

A wide-angle photograph of a lush green golf course with several sand bunkers and a flag on a green in the distance. The image is partially overlaid by a dark blue curved graphic on the left side.

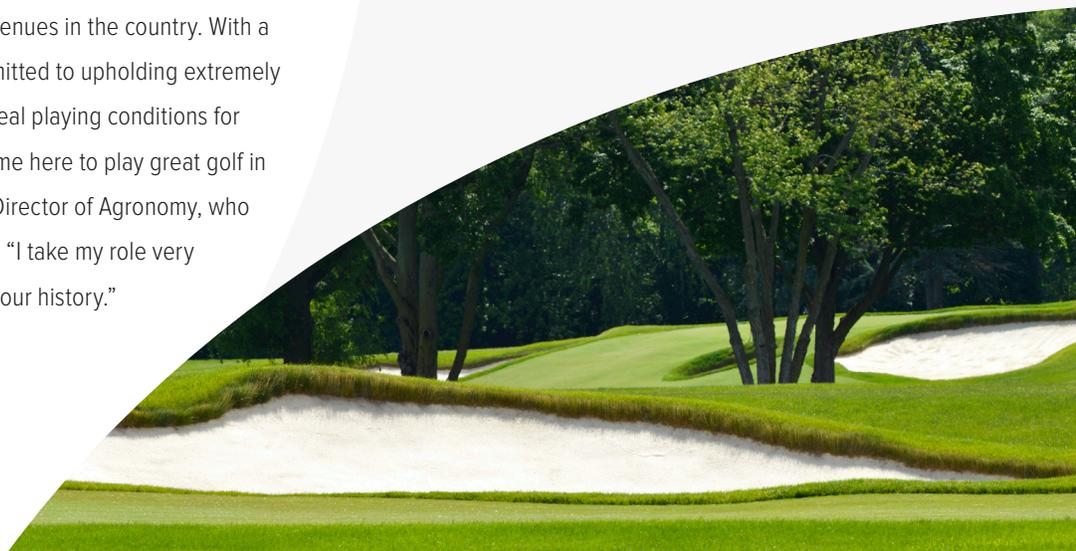
Bunker Restoration at Oakland Hills Country Club

Background

Oakland Hills Country Club (OHCC), located in Bloomfield Hills, MI, has a storied history dating back to its founding in 1916. Designed by renowned architect Donald Ross, both the North and South courses offer a challenging and prestigious golfing experience. The South Course, in particular, is considered a uniquely formidable championship course. It has hosted 17 major championships and will host eight USGA championships through 2051, including the USGA's 2024 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship.

In addition, the OHCC's South Course was chosen for the U.S. Open in 2034 and 2051, which will mark 100 years from Ben Hogan's US Open win. Hogan dubbed the course the "Monster" after his 1951 victory, and it remains known as one of the most demanding championship venues in the country. With a legacy spanning over a century, OHCC is committed to upholding extremely high standards and consistently maintaining ideal playing conditions for members and tournament players. "People come here to play great golf in great conditions," said Philip Cuffare, OHCC's Director of Agronomy, who oversees both courses and the entire grounds. "I take my role very seriously as a steward of the game of golf and our history."

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Challenge

In 2021, Cuffare was tasked with renovating the South Course's bunkers to restore them to their original glory. The project required meticulous planning and execution to ensure that the course maintained its championship-caliber status while preserving its historical significance. The plans called for reducing the number of bunkers by about one-third but increasing their size considerably. The total bunker area expanded from 125,000 square feet to 200,000 square feet.

Cuffare recognized the need for high-quality bunker sand and a strategic partner to help implement the architect's vision and meet members' expectations. He turned to BESTSAND™, a trusted provider known for its expertise, superior products, and excellent customer service and logistics capabilities.

Solution

Cuffare's collaboration with BESTSAND proved instrumental in achieving the club's goals for the bunker restoration project. Leveraging the expertise of Terry Gwinn, BESTSAND's Sales Manager, Cuffare developed a comprehensive plan to rebuild the course's greens and bunkers according to modern standards.

BESTSAND delivered 14,000 tons of sand by barges, trucks and rail over the course of the months-long project. This included sand and soil amendments that had to be delivered and blended before the greens restoration could begin, as well as daily deliveries of bunker sand during the restoration. Cuffare noted that the consistent quality of BESTSAND's products is outstanding. "With a project of this magnitude, it's truly impressive that the sand is perfect, truckload after truckload, ton after ton."

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For more information about BESTSAND golf sand, please call: 800.243.9004 or email: BestSand@CoviaCorp.com.



BESTSAND™

Golf Sand

Outcome

The results of the bunker restoration project exceeded expectations, delivering a course that meets the highest quality and performance standards. Key outcomes include:

Consistency: By providing consistently high-quality products from the first truckload to the last, BESTSAND™ helps clients like Oakland Hills ensure that their greens and bunkers will perform predictably day after day. As Cuffare noted, his job is to build bunkers and greens that will hold up in 2051. “We want a predictable outcome, and that’s what you get with BESTSAND.”

Ease of Maintenance: The strategic use of high-quality BESTSAND bunker sand and greens mix at the South Course reduces maintenance needs, with only minimal manipulation required to ensure optimal playing conditions. This ease of maintenance translates to reduced energy costs and labor hours, resulting in significant long-term savings for the OHCC.

Enhanced Playability: Beyond its impact on tournament play, the revamped course benefits OHCC members, who experience top-notch conditions on a daily basis. Players enjoy improved consistency and performance thanks to the firm and true surfaces created with BESTSAND’s custom blends. Even in adverse weather conditions, the course maintains its playability as the sand remains firm and resists washing or blowing away. “We don’t have to hope and pray for good golf course conditions. They are sustained day after day. We’ve changed the game in that regard,” said Cuffare.



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BESTSAND™ Delivers

As demonstrated by the outcomes and benefits experienced at OHCC, choosing BESTSAND is a strategic decision for those prioritizing quality and performance. Superintendents and agronomists at courses across the country partner with the BESTSAND team because the company has a reputation for delivering high-quality products quickly and efficiently.

Logistics: With coast-to-coast supply capabilities, a reliable source of raw materials and the industry's most comprehensive and accessible distribution network, you can rely on BESTSAND to meet your project timelines. "Maintaining a strict delivery schedule is very important when you're doing a restoration. With BESTSAND, there was no delay in the product, even during COVID," Cuffare said.

Quality: BESTSAND bunker sands start with high-quality angular silica stone, which is crushed and engineered to meet customers' needs. Cuffare noted that "The team at BESTSAND provides the best quality by examining and optimizing the tiniest details. They're flexible, they think outside the box, and they make our project goals their priorities."

Customer Service: BESTSAND is your expert partner for bunker sand, construction mixes, topdressing sand and divot mixes. You can rely on our decades of industry expertise. We'll work with you to find the ultimate solution for your course maintenance issues or new construction needs.

Conclusion

To achieve a successful bunker restoration project at the South Course of Oakland Hills Country Club, Director of Agronomy Philip Cuffare consulted closely with BESTSAND, from initial planning to product delivery and implementation. The restored bunkers offer enhanced playability, ease of maintenance and sustainability, ensuring that the South Course remains a premier golf destination for generations to come.

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Philip Cuffare, OHCC's Director of Agronomy, generously contributed his time to this study.

Thanks, Phil!

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