



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 25, 2019
To: Steve Argo
CC: Randy Thomas
From: Lalo Pacheco, Regional Agronomist - KemperSports
RE: Wild Wings Golf Club site visit – January 22, 2019

I traveled to Wild Wings Golf Club for a site visit at the request of Steve Argo. I was able to tour the golf course and maintenance facility with the Superintendent, Mike Scolaro to review the operation and discuss the capital needs of the facility. We spent the day reviewing the golf course and the maintenance facility, covering all topics from agronomy to capital. In addition, I have attached a revised capital list that covers all of the items that I have addressed in the following report.

Areas we reviewed:

1. Maintenance Building
2. Maintenance Equipment
3. Maintenance Staff
4. Golf Course

Maintenance Building

- The main rollup door is out of alignment due to damage to the sidewall of the building, which is allowing water from rain to enter the building and storage area then under a division wall and into the Superintendent's office. The sidewall needs to be repaired so that the rollup door can be realigned, which will stop water from entering the building.
- The outside of the building is in need of a fresh coat of paint as well as touch up paint. In addition, the molding and siding are beginning to deteriorate and they should be addressed on an as need basis to avoid further damage to the building.
- Wild Wings is in need of a storage shed, or a modified shipping container to store supply of fertilizer and seed. These items are currently being stored in the equipment storage area, which takes up valuable space for the equipment. A new storage area would allow for all of the equipment to be stored inside. Currently some of the equipment has to be parked outside, where it is impacted by inclement weather. This would also allow the fertilizer and seed to be store in a secured designated area.
- Wild Wings lacks cinder block storage bins for storage of raw materials. I witnessed three different piles of material currently being stored. This not only creates an unsafe environment, but it also allows for cross contamination of materials from one pile to another, especially with the windy conditions.
- The maintenance building is lacking appropriate shelving to stock and secure administrative documents, which are currently being stored in the employee lunch area.
- The building does not have a shower room where the staff can clean up in case of an accidental chemical exposure, or just for basic cleaning up after work duties.

Maintenance Equipment

Part of the capital recommendations are the capital lease programs for equipment. The major challenge facing the superintendent is a lack of equipment capable of producing a product that makes a memorable



impression on the guests resulting in return visits. In order to accomplish much of their daily work requirements, they are manually completing tasks that should be done by equipment. Hand digging in clay soils up to six feet could be done in a manner of minutes with a tractor with a backhoe. A host of trenching for drains and irrigation should be accomplished by a trencher, but is currently done by hand digging. Time is money and hand operations consume a tremendous amount of time and pulling resources from other areas. The current fleet of equipment is aging. There have been few replacements over the years and dollars will need to be spent in this area for sure. It is important however to make smart purchases moving forward that will help the team be more efficient than in the past, as maintenance practices have changed over time. Based on my observations, below are the immediate purchase needs.

- Tractor with a skip loader and backhoe attachment. You could use a 3 point hitch trencher for the same tractor. The staff does not currently have one and as a result they have to do a lot of manual labor.
- 2-3 Gator TX Utility vehicles – These are used for basic transportation for the staff when doing small tasks throughout the property.
- Sod Cutter
- Power Jumper Box – This is a portable device to assist with jumpstarting equipment. It is the most cost effective for immediate results; otherwise money should be allocated to replace the batteries on much of the equipment.

Maintenance Staff

Mike has 3 full time staff members besides himself; they are greens keepers, equipment operators and irrigation technicians. In my observation, Mike is in need of a mechanic. When asked about repairs, I was told that all of the repairs are done in-house by the same employees to the best of their capabilities, but none of them is a mechanic.

Without knowing all of the budget constraints, I think the property would benefit from the help of certified mechanic. Even on just a part-time basis. A certified mechanic can implement a preventive maintenance program, perform all of the appropriate repairs to ensure longevity of new equipment, and also help to extend the life of old equipment.

I also noticed the maintenance department is missing many of the basic mechanic tools to help with the in-house repairs. Many of which could be acquired over time as the operating budget permits.

Golf Course

The type of Bermuda grass used on the golf course is very hardy and capable of producing very good playing conditions. At the time of this review, most of the turf grass in Northern California is off-color or dormant due to cold conditions and not growing, which was the case for Wild Wings. However, the staff has done a very good job of producing a quality product, even in the winter months. The greens were smooth with only a few worn spots, which will recover in the spring. Tees are a little thin, but expected this time of the year. They will fill in and look great this spring. The areas off the ends of the cart paths will also start to grow again once the ground temperatures increase.

Turf Grass

Overall, considering the size of the operational budget and staffing, the golf course agronomic conditions are respectable, but not ideal. There are areas of concern that must be addressed in order to increase productivity and revenues. Due to the size of the golf course maintenance staff, any working impediments will affect their ability to produce the only product Wild Wings offers, a turf grass experience. Surveys of golfers have proven repeatedly they play or return to a golf course for more than just price, they want a quality turf grass to play on. Wild Wings has earned the title “Best Greens in



Sacramento” because of the turf grass on the putting surfaces. If the turf grass in the fairways and surrounds improve, Wild Wings has the potential to increase rounds and revenues year round.

Cart Paths

Currently, Wild Wings has golf cart paths on the par threes and around all tees and greens. Seven golf holes only have cart paths around tees and greens. On these holes, the cart path ends and the golf carts scatter in different directions. The golf carts driving off the end of the cart path damages the turf and squeezes the moisture out of the ground. This damage spreads over time and eventually reaches the fairways.

During the winter months all golf courses restrict golf carts to the cart paths to prevent the golf cart from destroying the turf due to very wet, soft ground conditions. Many times in Northern California, we will experience one or two days of rain, followed by a week of sunshine. Unfortunately, a single day of rain will cause the golf shop to prevent carts from entering the golf course for five to seven days. Although this does not prevent guests from renting golf carts, it does however restrict them to the cart paths, preserving the turf conditions. The challenge with Wild Wings is the lack of cart paths on every golf hole. Therefore, the golf shop does not rent any golf carts until the conditions improve. They may lose one or two weeks a month during the winter months based on inclement weather.

Green fees and golf cart fess are the lifeblood of any golf operation. Without cart paths, Wild Wings is losing a very important revenue source when playing conditions are still very desirable. There is a temporary solution to the cart path issue, but completing full cart paths around the entire course is critical to the long term turf health and revenue source for Wild Wings.

Due to the location of Wild Wings, there is a temporary solution with the uses of shells from a variety of nuts. Placing the shells on the ground in the same area and shape where the concrete path would be will allow for a temporary cart path. Reapplication of the shells would be necessary bi-annually to maintain the integrity of the path. With temporary cart paths in place, Wild Wings could install concrete cart paths at the pace of one or two holes per year until the golf course is fully pathed.

The completion of cart paths will dramatically affect the heath of the turf grass all over the golf course and increase annual golf cart revenues. The only product Wild Wings offers is turf grass. Wild Wings needs more than a reputation of just having the best greens in Sacramento, they need a reputation of quality turf grass throughout the golf course. Improved cart paths would likely increase both green fee and cart fee revenues during the wetter winter months, but by improving the overall playing conditions, it would likely also result in increased total rounds and revenues on an annual basis.

Irrigation System

Most of the irrigation system at Wild Wings functions according to the original design. However, there are areas around the golf course that are utilizing undersized irrigation heads that affect the quality of the turf grass and golfers experience. New irrigation heads need to be installed by connecting to the existing irrigation system and programmable clock. Applying irrigation water on the turf in a consistent manner will improve turf condition and increase the reputation of Wild Wings.

Drainage

Like all golf courses, drainage plays a very important role in regulating and moving water/moisture to assist in the maintenance of the golf course and health of the turf grass. Standing water on a golf course creates uneven soil conditions and creates opportunities for golf cart to damage the turf by repeatedly running through the water. Comparable to a pothole in any city street, the more the tires of a vehicle drive through the pothole the bigger it gets and the more damage it creates to the vehicles. There are several areas around the golf course that have standing water or annual damage that is not only creating



poor playing conditions, but also creates a safety issue if someone were to step into the hole created by the lack of drainage. We are recommending these areas be addressed over the next few years.

Conclusion

In conclusion I was impressed with the overall condition of the course considering the limited resources and staff. Mike and his team have done an excellent job maintaining the golf course with what they have been given. Over the last several years expenses and labor have been held in check, which is very common throughout the golf industry. Unfortunately, over time these cuts start to catch up with you. I see this exact scenario at Wild Wings Golf Club. Mike has just enough dollars and labor to keep everything “down the middle” looking decent. Greens, tees, and fairways are in good condition. That has been his focus with the resources he is given. What has begun to suffer are the areas around the outside, due to the ancillary tasks that are not accomplished because of lack of money/labor (i.e. bunker maintenance, tree trimming/planting, lake maintenance, etc.). Most of these issues are not expensive issues, such as poor greens construction, but they do impact the overall guest experience. I hope I have provided some direction for Mike and the club to use going forward. If can be of any additional assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.