

AGM October 2020

Green Committee is aware that bunkers continue to have problems. We will request an increase in man hours worked on the bunkers. This will include cleaning, raking and sand control of faces and bases of the bunkers. We will continue to monitor the situation over the next few months and take further action where necessary.

The Green Committee would like to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Greens Committee plan to address the wet bunkers and propensity of golf balls to plug in our bunkers?
2. Has the Greens Committee discussed these issues with Kyle Phillips and if so, what were his recommendations?
3. Are the Greens Committee open to pursuing external professional advice to resolve these matters?

Bunker humidity:

There is no golf course in the world that can irrigate the grass around the bunker without irrigating the bunker sand. Actually, it is more likely to find top courses that add sprinklers to irrigate only bunkers to apply some water when sand gets dry.

There are some reasons to have bunkers with too wet base:

- We got very steep bunker faces that drains the water to the base of the bunker. Many days we see the faces dry and falling, but the base remains very wet.
- We got a bentgrass collar that requires more water than typical bermuda collars. That means we can't shut sprinklers irrigating bunkers. Irrigation depends on the collar water need and not on the state of the sand. Any labor in the collars that requires irrigation will make the problem worse: fertilization, some pesticide applications...
- Sand depth in the base of the bunker is 10-12 cm. Although lab moist column test specified a depth of 14 cm in the base and even deeper if retaining water, we still got around 10 cm in many cases. This results from the early months after installation when sand felt too soft and it was decided to take some to stabilize it.
- Capillary Concrete installed to improve drainage has lately proved to cause this in some situations. Some other golf course reports the same problem.

Balls plugged in the faces:

This problem has decreased overtime but still is an issue particularly when we rake bunker faces more often or if we have to move the sand for any reason. We have done several actions in the past:

- Reduce the depth in the faces down to 4-6 cm
- Change the way we rake, leaving the faces without raking and even compacting with a roller.

Unfortunately, not raking is not an option. A dark color crust is formed soon that needs to be broken, otherwise the appearance of the bunker is untidy and unacceptable.

Conclusions:

We have certainly discussed these problems with Kyle Phillips and our Agronomy Consultant. They report every year and some changes were made. But it is clear that we still have to keep working to improve it.

- Sand is not the problem. We had got the same sand R.C. Valderrama has, and we now have got the same sand R.C. Pineda has and these issues are not that relevant there. Lab tests confirm this is a suitable sand for bunkers.

- Changing the shape of the bunker is not an option unless nothing else can be done.
- We are testing a new grass for collar and tees that demands less water. This could relieve part of the problem in the future.
- Adding more sand to those bunkers where humidity is more relevant is our main option. We did it last winter while Covid allowed us. We will continue this winter.
- It is clear our bunkers need more maintenance. Bunker faces need almost daily raking and rolling. Bunker base needs major daily tilling. Green Committee will propose extra staff for the bunker team.
- We will check on how Capillary Concrete affects wetness and will find solutions if it is part of the problem.



Real Club Golf Sotogrande



Real Club Pineda. Same sand.



Finca Cortesín



Real Club Golf Valderrama. Our Former sand



Real Club Golf Las Brisas



Crust of dirt on faces