



How a new fleet of John Deere machinery has invigorated Caversham Heath Golf Club

Farol on the Heath

Tucked away on the South Oxfordshire border overlooking the banks of the River Thames is the 18 hole Caversham Heath Golf Club forming part of the 2,500 acre Mapledurham Estate. The championship length course was the first new golf course of the millennium, opening in 2000, and now boasts an impressive 550 members.

Jon Scoones, Course Manager, has been at Caversham Heath since the build and has recently taken delivery of a fleet of new John Deere machinery to maintain the grounds.

Heading the line-up is the John Deere 8800 rough cut mower and 8700 fairway mower along with four 220E walking greens mowers, a 1200A bunker rake and a Tru-Turf greens iron to complete the set. "With membership increasing we knew it was time to reinvest in some new machinery for the club" said Jon. "There is so much kit on the market to choose from but I knew I wanted reliable machines with a good local dealer for service and support so John Deere and Farol Ltd were the obvious choice."



Robert Wytchard, Estate Manager, knows the importance of the course being right for the players. "We always want to raise the standards of the course year on year, so investing in new machinery shows our commitment to the members. The course is planning to expand to 36 holes in the future so raising our game now will pay dividends."

The 8700 PrecisionCut mower tackles the course's fairways with its powerful diesel engine, QA7 cutting units mowing an impressive 290cm in one pass. Tackling the rough is the fast and reliable 8800 TerrainCut mower with its exceptional cut quality following the ground contours.

The four 220E walk behind greens mower has fully floating heads to follow the greens curves meaning golfers enjoy a championship quality finish.

The Tru-Turf roller is a relatively new machine to the market and ensures players will always have an exceptional flat green for that all important putt.

The bunkers have not been forgotten and a 1200A now tends to raking and levelling the sand with excellent coverage.

Having a chat with Jon about how he manages the course clearly shows his knowledge and passion for greenkeeping. He said: "Staff are a key part of the course's success. I currently have a team of five but would like to increase that to seven in the future. Training is key and I like to give the staff everything they require to do the job safely and efficiently. Some of the staff are new so are starting on NVQ 2 whilst my more experienced team members are doing management courses alongside spraying and chainsaw certificates."

Jon was happy to share information on the maintenance of the course. He explained: "The greens were originally sown with a traditional Bent/Fescue mix whilst everywhere was sown with a dwarf rye. Our aeration program is very important for the upkeep and we aerate at least once a month varying between 8mm, 10mm and 15mm solid tines and 8mm and 15mm hollow tines. Our cutting heights are 3mm greens in the summer and 4mm in the winter whilst tees, collars and approaches are 10mm, fairways 12mm, semi rough 25mm and rough 75mm all year round."



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