

GOLF COURSE CARE AND MAINTENANCE



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The playing conditions on a golf course are the result of the expert professional attention by the maintenance staff, cooperation from Mother Nature and very importantly respect and kindness from each player.

Here are some of the areas where you as a player can contribute to the excellent playing conditions we have here at Ballston Spa Country Club. Also included are details of the maintenance practices employed by our professional staff.

COURSE CARE

BALL MARKS

Beginner or pro, it is a player's responsibility as a golfer to fix his/her own ball marks. If you're truly a steward of the game, you'll fix yours and any others you see while playing partners are putting. Properly repaired ball marks only take half that time to heal. There's really not much to it, but there are a few guidelines you should follow when making these repairs.

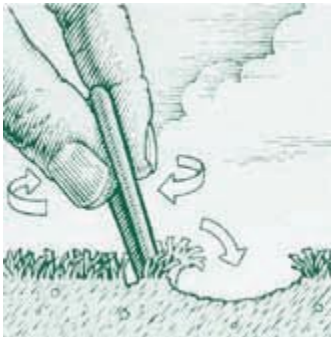
A fresh ball mark repaired by a player takes only
FIVE SECONDS

A freshly repaired ball mark will completely heal in
TWENTY FOUR HOURS

A fresh ball mark left unrepaired for only one hour requires
FIFTEEN DAYS TIME

Before the ugly scar has satisfactorily healed
**PLEASE REPAIR ALL
BALL MARKS AND DIVOTS**

1. Use a prolonged ball mark repair tool, knife, key or tee.
2. Insert at the edges of the mark not the middle of the depression.
3. Bring the edges together with a gentle twisting motion, but don't lift the center. Try not to tear the grass.
4. Smooth the surface with a club or foot.



DIVOTS



If you play golf, you create divots -- its part of the game. However, if you create divots, you should also repair them -- that's part of the etiquette of the game. Repairing your divots ensures that the golfers who follow you have the same level playing surface you had when you started your round.

A number of different methods are used to repair divots, and each of them is designed to make sure that the type of grass growing around the divot fills in as quickly as possible. We ask that you simply replace your divot in the same direction that it came out and firmly tamp it down. If your divot explodes on impact please fill the hole with sand from the bottle on your cart or from the divot caddy on the tee. Brush your foot across the sand to smooth the surface. Do not overfill the hole as it will lead to an uneven playing surface once the scar has healed.



BUNKERS

Some of the bunker banks at Ballston Spa are steeply sloped so please be careful when entering and exiting the bunkers. Choose an easy route to enter and bring a courtesy rake with you. After completion of your shot please rake the bunker to smooth your divot and footprints from the sand. This ensures that the folks behind you will not have to extract a ball out of a heel mark or divot. The bunkers are typically raked by the maintenance staff 2 to 3 times per week, depending on the amount of play.

GOLF CART USE

The soil on the fairways at Ballston Spa is predominantly clay based and as such drainage is slower in the spring and after periods of heavy or extended rainfall. This means that golf carts may be restricted to the rough/cart paths only or not allowed at all. The decision on limiting golf cart use is not easy but must be respected to ensure the overall health and playability of the golf course over time.



Golf cart traffic has also severely impacted the health of turf root zones. Soils are easily compacted especially when wet. Our cart path system at Ballston is incomplete and at best in need of repair. On most holes there are cart lanes that pass by every green and tee site on the course because that is where all traffic is concentrated.

Please keep all carts off the fairway on ALL PAR 3's and at least 30 yards in front of all other greens or where indicated by cart signs. Signs and ropes are used for safety and to preserve your investment. Please adhere to all course direction information at all times.

PROFESSIONAL MAINTENANCE OF THE GOLF COURSE

COURSE SET UP

Daily course maintenance is dependent on weather conditions as well as expected volume of play. Typical daily tasks as needed are as follows:

- Change cup locations every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday. Cups will also be moved on Holidays and for club tournaments. (practice greens are changed weekly)
- Move tee marker locations
- Refill water coolers and cups
- Refill divot containers on course and driving range
- Empty trash receptacles
- Adjust any ropes and signage

PIN PLACEMENT

Pin placements are determined by a number of factors that equate to fairness. Each location is determined based on factors such as: change in slope, turf quality, holding quality, length of shot to the green, prevailing wind, and design of the hole. Our greens at Ballston Spa are small and therefore pin locations are not always optimum.

MOWING SCHEDULES AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

MOWING



Ballston Spa CC has over 35 acres of grass that needs to be maintained by our small staff. One limitation with a small staff is you may see one person more than once during the morning hours when most routine maintenance is being done. To do our best at limiting the number of times your play is interrupted by a mower, the staff is trained to start in numerical order before golfers have reached them. Once they encounter golfers they find a gap in play and try to work around play. Hopefully, this way golfers only bump into a mower operator once during their round. Our staff is also trained to idle down engines and stop if they are in the vicinity of a golfer making a shot. Sometimes these employees are not always aware of your presence so please be patient and attract their attention. Ballston Spa employees take great pride in their work and a casual greeting adds to their day.

The weather conditions, turf growth rate and prior maintenance performed all determine the frequency of mowing. In a perfect world here is a typical mowing schedule:

Typical Mowing Schedule

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Mow greens	Mow greens	Mow greens	Mow greens	Mow greens	Mow greens	Mow greens
Change cups & tee markers	Change tee markers	Change cups & tee markers	Change tee markers	Change cups & tee markers	Change tee markers	Change cups & tee markers
	Mow tees, collars, 1st cut, fairways, rough	Mow rough, trim work	Mow tees, collars, 1st cut, fairways, rough	Mow rough, trim work	Mow tees, collars, 1st cut, fairways, rough	

GREENS - Greens must be mowed at least seven days per week while they are actively growing during the summer months. This is the first step in day to day consistency. Mowing frequency also promotes dense turf thereby slowing the encroachment of weeds. In recent years we have improved the putting surfaces in part by keeping a consistent mowing height. The USGA recommended a mowing height of .130-.135 inches during the high traffic months of May – September. This height will allow us to meet a recommended green speed of 8'-9' for daily play given our small green sizes. The best possible putting surfaces only come by using hand greens mowers. Mowing in different directions each day also helps with grain control. It takes 3 hours for 3 employees to mow greens each morning. There are many factors that influence green speeds like weather, mowing, topdressing, fertilization, rain, etc. We will do our best to maintain consistency throughout the season.

TEES, APPROACHES, COLLARS AND FAIRWAYS – These areas are generally mowed 3 times per week. The collars and small tees are mowed with a hand mower set at .400 cutting height. The larger tees and all the approaches are mowed using the triplex mower and are also cut at .400 cutting height. It takes two people 6 hours to complete mowing all the tees, approaches, and collars. The fairways are mowed with the John Deere and a Jacobsen fairway mower. Both mowers are set at .500 cutting height. Fairway mowing takes 2 people 4 hours to complete the circuit. These jobs may take longer depending on the amount of play on the course and the rate at which the grass is growing.

ROUGH – Two different heights of cut are used for the rough. A 6 foot wide section closest to the fairway (“1st cut”) is cut at a height of 1 inch. It is aesthetically pleasing and also intended to lessen the penalty of just barely missing the fairway. The rest of the rough is cut at 2.5 inches. The rough is cut using two rotary type mowers. One is self-propelled and has 3 large decks that are 10.5 wide together. The other rough mower is pulled behind a tractor and has 7 articulating decks to make a width of 11 feet.

AERIFICATION

Aerification is one of the most important management procedures available to golf courses. Although it may be viewed as a disruption to golfers, the long term gains for the course are worth the short term disorder. There are many advantages to routine core aerification including improved turfgrass roots, better penetration of moisture, oxygen and nutrients, loosening of compacted soils due to heavy traffic and improved drainage.



Spring and fall coring of the greens is necessary to remove excessive buildup of organic layers called thatch. Typically it takes two days because we only close 9 holes each day to allow continued play. The holes heal faster when the soil temperatures are above 50 degrees. So the weather usually dictates when we begin both spring and fall aerification. Soil temps below 50 degrees heal painfully slow. Therefore we try to complete all spring aerification during the first week in May when the ground has warmed enough. The fall aerification is usually done right after Labor Day. The stressful summer is usually over and the soil temperatures have not cooled off too much. Generally the greens are aerified with 1/2" hollow tines in the spring and 5/8" in the fall. Once the core is pulled, we remove them from the surface. The greens are then topdressed heavily (to fill in all of the holes), brushed, rolled and mowed. Heavy topdressing usually dulls mowers which keeps our Equipment Supervisor very busy. Tees and approaches are also aerified twice annually and scheduled as time allows.

Fairway core aerification is done once a year in the fall. Typically we try to do fairway aerification right after Labor Day on days where the afternoon sun can dry the plugs making removal efficient. Due to the large acreage that we aerify, we have to drag and break up the plugs. The debris left is then blown off. It is worth noting that all aerification plugs are stock piled for future use in select areas of need on the course.

TOPDRESSING

Topdressing is an important soil management program that is used extensively at Ballston Spa Country Club. The application of sand to the surface of the greens helps dilute organic matter and gives the green a much smoother and firmer surface. The greens are topdressed heavy after the two core aerifications in the spring and the fall. Light amounts of sand are applied on a two to three week schedule throughout the season.

IRRIGATION & WATERING PRACTICES

Ballston Spa Country Club has an irrigation system that covers all 18 greens, tees, and fairways. The two water pumps pump water out of the irrigation pond next to the #17th hole into the irrigation pipeline throughout the course. Each head can be turned on from one of the 10 irrigation control station throughout the course. This system is old but works well. The course is watered early in the morning to avoid interrupting play and to

maximize the amount of water and dew we can get down to the roots. During dry hot spells our greens will need to be cooled off during the day. This leads to sometimes watering with the irrigation heads or with a hose in the afternoon. The idea is to not overwater but to keep the grass green and alive while maintaining a firm surface to play on. A moisture meter is used on the greens to give us a reading of the amount water that is in the green and the amount of water that needs to be applied each day.

PESTICIDES

Pesticides are applied on a regular basis at Ballston Spa Country Club. It is quite common and all golf courses follow the same practice. Any closely mowed turf that sees a lot of traffic is going to battle insects, fungus or compete with weeds. In order to limit the damage caused by insects, weeds or disease, pesticides must be applied selectively and routinely. The course Superintendent has a chemical applicators license and personally does all the spraying at BSCC. We take a prevention approach to competing with pests. Spraying a low rate of product more frequently helps stay ahead the problem. The alternative of waiting until you have a serious outbreak leads to more damage and more cost. After you have an outbreak you have to spray several times at the highest rate to kill the pest. Spraying at BSCC takes place early in the morning or later in the evening.

Please keep in mind that the practices described above are subject to change given weather conditions, growing conditions, volume of play, etc. We appreciate and welcome your comments, however, club protocol dictates that suggestions concerning course conditions, problems with the staff, etc., be channeled through the Green Committee unless safety or security of the course has been compromised.

You may contact the Green Committee at gc@ballstonspacc.com