

TALKING

This month Greenkeeper International's bi-monthly series featuring Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers from every Region examines Cutting Regimes

Cutting Regimes

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE



Kerran Daly
Course: Salisbury & South Wilts GC
Region: South West and South Wales Region
Course Type: Chalk downland
Number of Holes: 27 (three loops of nine)
Staff: Course Manager plus six.



Duncan Kelso
Course: Kings Hill GC
Region: South East Region
Course Type: Heathland
Number of Holes: 18
Staff: Course Manager plus six



John Scotney
Course: Sleaford GC
Region: Scottish Region
Course Type: Heathland - almost inland links
Number of Holes: 18 plus six hole par-3 course
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus three



Ian Holoran
Course: Middlesbrough Municipal Golf Centre
Region: Northern Region
Course Type: Parkland
Number of Holes: 18
Staff: Five in total



Ian McNab
Course: Dumfries & County GC
Region: Scottish Region
Course Type: Parkland and Heathland
Number of Holes: 18 Holes
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus four

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1. Do you hand mow greens only for special occasions or as a matter of course?

We use Toro triples five days a week in summer and only cut by hand for special occasions and also in winter.

We only cut by hand for special events in the summer, although in winter we do use hand mowers. We use triples normally.

We hand mow in winter and use triples in the summer. We don't have the time to hand mow in the growing season.

We use a Jacobsen Triplex Green King and have never cut by hand in the 11 years I have been here.

We hand mow greens from Monday to Friday each week and use triples at the weekend. Cutting is usually done on a daily basis in the growing season.

HEADS

2. Do you have specialist equipment for greens, tees and surrounds, fairways, banks and roughs or do you double up with some?

The Toro triple 3200D and Ransomes Super Certes are used for greens; the Toro 216 for tees and aprons; a Sabo Soberine for fairways; an Allen National for banks and the Dowdeswell roller mower and a Wessex flail for rough.

Greens - Toro GM3200, John Deere 220 pedestrian mower. Tees and surrounds - Toro GM3100. Fairways - Toro Reelmaster 4500. Banks - Saxon triple. Rough - Toro 455 quad float.

We have specialist equipment - two John Deeres, three Ransomes Auto Certes for greens; Sabo triking for tees; Ransomes T-plex for surrounds and winter greens and a hydraulic five-gang for fairways. We also have a John Deere rotary for semi-rough and a Saxon triple. A John Deere 955 and a Votex nine-foot double up for the rough.

We use a Jacobsen Triplex on the greens, and also Jacobsen machinery on aprons and tees. Fairways are cut with a Jacobsen and a Hayter hydraulic five-set and the rough with a Kubota.

Specialist equipment. A Paladin 21 inch for the greens, Toro and Ransomes for tees and surrounds, a Ransomes five-unit for fairways and a Hayter for rough.

3. Is your cutting equipment all from one manufacturer - if so who - or a mixture, and why?

I believe a mixture to be better because I don't believe that any one manufacturer has the best quality item for the various purposes.

It's mostly Toro which has a proven history of reliability.

We have a mixture because of funds. I would probably have all John Deere equipment if we were starting from scratch because of the spares and good back-up.

Jacobsen is used because of a contract price by the municipal authorities.

We have a mixture because different courses have different needs. Everything depends on the terrain.

4. How often do you sharpen the blades and how do you go about it?

We re-grind once a year in winter and back lap monthly or more often as necessary. We have our own in-house equipment for grinding and back lapping and it is all done by our greenkeeper-mechanic.

We do rotary blades ourselves and send cylinders away. Fairway machines are done once a year and greens equipment two to three times a year, but obviously if something needs attention we do it.

We back lap the cylinders on the greens units every two weeks and tees and surrounds equipment every three weeks, gangs as required. Some of the rotary blades we do ourselves and send others away.

We have back lap facilities in our own workshop and anything particularly troublesome can be sent to the council mechanics. They are all serviced regularly.

We sharpen blades two to three times each year. We send equipment to a specialist in Edinburgh, always at the end of May and the end of July.

5. What cutting heights do you employ for greens, tees and fairways in winter and in summer?

Greens - summer 5 mill, winter 7 mill. Tees - summer 10 mill, winter 12 mill. Fairways - summer 14 mill, winter 19 mill. For a handful of tournaments we cut greens at 4 mill but only for very short periods as it causes too much stress.

We cut at 4 mill on the greens in summer and 5.5 mill in winter. Tees are 10 mill in summer and 12 mill in winter while fairways are 12 mill in summer and 16 mill in winter.

Winter heights - greens 6.5 mill; tees and surrounds 15 mill; fairways 22 mill. Summer heights - greens 4.5 mill; tees and surrounds 13 mill; fairways 18-19 mill.

Greens are cut at 3 16ths in summer and 5 16ths in the winter. As we have 80,000 rounds on the course each year we tend to raise the heights round about the time of The Open Championship. Tees are 14 mill in winter and summer and fairways 18-19. Because of the wear we tend to have higher heights than many courses.

Greens are cut at five 32nds in summer and 6 mill in winter. Tees are cut at five 16ths all the year round and fairways 12 mill all the year round.