



Driving Insurance Premiums down for Golfers

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Ashbourne's signature 12th hole, dubbed Amen Corner

GROWING THE GAME IN EVERY WAY

Innovation on and off the course puts Ashbourne at the cutting edge of Irish golf. By **Brian Keogh**

sustainable grass and produces better surfaces, and in the long run, it is less expensive to maintain year on year.

"We are now at over 50 percent and up to 70 percent of some greens and with more pesticides taken off the market every year, it means there are fewer to use against disease.

"Fescue is naturally disease-resistant, and while it is susceptible to dollar spot, it is not common in Ireland and it is manageable.

"The main diseases that could

wipe out meadowgrass greens are not going to affect fescue, which is more sustainable and needs 50 percent less nutrition than meadowgrass or bentgrass greens."

While Ashbourne has major competition on its doorstep in the shape of championship courses such as Killeen Castle and St Margaret's Golf and Country Club, it is becoming a major centre for Junior golf and already the permanent venue for the Leinster Boys U16 Close Championship.



T2G CLUB FACTFILE

Ashbourne Golf Club
Archerstown, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
Email: ciara@ashbournegolfclub.ie
Tel. +353 1 8352005
Website: www.ashbournegolfclub.ie

Green fees: €25 per person
Society rates: Mon-Thurs €20; Fri €25; Sat & Sun €35
Buggy hire: Yes €25
Club hire: Yes €20
Electric trolleys: Yes €10
Range Balls: No

Signature hole: 12th, Par 4, 370m (405 yards)

The index one hole, this tough par four requires bravery and accuracy off the tee with the Broadmeadow River down the left and out of bounds on the right. A good drive still leaves a nerve-wracking second over the river to a green protected back left by a pond.

Professional's tip: A risk-reward par four, the low handicappers will take the tiger line over the two small trees on the left-hand side of the fairway. Lesser mortals should treat this as a three-shot hole. If you play conservatively, you will avoid a big number and may even sneak a par.

Membership rates: Full €999; 5-Day €549; Juniors €150.

Nearby clubs

Balbriggan
Beaverstown
Black Bush
Corballis Links
Corrstown
Donabate
Forrest Little
Hollywood Lakes
Hollystown
Killeen Castle
Malahide
Portmarnock
Portmarnock Links
Roganstown
Rush
Skerries
St Margaret's
Swords Open Golf Course



Its signature holes — the run from the 10th to the 12th that the members have dubbed Amen Corner — make it one of the most popular clubs in the area for societies and green fee business.

"Over the last year we have improved our irrigation system through the installation of new pumps, refurbished the professional's shop, developed a buggy bay for members buggies, upgraded the bar and are at the start of a multi-year bunker

upgrade programme," added vice-captain Purcell.

Despite tight finances, the club has ambitious plans to continue to improve and grow.

Whether they can keep pace with demand remains to be seen but in an era when golf clubs are struggling to attract new members, Ashbourne's population explosion can only be a good thing for golf and a modern, pro-active club that is clearly one of the big success stories of the Celtic Tiger years.



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