

A New Green Construction Technique

by Nick Hongisto
Schaumburg Golf Club

This year, and for the next three, we will be undergoing major improvements here at Schaumburg Golf Club, formerly Golden Acres. The improvements include new tees, greens, and bent fairways. An 18 stall driving range. A double row Toro irrigation system with the Network 8000 as the controller, with a Watertronic pumping station. A new maintenance facility and a new clubhouse. We have a master plan which was done by Lohmann Golf Designs, Inc. The general contractor is G. A. Blocker.

In constructing a USGA putting green, there is a lot of equipment and manual labor in placing the pea gravel base and the coarse sand layer. I think that Gary Blocker has hit upon a great idea to prevent any mixing of the two layers during the installation. He has brought out a cement conveyor belt machine. This machine is intended to convey cement out to say a large floor or any very large area that needs cement.

The machine is set up on the side of the green, one operator controls the belt, in and out, left and right, with a controller panel that he carries. Another person holds the spout which can be placed as close to the ground as you want. A skid steer loader buckets the pea gravel into the hopper. It goes up the conveyor belt, out over the green and down the spout. The loader operator really has to work to keep up with the machine.

Installing the pea gravel and coarse sand in this way solves two problems. 1. The nice clean edge around the green stays just that way. No loader or angle dozer has to drive into the green. 2. As the gravel is poured on the green, it still has to be hand raked out to the 4" level. Then when the coarse sand is poured in it keeps the pea gravel at the 4" level. There is no mixing of the two layers.

After the two layers have been installed, the topmix can be brought in, which we had Greensmix do in our parking lot. We did this in the usual way of dumping on the edge of the green and pushing it out onto the green with a small dozer.

From a superintendent's point of view it did a great job. It was quick, Gary did all 10 of our new greens in two days less the topmix, and very neat. I am not sure how economical it was. The machine had to be rented along with the operator. But it should save some money just with the time savings it brings.

So if you're rebuilding a green or greens, which it seems that almost everyone is, this is something you might think about.



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