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Press Release

Drainage and sand banding combination keeps the greens in play at Robin Hood Golf course

Set amongst mature trees and lush fairways is claimed to be one of the toughest and most stimulating courses in the West Midlands. In fact the 17th and 18th holes of the Robin Hood Golf Club are accepted as amongst the most challenging finishing holes in the area.

Three years after joining Robin Hood GC, Course Manager Andy Wood is delighted with significant improvements that have been made in that time. When he joined the team, it was not the difficulty of the course which concerned him, but how to prevent it from constantly being out of play due to poor drainage. With development funds at his disposal Andy has achieved major improvements to the course.

The first task of the five year improvement plan was to hire in professional contractors to install a completely new main drainage system. This would be followed by re-building bunkers and tees.

However, even with the new drains in place, you still get pockets of poor drainage areas around the course which needed to be addressed intermittently. To deal with this issue Andy invested in two significant pieces of kit; an AFT 45 trencher and an AFT Sandbander, which have since proved invaluable in tackling localised flooding and potentially wet areas.

“We Sand banded across the main drain lines after the initial installation but it is inevitable that changes below the surface will over time still hold the water. “ Andy explained. “We needed the flexibility of targeting areas as and when they became a problem.”

“In the past we had had a big problem with thatch and other organic matter building up on the greens and the main drainage system went an enormous distance in preventing this but it is still essential that we alleviate any water lying on the surface as soon as it occurs.”

In the past the greens staff have employed various aeration techniques to improve the flow of moisture through the root zone, but none has been as effective as using the AFT 45 to install drainage lines at 1.5metre centres in particularly troublesome spots. This would be followed with diagonal adjoining lines with the Sandbender to provide even greater opportunity for the water to flow into the main drainage system.

The AFT Sandbender has revolutionised the way sand slits are installed on sport surfaces. The unique blade design and oscillating movement installs drainage slits with well consolidated sand. In this instance the Sandbender has been used to successfully divert surface water on the greens to the existing lateral drains.

Suitable for tractors from 35hp it gives fast and easy installation of 25 or 40mm sand slits with a maximum depth of 250mm (10"). It also works well with lytag and gravel (up to 6mm).

“The AFT 45 is an excellent, easy to operate trencher and because it can go on the back of a reasonably powered tractor, it is mobile and can be used anywhere on the course whenever we need it. This coupled with the Sandbender has given us a perfect combination of equipment to keep our course in play all year round” Said Andy “The training and back up service from AFT Trenchers has been first class and we are confident that these machines will be good for many years to come.”