



Located in Leesburg, Virginia, Raspberry Falls Golf & Hunt Club is a spectacular course with all the marks of what makes for an exceptional round of golf. Located in Virginia's horse country, with vistas of the Catoctin Mountains in the background, it's one of the most popular daily-fee courses in the Washington DC Area.

The course was built in 1996, laid out by Gary Player Design, relying on a links style making use of the dramatic rolling terrain, meandering streams and spectacular scenery. One of the original feature elements are the deep stacked pot bunkers.

The challenge for Superintendent Steve Cohoon has been the maintenance of those bunkers and the scheduled rebuilding when the natural turf structures decay.

CREATING AN EVALUATION PLATFORM

In Spring 2019, the facility took action and developed a plan to install the PermaEdge Bunker System. The target was one of the most troublesome bunkers, called "Deep Cotton", guarding the green on Hole #1. The decision was made to rework the large, 120 foot wide bunker into two smaller bunkers.



By selecting this particular bunker, the facility would be able to build several bunkers as an evaluation technique. Being able to experience first hand the playability, maintenance, and golfer reaction to the revamped bunkers was important.

Typical in the golf industry, many facilities choose to evaluate all manner of products in this way. Bunkers are no different. In fact, we regularly train staff and build a small number of bunkers for facilities, allowing them the chance to see what their actions deliver.

BUILDING BUNKERS

The PermaEdge Team arrived on a cold day in April, assisting course staff on excavation details and bunker prep requirements. Once the bunkers were shaped and fine-tuned, mobilization for PermaEdge occurred efficiently. By the end of the first day, the bunkers were ready.

With both bunkers being of the same shape, the decision was made to train staff completely on the first bunker. With the basic skills necessary, staff would then be able to build the second with little challenge.



The target bunkers were medium-sized but quite deep at roughly 5.5 feet high on the high side. Bunker entry points were low, with a planned step down of 10 inches after the addition of sand.

With adequate quantity of PermaEdge on hand, training went extremely well, aided by a very engaged, detail oriented maintenance staff. As wall building continued, staff were coached-up on the methods for achieving the best structural integrity, an important focus when building to those heights.

We chose the "double setback" method and the staff did a tremendous job reaching for a great aesthetic. Wall shape was true, angles were consistent, and the elevations fit nicely to the surround.

After a great wall building effort, the first bunker was shaped and turf reinstatement was performed. Sod was sourced from on-site locations and matched well to the existing, undisturbed surrounds.

COURSE-WIDE RENOVATION

After a successful evaluation of two years, the decision was made to address the rest of the course beginning in Spring 2021. Although internal staff was trained and did a fabulous job, the decision was made to have golf course contractor McDonald & Sons perform the work.

Plans are to be on-site again to insure continued quality, integrity, and aesthetics. With an experience builder we're confident the results will be outstanding.

