



Rolling bunker faces instead of raking them helps keep the sand firm and smooth. This reduces the risk of washouts and poor lies and saves raking time.

ROLLING BUNKER FACES SAVES TIME AND IMPROVES PLAYABILITY

Myers Park Country Club | Charlotte, N.C. 28209

Scott Kennan, superintendent

ISSUE

At Myers Park Country Club, raking bunkers daily and firming sand in the faces to maintain the desired playability required a substantial amount of staff time. Following heavy rain events, the bunkers were susceptible to washouts that could require days of repair work involving many staff members.

Myers Park installed a durable bunker liner and replaced their bunker sand with an angular sand, helping to dramatically improve drainage and minimize repairs following heavy rain events. However, the bunker faces still required extensive raking and upkeep to produce a firm, packed surface that was less likely to result in buried lies. Addressing this issue had the potential to yield significant labor savings.

ACTION

Assistant Superintendent Jeremy Pyles constructed an inexpensive and lightweight aluminum roller apparatus that utilizes a swimming pool noodle to lightly roll the bunker faces. This tool helps produce a firm bunker face which can last for an extended period of time. The lightness of the pool noodle doesn't disrupt the sand in the way that heavier rollers or rakes would, so a light crust forms on the sand surface that keeps faces firm and smooth. The bunker faces are rolled only as needed and undisturbed sections are left alone.

RESULTS

Utilizing this lightweight roller to prepare the bunker faces has resulted in less raking and a better playing surface. Labor hours maintaining or repairing bunkers have been reduced and the maintenance staff can allocate more time to other golf course tasks.

Golfer feedback also has been positive. Players have said they like the look and improved playability of the rolled bunker faces. The faces now stay firm and golf balls typically roll to bunker floor.

The biggest challenge with utilizing the new method was finding a durable frame for the roller. At first, the maintenance staff tried using paint rollers you would find at a local hardware store, but they were not durable enough for daily use. After some online research, a sturdier frame was located which was modified into the tool now used for rolling the faces.

One issue that can occur with this process is algae formation on the rolled faces when they have not been disturbed for a while. This issue can be especially problematic during summer. To combat this issue, the faces are aggressively raked once a week and then re-rolled with the roller.