Does Augusta National or other courses which appear on television influence your members'/clients' perception on how a course should look?

To be honest, not since I moved to Cardrona. I have experienced that in the past, but here it has been different. Having a small membership helps in that and it is important to have good communication to tell them why the course looks and plays like it does.

It is hard to say. On the one hand the American courses on TV don't do us Brits any favours as members see them and want our course to look the same in the middle of winter, which just isn't possible. On the other hand they are just happy to see the course looking and playing well.

There is an influence, but I wouldn't just put it down to Augusta. In the past that might have been true, but with so much TV golf nowadays the golfer sees so many courses that they will be influenced. I also think that today's golfer travels a lot more and sees courses across the globe in different climates and that influences their opinions.

It certainly does have an influence on our membership, but I don't let it influence how I manage my course. Satellite TV has a lot to answer for as the majority of golfers judge the course's quality on its colour, which is wrong. Personally I don't like these bright green courses that you see on TV, they look too artificial.

Fortunately I have a very well travelled membership, who are fully aware of the climatic differences let alone the financial ones. I pity anyone who has members who feel their course should resemble Augusta in any way. It would break my members' hearts to have manicured gardens on their golf course.

I definitely think so. You get the fair weather golfers coming out around this time of year and they expect to see the course looking exactly how they see courses on TV. They forget that this club doesn't have the huge budgets that other clubs have and that it is just not possible to meet those unrealistic standards.

Yes, especially here in Switzerland where there is little or no knowledge of links style courses. The course is built on a sandy soil with wall-to-wall fescue. In the early morning it looks very green but with the Mediterranean climate we have here it usually looking very brown by midday.
### Pressure to Make the Course Greener in Colour and Inline with TV Standards

- We don't have a huge problem with fertiliser. I am lucky in the fact that I am clearly in charge and we have total responsibility of the course. We are a business and we do have to think along those lines, but that doesn't put pressure on us to change the course.

- It used to be like that, but attitudes are changing. My Chairman travels around the world and plays a lot of high profile courses. He picks things up which he wants to see on ours. We used to fertilise just to make the grass greener, but this also increased the amount of thatch we had, so we don't fertilise as much now.

- Our course appears on television so the pressure comes from having the course up to the high standards required by the European Tour. So the pressure is on us to get the course right. We have our set up similar to the US Open, so the focus is on developing the course into that type of state and standard.

- There is no pressure applied to me by the club. I have been here 18 years and I have a course policy in place that the members respect. I focus my attention on the playing characteristics of the course, as that is the most important thing. Obviously we make the course as presentable as possible, but how the course actually plays is crucial.

- Not at all. A luminous green heathland course is the last thing anyone wants here. In contrast they love to see it really green and looking great. We have a maintenance programme in place and we concentrate on producing quality turf and fast firm greens, which is what the members want. We also grow the rough to about four inches and the fairways, it all depends on the standard of the course. We grow the rough to about four inches and tighten the fairways.

- We have an excellent maintenance programme in place and we concentrate on producing quality turf and fast firm greens, which is what the members want. I like to keep the grass looking natural, but on the fine turf we just continue to look after it how we feel fit.

- You definitely have to have a balance. We don't go over the top on the fine turf, instead we concentrate on the rough. We fertilise the rough to get it up to the height and standard demanded, but on the fine turf we just continue to keep it looking good.

### Meeting Members' Demands

- It is difficult to get that balance, but crucial to do so. We have Q&A sessions with the membership, which helps a lot. Some suggestions we get just won't work, and you have to be very careful to explain why it wouldn't work. We have to treat everyone, including members, as clients, and you can't afford to upset or lose them.

- We just try to keep the course on an even keel. There are certain things we are asked to do by the Chairman, particularly when holding events, such as speeding up greens etc. But we don't do anything that will stretch the course and put it under too much pressure.

- When you visit courses on TV you realise that producers can make anywhere look good with filters and camera work. It is a sad reality, but his view carried a lot more clout than mine, as a club professional. I had the greens faster, than tell you. We had the greens faster, and the fairways, it all depends on the standard of the course. We grow the rough to about four inches and tighten the fairways.

### The Biggest Tournament and How It Was Set Up

- We hosted the 2004 PGA European Pro Tour Cardrona Classic. Over the last 10 years, as BIGGA has become more respected, the PGA's attitude has changed, they now ask you to change things, rather than tell you. We had the greens fast, stinging at 11 feet. We narrowed the fairways and changed the par from 72 to 73, having five par-5's on the course.

- We held the British Masters. We are given European Tour guidelines explaining how the course is to be set up, so we follow that. This doesn't really vary from what we do during the rest of the year. We grow the rough to about four inches and tighten the fairways.

- The course holds major and senior country events and Pro-Am's. For these we speed up the greens slightly and cross cut the fairways, it all depends on the standard of golfer we are hosting. We like to think that we produce a high standard of course all year round, so we don't need to change the course too much when we do hold competitions.

- Last year we held The British Men's Senior Open. With my staffing and resources we find one course tournaments straightforward, the difficulty with this was that it was staged over two courses amid heavy thunderstorms. You work your aeration and fertiliser programme around the main tournaments and we increase our cutting frequencies to whatever is required.

- We don't hold any major events here, mainly club competitions. We just try and keep the course at its best for as long as we can. It allows us the time to make adjustments as and when needed, without causing big problems or disruptions.

### The Course Takes Time to Recover After Peaking for These Events

- After last year's event we had a lot of problems, which were mainly caused because of the large amount of rainfall we had. The course can cope with the extra play, however it is the spectator damage that hurts the course. Having that extra traffic around the place and having things like tents and marquees put up takes it toll.

- We speed up our greens by top dressing, verti-cutting and maybe lightly rolling, rather than dramatically dropping our cut height. This allows the course to recover quicker. We also use stress relieving methods when needed.

- Not really. It is club policy to only host amateur tournaments and they bring very little public interest so there is very little demand. We decrease the mowing frequency back to normal, usually aerate, as we try to do every few weeks anyway, and maybe give them a small tonic because we will have been keeping them very lean for obvious reasons.

- Recovery is fine after these club events during the season. The biggest challenge is the recovery time in the winter, as there is now becoming a high demand for golf here during this time. We are lucky that the course holds up well during this time.

### Is the Course Still Very Young but Well Established?

- The course is still very young but we did have the County Strokeplay here in 2003. I did not alter the course that much except for double cutting the greens and a few difficult pin placements. We had midday temperatures of 110°F and strong winds which kept the scoring high.

- The course is very healthy. It is a sad reality, but his view carried a lot more clout than mine, as a club professional. I had the greens faster, and the fairways, it all depends on the standard of the course. We grow the rough to about four inches and tighten the fairways.

### What is the Pressure to Make the Course Greener in Colour and Inline with TV Standards?

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