

Update on the 2020 re-model project

By Caspar Grauballe, Architect

Dear members of Simon's Golf, we are now approaching the halfway point of the extensive 2020 re-model project and I would like to give you a small review of the project so far.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 outbreak there was a delay to the start of the project, and we had to take a slightly different approach than we had initially planned.

David Nelson's team of contractors consists of specialists from various countries and the closed borders in Europe created difficult travel conditions. However, we were able to quickly establish a smaller team who were able to arrive on site and stay at Nybogaard enabling us to minimise the delay.

Some of the initial work was the updating of the irrigation on the tees on A and B and the addition of approach irrigation on A and B, this way we can ensure high quality of tees and fore-greens even during dry periods.

C-Loop was closed so that the contractors could work unhindered, I appreciate that this was a significant change to my initial outlay in the February members meeting, but I hope you can appreciate these changes were made to ensure the project could finish as close to time as possible.

Reamonn and his team took advantage of the closure of C-Loop to carry out additional tasks on the greens and tees so that they are now healthier and ready for play.

C-loop has now been open for play for a while and it's been nice to hear that the changes have been well received (at least by the players I've talked to). There is, of course, a certain period when the work areas still require some extra attention before they are fully in line with our plans.

The last few months have been extremely dry and as such it is difficult to establish new turf, but Reamonn's team have done a great job of watering in all the small areas of new turf which has been very successful. Most of the grasses have established themselves very quickly and should soon be able to cope with normal play.

The cutting height of the grass will be lowered slowly as and when it is deemed that the grass can withstand it. There have been some problems with the delivery of some of the rolls of grass and unfortunately some have not survived - these will of course be replaced.

The areas where the excavators have driven through the rough and elsewhere may look somewhat damaged, but they will recover when they have been given some time and the weather is more favourable for the grass to grow.

The dry period has also created challenges with the bunkers as the new sand needs rain and time to settle properly. You may find that the sand seems soft initially until there has been a significant amount of rain to help them settle. For comparison, it is the same sand that is installed in the practice bunkers at the range.

On C-loop we have carried out the following work:

New tees:

Two new tees have been constructed. We have enlarged and raised the yellow tee on C5 and enlarged the blue/yellow tee on C7. This has made both areas easier to maintain to a higher standard and provide a better experience for players.

We have also constructed new tees on A1, A5, A6, A9, B1 and B2/C1. There was a slight delay to the completion of these tees to ensure C-Loop was completed as soon as possible.

Bunkers:

Work on C-Loop bunkers has been divided into 2 sections – The bunkers that could remain in place and the bunkers that have been completely rebuilt.

The bunkers that have not been completely rebuilt have provided a significant challenge in terms of work, as we needed to ensure that they have exactly the same shape and incline as before. Our contractors were able to find a way to ensure the bunkers were ready faster than initially expected

The construction of the new bunkers has been easier as there was more flexibility in the design and construction.

As those of you who have been out playing on the course have probably experienced, the bunkers have generally become more visible and the locations of the new bunkers are more strategically situated. We have focused on placing the new bunkers in strategic locations to challenge the more experienced players and make them less challenging for less experienced players.

Run-offs:

We have created several run-off areas on greens C1, C4, C5, C6, C7 and C8 which will help create a greater variety of play around the greens. The idea is that they will create better opportunities for average players to get a good score on the hole, but still create challenges for the lower handicapped players.

Presently the grass on these areas is a little high and as such they do not have a significant impact, but this will gradually change as the cutting height is reduced and the balls will be able to roll away from the edge of the green.

Walkways:

A new grass pathway has been constructed between the C2 green and the C3 tee, irrigation has been installed so that we are able to water the area. In the future we will be looking at some of the other pathways on the course to create higher standard conditions between the holes. As we progress with the current works we will be assessing all pathways and discussing how best to renovate them. Some pathways can be improved with intense maintenance, although this task is weather dependent. Pathways, such as between B4 and B5 will be redesigned with drainage and irrigation installed.

Drainage:

Drainage has been installed in several areas where deemed necessary, in all the bunkers, pathways, run-offs and the new tee areas. This will help the course perform even better during very wet periods.



Works on B-loop are now well underway. We have designed most bunkers and are now putting Capillary Concrete at the bottom, Durabunker on the edges, installing sand and turfing around them.

We have started with B8 as this hole has the most changes. A whole new bunker layout has been created to make the hole more strategic with several different options for golfers around the green.

We then progressed to B9 and expect both B8 and B9 to be open for play relatively soon.

Along with the other works on B-Loop a new wide grass pathway has been constructed between B4 and B5. Drainage and irrigation will be installed on the pathway so we have control during extreme weather conditions.

Despite the somewhat delayed start I am extremely pleased with how the project is progressing and the excellent quality of the work that is being carried out by David and his team, along with the great deal of support I have received from Reamonn and his team. It is exciting to be part of developing the course in such a progressive project.

Thank you for your understanding and patience. I'm really looking forward to opening the next holes and showing you what we have accomplished.

Yours sincerely,

Caspar Grauballe