

SUPER TIP

Every Drop Counts

By Darren J. Davis

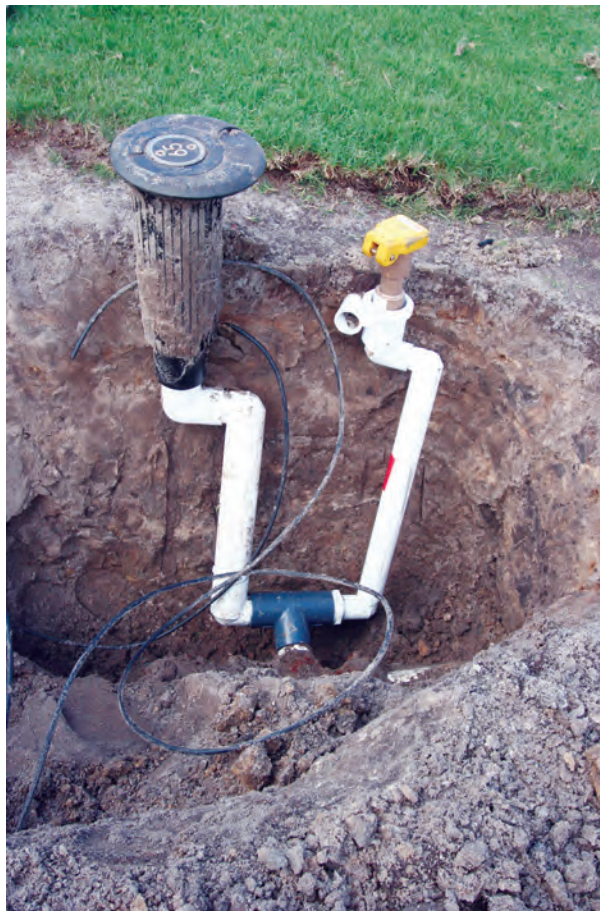
Conservation is not a new concept for golf course superintendents; however, with current water restrictions affecting a vast majority of Florida golf courses the phrase, “every drop counts” has definitely taken on added meaning. The Super Tip offered below details a project that was undertaken at Olde Florida Golf Club during the summer of 2007 in anticipation of additional restrictions being placed on irrigation water use.

When installed in 1992, the computerized irrigation system at Olde Florida was fairly “state of the art”. However, even with the significantly modern technology available at that time, it was decided to install 100 quick-coupling valves to provide supplemental irrigation water on tees and greens. During the dry winter golfing season, these quick-coupling valves enable us to maintain a more consistent playing surface than if overhead irrigation was solely utilized. An additional important benefit of the quick coupling valves is a significant reduction in water usage.

Through the years we have expanded our hand-watering practices to include areas in the fairways and rough. However, with a hydraulically-controlled, dual-head fairway-and-rough irrigation system, the process of tapping into irrigation heads with hoses is very time consuming. Additional quick coupling valves were in order and John Leibold, president of Leibold Irrigation provided me with a technique which we utilized to install an additional 100 quick coupling valves to the fairways and rough. While the total quantity we decided to install may

seem daunting to some, the process described below can be employed to quickly and inexpensively add quick coupling valves in quantities as little as one at a time.

For ease of installation, the additional quick couplers were all installed at existing irrigation heads. After the turf surrounding the



Adding strategically located quick couplers offers efficient hand watering option to drought prone turf areas. Photo by Darren Davis.

irrigation head was stripped and the soil removed the following steps were undertaken:

The top of the existing swing joint was unscrewed from the lower ninety degree fitting.

The lower ninety degree fitting was then unscrewed from the 1-inch male-

by-male nipple that attached the swing joint to the service tee.

Note: To avoid potential problems the male-by-male nipple originally screwed into the service tee remained untouched throughout the process.

With the existing swing joint removed (with the exception of the male-by-male fitting), a 1-in. Lasco

315-psi-rated, acme-thread double swing tee was installed on the 1-in. fitting extruding from the service tee.

The lower 90-degree fitting from the original swing joint was then installed on one side of the new Lasco fitting.

A (new) male, acme-by-acme nipple was then screwed into the lower 90-degree fitting.

The top of the original swing joint was then screwed onto this new nipple.

With the original swing joint and irrigation head reattached, the next step was to install a new quick coupler swing joint on the opposite side of the Double Swing Tee. The first step in the quick coupler swing-joint installation was to remove the lower male acme-by-acme nipple from the new swing joint and install it into the available side of the double swing tee.

Next the lower 90-degree fitting from the quick coupler swing joint was removed from the swing joint and screwed onto the nipple that was just installed on the swing tee.

Finally, the new quick coupler swing joint was screwed onto the installed 90-degree fitting.

Note: all fittings were screwed snug and then backed off one turn.

After all connections had been made the swing joints were correctly positioned, the soil and sod was replaced.