

PROVEN PERFORMANCE

Beaverbrook Golf Course



THE CHALLENGE

Product Topsport
Client Beaverbrook Golf Course
Main contractor DMK Golf Design
Location Leatherhead, Surrey

Building Beaverbrook: a tee to green solution for one of the country's most exclusive golf clubs

THE CHALLENGE

Golf in the UK is well known as an accessible sport, with thousands of clubs dotted around the country. Whilst the nation is home to some of the most famous courses in the world, the word luxury does not always spring to mind. However all this is set to change with the impending opening of the Beaverbrook Course at the Cherkley Court development: a £90m hotel and golf course resort designed by some of the most prestigious names in the game.

Based near Leatherhead in Surrey, and once home to media magnate and one-time owner of the Express Newspaper Ground – Lord Beaverbrook, Cherkley Court is set to push the boundaries of premium golf resorts, not just in the UK but across Europe.

The new resort, developed by Longshot Cherkley Court (LCC) and due to open in 2016, will be home to a £90m hotel and the prestigious 18 hole Beaverbrook golf course. Co-designed by eight-time major championship winner Tom Watson, along with renowned golf course architect David McLay Kidd (DMK), the Beaverbrook Course will offer the rare opportunity to play on a world-class surface.

One of the standout features of the Beaverbrook Course will be its USGA-accredited greens. Achieving such a high quality putting surface is out of reach for many clubs due to the associated requirements, costs and logistics that must be adhered to in order to receive USGA accreditation.

In order to meet such demanding requirements, DMK approached Tarmac to tap into its years of expertise in golf course Rootzone design and construction via its specialist Topsport solutions. For the Beaverbrook course, a range of high performance Topsport materials were heavily involved in nearly all aspects of the course's construction, from tees to greens, and all the green surrounds.

A crucial part of achieving USGA accreditation is ensuring the right rootzone mixture is achieved. The USGA specifies that all rootzones used for greens must be mixed offsite, and strongly recommends any potential product undergoes a rigorous quality control programme undertaken in a laboratory environment. This ensures that any Rootzone laid will comply with the strict performance criteria laid down by the USGA recommendations and will offer the necessary agronomic support for the seed bed and growing in process.

THE SOLUTION

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In order to help DMK achieve USGA accreditation for the Beaverbrook Course greens, Tarmac supplied over 12 thousand tonnes of its Topsport rootzone to be used across all of the greens, as well as the green surrounds and tee boxes.

The bespoke rootzone was designed and mixed at a dedicated off-site mixing station from high quality sand, blended with carefully selected organic materials. This allowed it to maintain organic content and pH balance, as well as providing the best possible growing medium for the three different playing surfaces.

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Peter Cullen, Technical Sales Manager,

Support for adequate drainage also had to be prioritised to provide consistent course playability throughout the year. Poorly drained greens can result in a number of serious maintenance issues, as well as having a detrimental impact on a player's round as they are much more difficult to read. Given Beaverbrook Course's vision of unsurpassed quality, a state-of-the-art drainage solution was imperative.

Drainage gravel is a crucial element of a green's construction, and as with rootzones, must meet certain criteria in order to achieve USGA accreditation. Tarmac was again on hand to supply over six thousand tonnes of its specially designed Topsport drainage gravel to the Beaverbrook Course. The gravel was designed to meet the performance criteria required when an intermediate gravel layer is not used in the green construction. Bridging, permeability and uniformity co-efficient criteria were all met by careful source selection, which included the ability to wash and screen to a well-defined grading profile. The overall drainage and growing media profile profile can then move water rapidly away from the green's surface, ensuring available play times are maximised.

Peter Cullen, Technical Sales Manager, for Tarmac's Topsport team, was heavily involved in the specification and supply process for the Beaverbrook Course at Cherkley Court. “All construction materials supplied to the Beaverbrook Course, including the drainage gravels, the straight sands and the blended rootzone product, had to be produced to the USGA Recommendations for putting green construction; which involved an incredible amount of pre-testing and pre-production work to ensure we could meet the brief.

“One of the key challenges involved the production of the USGA rootzone. It comprises of fully classified sand produced at Kingsley quarry in Hampshire which is then blended with a specifically graded sphagnum peat. This resulted in a growing medium with very precise physical properties to support the very fine grasses needed to meet USGA requirements. It took probably about six months to achieve the right blend ratios to achieve the specification.

"Similarly, all gravel had to be designed to meet the Beaverbrook Course's exacting grading specification. This was to ensure no fine material could potentially enter and block the perforated drainage pipes, which were laid in the herringbone style and then covered with Shepperton 2/6mm of gravel, and 30cm of the rootzone, before being shaped."

Peter concludes: "Whilst a significant amount of research and development has been undertaken to ensure only the best possible material was supplied for the Beaverbrook Course, we are extremely confident the end result will be one of the finest playing surfaces in British golf."

Casey Krahenbuhl, Senior Design Associate at DMK Golf Design and Site Manager at Beaverbrook Golf Course, added: "Our design criteria changes from site to site, but here at Beaverbrook the developers wanted nothing less than the highest standard of greens in the country, or even in Europe. Fine creeping bent grass greens were the only option for us to meet this brief, and to do that we needed the very best green and tee construction possible, namely USGA Specification. Sourcing a sand and a gravel that worked for us was crucial. "However it's not just about the product, it's also about the supply chain and dealing with vendors that we trust and believe in and that we know can be partners to the project.

The final product was fabulous; some of the best USGA sand we've ever dealt with, really consistent and exactly what we were after. Tarmac's Topsport team has been the best partner we could ask for on the job, they've been our biggest vendor and the supply chain they've provided has been fantastic throughout."

- *USGA accredited bespoke rootzone blend*
- *In excess of 12,000 tonnes of rootzone supplied*
- *Over 6000 tonnes of drainage gravel*
- *Drainage media designed to meet USGA performance criteria*

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Casey Krahenbuhl, Senior Design Associate at DMK Golf Design and Site Manager at Beaverbrook Golf Course

For more information on our range of Topsport golf course solutions please visit www.topsport.co.uk

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