water to drain away as it wasn’t reaching the pipes.

We are cutting for far longer periods now. We hardly touched it in winter for years but I remember a couple of years ago the staff wore off from Christmas to New Year and when we came back it was only just possible to cut the grass with mowers because there was so much growth.

We are very lucky because we are not bothered too much by disease but we had some Fusarium in November and December, quite a bit more than in years gone by.

The course was built six and a half years ago and since then we have been putting more and more drains in. The builders of the course didn’t leave any drainage plans so we have almost had to start again. Irrigation has been updated for similar reasons. I think some of the old irrigation is four feet deep.

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We try to keep our greens (USGA) fed as the water goes straight through. I use high potassium content as a pick-me-up.

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Milder means you have more cutting to do. I have cut greens almost weekly this winter, whereas before we could go weeks without cutting when it was very cold. I don’t use feeds in winter, apart from seaweed to harden off the greens.

There is no major problem at the moment because there was so much growth.

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