Cynodon Dactylon removal project at Westlake Golf Club

Motivation

One of our major concerns at Westlake Golf Club is the large amount of *Cynodon Dactylon* that has infested our *Poa Annua* putting surfaces. The reason this is such a problem is two-fold:

1. *Cynodon Dactylon* cannot tolerate low mowing heights. This results in scalped turf leading to a poor quality putting surface.

2. *Cynodon Dactylon* also has poor cold tolerance, resulting in the grass going dormant over the winter period, also creating an undesirable putting surface.

Solution

The only solution available to us at the moment is to physically remove the *Cynodon Dactylon.* The problem though, is trying to do so while at the same time providing members and guests with a playable golf course.

After a thorough inspection on all of our greens, it is our opinion that we will be able to remove the *Cynodon Dactylon* by means of sodding from almost all of our greens, with the only exceptions being the 3rd and the 16th. Both of these will need to be re-seeded in the spring (when the soil temperatures are high enough to allow for good seedling establishment), most likely at the end of September.

While the 3rd is being seeded, golfers will be required to play the new par 3, and while the 16th is being seeded, golfers will be asked to utilise an alternative green that will be constructed just a few metres in front of the current 16th green. On the rest of the greens, the *Cynodon Dactylon* will be removed on a green by green basis. During this phase each green being worked on will be closed for play and golfers will be required to play the new par 3.

Our course of action will be as follows:

Step1: 3rd of June till the end of August

- Start removing the *Cynodon Dactylon* from the following greens (in no particular order).
    - 1st, 2nd, 10th, 13th, 6th, 17th (worst affected greens)
    - 4th,5th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th (least affected greens)

- Construct a 10x 10 metre alternative green in front of the 16th green. This green will be constructed to the highest standards and it is our intention that when it is opened for play, that it plays to the same standard as the rest of the greens on the golf course.

Step2: 16th – 27th of September

- Start construction on the 3rd and the 16th green.
- Remove all of the old root zone and replace with new sand.

Step3: 30th of September

- Seed the 3rd and the 16th greens with putting green seed mix.
- Fertilize and water and allow 12 weeks for the seeds to germinate and establish themselves.

Step4: 23rd of December

- Open the 3rd and 16th greens for play.

Conclusion

Once we have concluded the *Cynodon Dactylon* removal project, our greens will undoubtedly be in a much better condition than they currently are. That being said, the removal of the *Cynodon Dactylon* from our greens will almost always be an issue that requires some attention at Westlake Golf Club.

Our goal for this year, is to simply get the *Cynodon Dactylon* percentage, to a level where it is easily manageable in the foreseeable future.

PS: We have also just discovered a new chemical that can potentially be used to remove Cynodon Dactylon from our greens. In the coming months we will be doing some trials with this product on our nursery green and will keep everyone posted on its efficacy.