

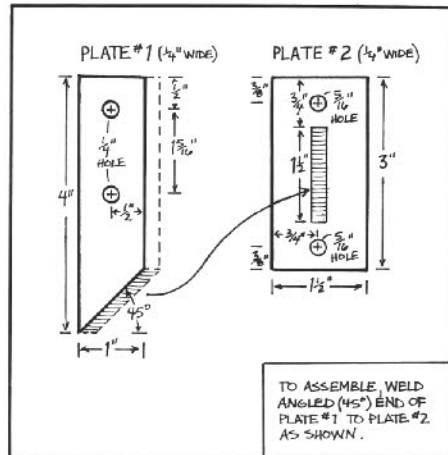
MAPLE BLUFF'S TORO SAND PRO MODIFICATION

By David J. Butz

Every now and then a minor problem arises in the area of golf course maintenance. Over the past few years, a problem with the maintenance of sand traps has cropped up at Maple Bluff Country Club. Players started complaining that our sand had become too soft and they were getting too many "fried egg lies". We have Yahara mason sand in our traps which tends to fluff up from over-raking. Since we have to rake the traps four to five times a week to maintain them up to members' expectations, the sand is constantly being cultivated and loosened up.

Last winter we talked about this problem and decided to try some modifications to our existing Sand Pro, before we were forced to replace the sand in all 68 traps. We figured the pronged rakes on the bottom of the rake assembly were the problem, so we decided to eliminate them. The question now was what could we replace them with that would still give us a nice finished product.

At this point, our mechanic, Gene Paulus, put his engineering skills to work. He came up with an excellent design for a rake to take the place of the pronged rakes.



Now all we had to do was wait until spring to see how it would work. We realized immediately that this new rake was everything we had hoped for and more; it not only gave us a nice smooth finish, it allowed the operator to rake traps in less time because there wasn't as much raking due to uneven ridges.

We now get a smoother finished product in less time, and no more complaints about the "fried egg lie". We did notice one minor problem with this new rake. In mid-July crabgrass started growing in some of the traps. This had never happened here before, so we

switched back to the old rake for a few rakings to work the sand up a little deeper.

These are the directions to use if you want to try this simple modification.

A. Remove prong rake kit plate (part no. 42-1910)

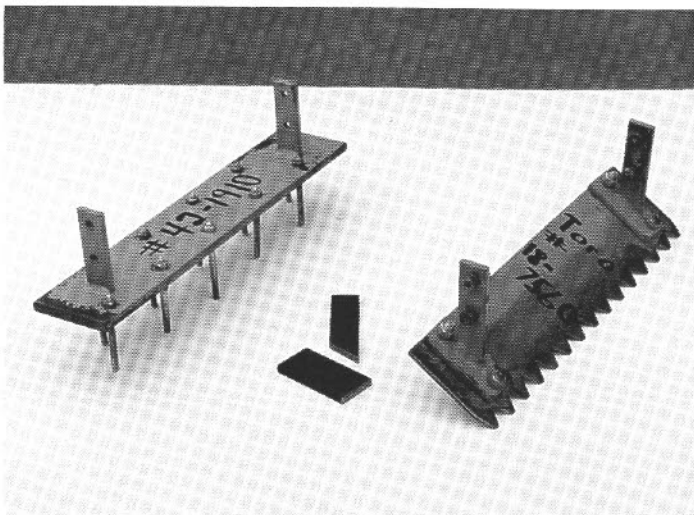
B. Make up two small brackets (dimensions show in diagram)

C. Weld these two brackets together as shown in diagram.

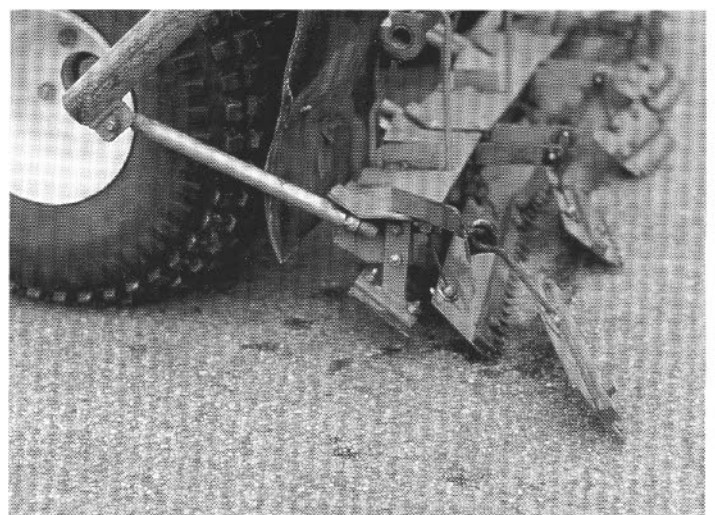
D. Fasten bracket to drag plate (part no. 18-7560) using four 1x5/16 bolts and nuts.

One last thought: I sometimes wonder what the future holds for us in sand trap maintenance. One scenario could have the Superintendent from Blackhawk Country Club inventing a device that drops golf balls from a given height into sand traps. The lie could then be measured for the degree of the sand's hardness. This invention would become known throughout the golf world as the Millerimeter!

Editor's Note: Dave Butz is the assistant golf course superintendent at Maple Bluff Country Club, a position he has held for the past six years. A Wisconsin native, Dave and his wife Terry have two children and live in Madison.



The three pieces on the right replace the rake part on the left.



This photo shows the finished product on the Toro Sand Pro.