

Mounted hose reels make hand-watering quick, easy

By KEVIN J. ROSS

VAIL, Colo. — In all my years in golf course management, I have yet to see the perfect irrigation system. I do not believe this is due to a lack of irrigation design or equipment, but rather of agronomic science. Let's face it. No irrigation system can replace the agronomic benefits of a good hand-watering program. If you're not hand-watering on a consistent basis (when needed), perhaps you should evaluate your watering practices.

Hand-watering is a pain, but it can make or break the condition of your golf course. Hand-watering has been a major part of my management program for many years and at different courses. I have tried to simplify hand-watering as much as possible. Peers who visit my facility often comment about our hose reels which have been adapted to simplify the process.

Hose reels simplify the operation of hand-watering greatly, saving both time and frustration, and many superintendents already use them. No one wants to



Photo by Kevin J. Ross



ON THE GREEN

Three types of hose reels used at Country Club of the Rockies: mounted to an E-Z-GO (left); mounted to a Kawasaki Mule (center, in use); and mounted to a fabricated trailer.

untangle a spaghetti-like watering hose, and this is never the case with hose reels.

Many types of hose reels are on the market. We prefer to use one made by Hannay of Westerlo, N.Y. We use one base reel that comes with two options: hand-crank windup, or electric windup. Both are excellent, but the electric windup costs double.

My equipment manager, Mike Koehn, fabricates hose-reel framing that we mount inside certain utility vehicles and small trailers. We simply bolt the reels

to the framing or trailers. On one end of the reel there is a 1-inch pressure swivel joint. A 1-inch or 3/4-inch hose can be used on the reel, depending on your preference.

At this point, we use a 1-inch MPT by 3/4-inch insert fitting (we like 3/4-inch hose), threaded into the swivel joint. Then we attach a 5-foot-long section of hose with a female end and clamp it on the 3/4-inch insert side of the fitting. At the end of this hose we mount a quick-coupling key. The interior of the

hose reel has a 3/4-inch FPT mounting area, where we thread a 3/4-inch MPT by 3/4-inch insert fitting into this mount. We then clamp our desired hose length(s) to the insert side of this fitting. Make sure this hose has a male end, so you can attach additional lengths of hose and any watering nozzles you might like to use. We install 150 feet on most of our reels and that works fine. The reels we use are capable of holding 250 feet.

Using these reels is simple. Drive your vehicle close to the

quick-coupling valve and attach the key end with the 5-foot section into that valve. Then pull as much hose off the reel as desired to do the necessary watering. When finished, unplug the quick-coupling valve and wind the hose onto the reel. The speed and efficiency is impressive. You can unwind or wind 100 feet of hose in about 20 seconds, and that beats any other method I know.

If you are not using hose reels, give one a try. It makes the hand-watering game much easier.

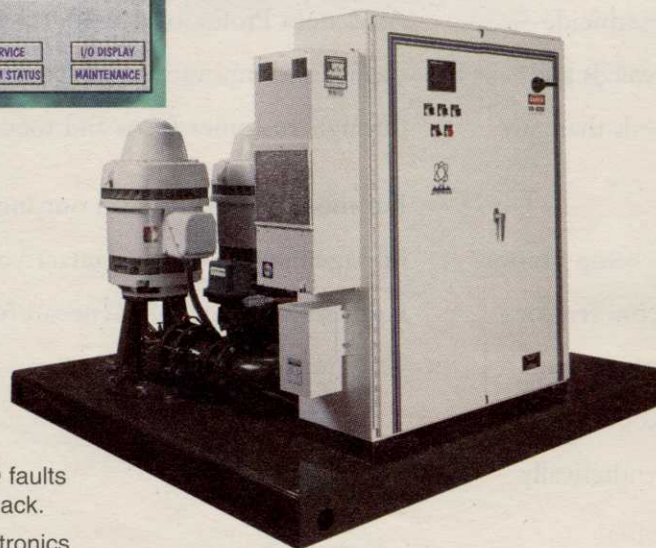
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