

# Doing the sprinkling while they tee it up

By TERRY BUCHEN

WICHITA, Kan. — Trying to keep a quality turfgrass surface on a driving range teeing ground has always been difficult, especially with a warm-season turfgrass that is overseeded with perennial ryegrass.

Brett Conrad, long-time superintendent at Wichita Country Club here has a unique concept to quickly grow in the new grass where once there were ugly divot scars: low-pressure sprinklers that do not disturb golfers.

"Our low- to medium-humidity and many days with a big blue sky throughout the year cause our driving range tee surface to dry out during the day," Conrad said. "We fill in our divots daily with fresh topsoil and perennial ryegrass seed and feed these areas with a starter fertilizer once a week to speed up recovery."

The tee surface used to have the traditional large overhead sprinkler system, and Conrad could not water the area during the day when golfers were present.

Because the practice tee is used frequently, Conrad met with first assistant superintendent Nancy Turner and second assistant and irrigation technician Dave Hogan to discuss how to modify the system so it could be watered anytime.

They rotate the tees, using bag racks



Terry Buchen photo

Golfers can still practice while the driving range tee is being irrigated.

as tee markers and roping off the areas that need watering. They move the ropes and bag racks toward the rear of the tee surface, so that divots will land on the areas that have already been used.

Hogan installed individual rows of Rainbird #1804 PRS sprinkler heads, operating them on individual station timers.

"These sprinklers operate on a consistent pressure of 30 PSI," Conrad said, "and we are able to water anytime during the day while the golfers are practicing with no interference to them.

So our grass seed germinates much faster. Our climate dictates that we must water throughout the day, or the seed will dry out and die."

He said the golfers hardly notice the small spray heads when they are being used and "our turnaround time is three weeks before each tee area can be used again."

"It is so nice to be able to irrigate each individual row totally independent of each other during the daylight hours while not bothering our members and their guests whatsoever," Conrad added.

# North Carolina Show 'Going for the Green'

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Turfgrass Council of North Carolina will co-sponsor its 36th Annual Turfgrass Conference and Show on Jan. 7-9 at the Charlotte Convention Center.

"Going for the Green" is the theme of the conference, which features an educational program for turfgrass managers and a trade show.

Nine workshops and two days of educational sessions will deal with golf turf, lawn and landscape care, grounds maintenance, pesticide training and regulation, irrigation, sod production, sports turf management and business management. Workshops will be held Jan. 7 and educational sessions will be held Jan. 8 and 9.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Professional Lawn Care Association of America and the Irrigation Association will offer certified classes Jan. 6 and 7, respectively.

Terence M. McNabb, president of Resource Management, Inc., will present Lake and Aquatic Plant Management seminar. Jerry Gaeta of Vander Kooi & Associates will present: Managing Your Business for Greater Profit! He will present his experience in using the Vander Kooi Estimating and Management System.

For further information, contact Marsha Richardson at 910-695-1333.

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