



When Gary Brawley, ASGCA, approached the design for The Links at Sagewood in Phoenix, Arizona, he had one goal in mind: create a fun and playable putting course that would be accessible for all residents of the retirement community. That meant developing a greens mix that could withstand the Arizona heat and allow for control of the greens speed. Brawley designed a 50,000 square-foot putting course with movable tees and hole locations to allow for flexibility in the daily set-up and to give golfers a new challenge each day.

MAKING THE DESIGN A REALITY

After originally discussing the potential for artificial turf, Brawley and the ownership team decided to install MiniVerde Bermuda Grass. Starting with soil tests to see what amendments the soil needed, Brawley consulted with John Maeder, Profile Golf™ business manager. Maeder advised employing Profile® Porous Ceramic (PPC) Greens Grade™, an inorganic soil amendment that allows for deeper rooting, increased drainage, nutrient retention and better water management. They also chose to use EcoFibre® Wood Fiber Mulch to improve moisture retention and enhance more rapid vegetative establishment.

"My goal is to provide the best service to my clients; they all should be given the same opportunity," Brawley said. "If I can bring someone like Profile in to look at test results and blends, that's just going to make the results that much better. It gives me relief because I'm not the scientist and having the confidence of the Profile team making the recommendations provides a level of comfort to me as an architect."

DEVELOPING STRONG ROOT SYSTEMS

Wadsworth Golf Construction built the putting course and grassed the project in June 2020. That year, Arizona experienced the driest summer on record with less than an inch of rain during the key growth period. Despite that, in four months, the greens had established with 8-inch roots.

"You have to attribute some of that success to the amendment we added to the root zone profile and the increased ability to manage our water," Brawley said. "We're always battling Mother Nature when trying to grow in greens. We were nervous about growing and it was getting hot. But it was a fantastic grow-in."

A COURSE FOR EVERYONE

When the putting course opened in November 2020, Brawley had a chance to talk with the residents who were excited to get out on the green.

"One woman was using a walker on the course and she said, 'Mr. Brawley, I hope it's okay I use the walker.' I said, 'Absolutely. The green is firm enough, it's not going to cause any problem.' She said, 'I'm 94 years old and can play this twice a week. You brought golf back to my life.' That was my goal and we achieved it."

Based on the impressive results, Brawley has now incorporated PPC into four other projects with plans to include it in all future projects.

Award-Winning Architect Employs Profile® Products to Make Accessible Putting Course a Reality

Project Summary

The Links at Sagewood
Phoenix, Arizona

CHALLENGES:

- Create a fun, accessible putting course that could withstand the Arizona heat
- Control the greens speed to keep the course playable for all

RESULTS:

- During one of the driest years in Arizona history, the greens established in just four months with 8-inch roots

ARCHITECT:

Gary Brawley, ASGCA

PARTNERS:

Jeff Gibson, Superintendent
Wadsworth Golf Construction,
Contractor
Sunwest Golf & Reclamation, Inc.,
Hydrosprigging Contractor
West Coast Sand and Gravel,
Sand Blender

Evergreen Turf, Turfgrass Supplier

PRODUCTS USED:

- Profile® Porous Ceramic (PPC) Greens Grade™
- EcoFibre® Wood Fiber Mulch



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