



The Polo Trace Course in Florida involved 70 to 75 acres of hydroseeding. Bahiagrass and perennial ryegrasses were used in the roughs and bentgrass on the greens.

A COMPATIBLE PRACTICE

Hydroseeding is becoming more popular with superintendents because it offers even, precise seed delivery and fast green-up.

by Robert Stinson, the Finn Corp.

At a time when more people seek to participate in sports activities, golf occupies a unique place in the sporting world because of the challenges within the game that remain throughout the course of a player's life. You can play to improve a previous score on a certain course or hole, or to beat a single opponent or a group of opponents in a tournament.

Perhaps this is why the number of golfers grows annually in this country and around the globe. In 1988, more than 200 new golf courses were finished and another 300 under construction were due for completion in 1989. Until the year 2000, an average of 350 courses a year will be needed to meet the golfer demand.

More than 23,400,000 people golf in the United States, and the number is growing daily. Because that number is so high, maintaining present courses is as important as

building new ones.

Individual design is one of the challenging aspects of playing golf. Each course has unique features that enhance the skills required to play a good round. For example, the Indianwood Golf and Country Club course in Lake Orion, Mich., is built in the links style common to inland Scotland. Course superintendent Mark Jackson says the new course has the highest slope rating of any course in Michigan and, thus, is the most difficult to play.

Indianwood's links style of terrain made hydroseeding the most appropriate seeding method to use on the banks, hills, mounds and slopes. The mounds are very sandy and it was impossible to drive or work on them without damaging the seedbed preparation.

As with some other courses, the greens were planted by the two-step method. The seed was first applied

and then fiber mulch was sprayed on both as a seed cover and to hold moisture for faster growth.

One-step seeding

The one-step method of applying seed, fertilizer and fiber mulch at the same time was used in the other hydroseeded areas. Jackson used the Finn HydroSeeder, a useful maintenance tool for touch-up, watering and re-fertilization as needed.

Today many courses are being built as parts of large residential developments. The Eagle Landing Country Club near Atlanta is the third such development with which course superintendent Dave Gardner has been associated.

While the seeding of the first two developments was subcontracted, a decision was made during construction of the Eagle Landing development to purchase a HydroSeeder for increased efficiency and flexibility in performing various tasks. According to Gardner, in addition to using the HydroSeeder during the actual course construction, it is used to vegetate roadsides, establish home lawns, water shrubs and trees and to establish or maintain turf as required in a large acreage development.

Public course boom

In addition to the private courses under construction, many public courses are being built. Many contractors new to course construction have become involved because of existing opportunities.

Steve Turner of Evergreen Lawn Care in Bowling Green, Ky., was still relatively new to hydroseeding when

he began to work on the Hartland Municipal Golf Course, using his newly-acquired HydroSeeder. Hartland is a centerpiece development for the Bowling Green community and will include a new convention center and upscale private homes within and around the public course.

Each of the greens at Hartland was constructed to be approximately 8,500 square feet. The bentgrass seed was extremely small; Turner did not see how a mechanical seeder could have been calibrated to accurately seed at the 14 pounds-per-green rate.

Benefits noted

Turner employed a HydroSeeder with one 800-gallon tankload of seed and water with a mulch tracer to do each green. By hydroseeding the greens, he was able to do the job without introducing any foreign seed material.

In the process of doing the course, Turner discovered a number of the

benefits of hydroseeding. He was able to do a more precise job in applying material around cart paths and other obstructions with minimal clean up. His labor, as opposed to other seeding and mulching methods, was reduced significantly.

Turner now "loves the hydroseeding process" and will be seeking to do more golf courses in the future.

Golf course designers and construction personnel in the United States are renowned for their expertise and are now doing projects throughout the world. An example is the Golf Course Barbaroux in Brignoles, a Pete Dye-designed private membership course in the south of France.

John Alford, a construction superintendent on a number of Dye courses in the southeastern U.S., headed the construction team at Barbaroux.

One of the important tools that Alford wanted for the job in France was

a HydroSeeder, a machine that he had used on each of his previous courses. John liked the machine because of the ease with which the job could be done.

No washout worry

"Once the ground has been prepared, you can do the work and not worry. It will be stabilized and you should not have nearly as much concern about washout," says Alford.

The French workers were also impressed with the machine, calling it "the elephant" due to its appearance and work capacity.

The HydroSeeder remains at the course, filled with water as a member of the Barbaroux Volunteer Fire Department, since the terrain of the area dictates that larger fire-fighting tanks would not be practical.

Southern Hydro Turf, Inc., of West Palm Beach, Fla., has done the seeding for many courses. They are working on the Polo Trace course, which



In addition to the playing surface, many areas—such as cart paths—require continuous management to maintain the desired condition. Using a tower gun or remote hose method of hydro-seeding makes it easy.

Hydroseeded greens can be playable in as few as 60 days.

will involve 70 to 75 acres of hydroseeding. Argentine bahia and perennial ryegrasses are being used in the roughs and bentgrass will be used on the greens.

Southern Hydro Turf's Terry Wilson has reported that greens on earlier such projects were playable in as few as 60 days, an important consideration with the growing use of established courses, which need constant maintenance.

Touching up areas

In addition to the playing surface, many areas—such as cart paths—require a continuous program to maintain the desired condition. A tower gun or remote hose method of hydroseed application makes it very practical to reseed or touch-up all areas during the growing season.

Throughout all phases of golf course construction and maintenance, a hydroseeding is a most valuable asset for efficient landscape management. In addition to the obvious benefits of lead time and effort required for a project, the improved playing surface and aesthetic quality of the surroundings add significantly to the total enjoyment of a round of golf. **LM**