

# FROST DAMAGE

Foot traffic causes substantial damage to frozen greens.

Golf greens are fragile & require careful, professional management. A green is a collection of millions of individual grass plants that are very delicate. Putting surfaces are cut at a height of between 3mm-6mm depending on the time of year, which places extreme stress on the plant. This makes them vulnerable to attack from disease, pests, drought & frost.

Where there is a visible frost on the surface, the grass plant becomes brittle as it is made up of 90% water and when frozen can be easily crushed. As a consequence, playing in these conditions will damage the plant causing discolouring and eventually the plant will die.

Similarly even when there is not a visible frost & the top inch of top soil is thawed, the sub-soil may still be frozen. Play in these conditions will cause root break, where the underlying roots are severed causing the plant to die.

Damage of this sort may not become immediately evident but within 3-4 days the leaves will turn brown and the plant will die. This will cause thinning of the grass coverage & weakens the remaining plants. This in turn makes the surface more susceptible to disease & weed ingress ( annual meadow grass). At the start of the new season the greens will take longer to recover & the quality of the putting surfaces will be compromised until mid-season.

Its not rocket science, the number of people who want to play in frosty condition throughout the winter months are far less than those who want to play on good greens on a mild spring day in April. If real plant structure damage is done during frosty conditions, then the cost of renovation coupled with loss of green fee revenue, due to poor surfaces in the spring, outweighs allowing a minority to play on frosted greens during the winter months.

It is, therefore, essential that golfers do not play to main greens, putting green, or make their own inspections of greens when Green staff have put temporary greens in play. The green staff realise that temporary greens are not popular with the membership or visitors but unfortunately they are a necessary evil.

We will endeavour to keep main greens in play for as long as possible throughout the winter months. Inspection times will be carried out at 7.30am,9.30am & 11.30am.

Thank you for your co-operation

Scott Mckittrick  
Course Manager