



Drop Spreader Marking System at Kensington Golf and Country Club, Naples

Scott Whorrall, golf course superintendent for over three years at the Kensington Golf and Country Club in Naples has used good old common sense and ingenuity to solve a common overseeding problem: determining the exact edge where the drop spreader disperses the desired cool-season grass onto the bermudagrass greens.

The Solution — bolt two “flour sifters,” one per side, onto a standard drop spreader in order to mark with flour the location where the fine bentgrass/*Poa trivialis* seed has been placed. At the base of the “flour sifters” is a funnel that was cut and attached to decrease the size of the opening of the sifter. Attached to the handles of the flour sifters, a strong but pliable piece of electrical wire was affixed and then stretched to the handle of the drop spreader. This enables the operator to pull on the wire, opening the bottom of the flour sifter and dispense a small spot of flour as the drop spreader is pushed across the green.

Whorrall said, “With the expectations of golfers continuing to escalate, precise overseed stands on greens is obviously crucial to providing superior putting surfaces during the busy South Florida winter golf season. To be precise, exacting specifications and overseed quantities must be used.” The “flour sifter” technique enables the staff at Kensington to apply evenly the exact quantity of seed that is desired.

Whorrall’s program for overseeding greens is similar to others but the Kensington staff is very meticulous. Prior to the scheduled overseeding date, nitrogen applications are decreased, the cut is lowered and then one week prior to overseeding, an application of Primo at 2 oz./1000 sq. ft. is applied to the putting surfaces. On the morning of overseeding, the greens are cut, vertically mowed with a triplex unit in four directions, then blown clean.

Whorrall is certainly particular in the actual overseeding technique. The utility vehicle carrying the seed is lined with plastic prior to loading seed bags in the bed of the vehicle to avoid any accidental dropping of seed in any location other than on the putting surface. The spreader, equipped with the attached “flour sifters,” is then placed on the green to be seeded, also on top of a sheet of plastic. The trained crew member then backs the cart right up to the putting surface and carefully fills the drop spreader with the bent/*Poa trivialis* mixture of seed chosen by Whorrall.

The operator, now ready to dispense the seed on the green, fills the sifters with regular flour. As each pass is made across the green, the operator pulls on the cord attached to the handle of the sifter dispensing a small pile of flour on the ground at the exact edge of where the seed is placed. The sifters work independently so the right and left sides are pulled separately about every three steps. By alternating the sides, the trail of flour that is placed on the green will consequently show the spreader’s path. To further increase the evenness of the overseeding, the seed is sown in two directions.

After the seed is placed, the green is topdressed, amendments added and irrigation applied. Equal care is taken with these processes to prevent the unsightly “volunteer” grass clumps from forming.

Whorrall has used the “flour sifter” technique for three years and says he is “pleased with the results.” He added, “The only negative is it (the sifters) is a little ‘rigged’ and it would be nice if it were a commercially available item.”

Darren J. Davis

Golf Course Superintendent
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Side view of spreader shows the control cord connection to the dispenser’s triggers. Photo by Darren Davis.



Rear view of the spreader shows positioning of the flour dispensers at the edge of the seed drop line. Photo by Darren Davis.