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PROJECT PROFILE | Beijing Yintai Hongye Golf Club

Barren Site Reclaimed As Award-Winning Golf Course, Environmental Success

In 2009, contractors transformed abandoned stone quarries in southwest Beijing into the 54-hole Yintai Hongye Golf Club. The transition wasn't an easy one. Situated on 165 hectares along the flood basin of the Yongding River, it had become a garbage dumping ground and was plagued with water problems. During major rain events, severe flooding would occur. The rest of the time, the area was as dry as a desert due to the diversion of water to irrigate agriculture. The harsh environment also produced the largest sandstorms in Beijing.

The contractors constructed 30 new lakes and wetlands and covered 65 hectares with turf and 160,000 trees and plants. The first phase of the renovations addressed many of the site's environmental challenges, but didn't go far enough. In spring 2014, the Yintai Hongye Golf Club took on a project to renovate its third course, Yinhong #6, under the guidance Rick Robbins, an American Society of Golf Course Architects professional architect.

Reviving the Site's Third Course

The club's three courses were initially constructed without the assistance of an ASGCA architect. With the third course a year from opening, the developer contacted Robbins & Associates. Robbins was tasked with redesigning the site into a destination course that could host an international tournament event and comply with China's strict environmental regulations.

Reshaping the bunkers and greens made them an integral part of the landscape and supported the nearby wetlands. This required disturbing the existing turf, often in periods of heavy rains or dry, dusty conditions.

Robbins and the golf course contractor needed a solution that would protect the revived bunkers, while providing optimal conditions for vegetation establishment. They turned to assistance from Profile Products and Tammy Harney, who helped devise a solution using Profile® Flexterra®

PROJECT LOCATION:

Beijing, China

COURSE ARCHITECT:

Mr. Rick Robbins

SITE CHALLENGES:

- Unique bunker shapes with unpredictable edges
- Steep slopes
- Limited equipment
- Narrow bunker sides

PRODUCTS:

Patented Flexterra® HP-FGM™ by Profile Products

RESULT:

Soil stabilization and established vegetation for definitive bunker shaping

REFERENCES:

Ms. Fang
General Manager
Yintai Golf Club

Mr. Chen
Superintendent
Yintai Golf Club

High Performance-Flexible Growth Medium™ (HP-FGM™). When work began, there was no clear delineation between where bunker edges and the sandy and inhospitable soil began.

"The site had a very high likelihood of seed migration, due to the rainfall and dry soil conditions," said Tammy Harney, Profile Products' vice president of international business. "Preventing the seed from washing away was critical for improving vegetation germination rates and preventing plant species from growing in undesired locations."

These challenges, combined with the narrow land plots and steep slopes, made the project ideal for hydraulic mulch. Rebuilding the bunkers also required the removal of hundreds of acres of water-reliant vegetation and the quick establishment of native plants in its place.

"We recommended Flexterra because it's easy to apply and offers smooth and even coverage on intricate bunker edges and narrow fairways," said Harney.

When it came time to hydroseed steeper areas of the course, contractors increased the application rate of the hydraulic mulch. Once cured, the Flexterra matrix expands to create air space cavities and allow the native plant seeds to germinate and thrive.

Cosmetic and Environmental Benefits

The application of hydraulic mulch produced excellent vegetative establishment on the site, which reduced the impact from heavy rains and minimized runoff of soil, seed and water. Another benefit of the hydraulic mulch was greater moisture retention in grasses and plants.

The new design was adapted to provide a better transition between golf play areas and forested areas, with special attention paid to constructing lakes and wetlands. The new lakes and wetlands provide a natural means of filtration for long-term improvement of water quality. Contractors planted native plants and grasses along the pond and lake edges to assist the natural filtration process.

Award-Winning Reclamation Project

The Yintai Hongye Golf Club renovation went on to win many local and international awards. In 2010, it was recognized as a Top 10 China Golf Course for "Best Environmental Protection Creativity." The course was also awarded a "Green Enterprise of Beijing" award for its environmental contribution of the Yongding River and restoration of the river's biosystem. The course is the only golf club among the 182 award winners to be recognized with this honor. In 2014, the golf club was honored with the prestigious international "Design Excellence Award" from the American Society of Golf Course Architects. The ASGCA's Design Excellence Awards are given to courses that showcase innovative and problem-solving skills required in modern golf course designs.

It took an entire team—architects, contractors and turf specialists—to transform a barren, environmental wasteland into one of China's most attractive and playable courses. The renovation project wouldn't have been successful without the expertise of everyone involved.

"We always have great results when we work with Profile, and they're great to work with," said Robbins. "They have excellent technical knowledge and aren't afraid to offer their expertise to help you get the job done."

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