

Ålands Golf Club, Finland



A Bold Renovation of The Castle Course Takes Advantage of Spectacular Scenery

Property Details:

Ålands Golf Club Course Director

Åsa Nordström

Golf Course Architect

Philip Spogård

Contractor

Nelson & Vecchio

Rain Bird Distributor

Schetelig OY

Rain Bird Products

Nimbus™ II Central Control

IC System™

751 Series IC Rotors

900/950 Series IC Rotors

550 Series Block Rotors

PEB IC Valves

23,000m Rain Bird 2-core control cable

CHALLENGE

Close to the Gulf of Finland, the Åland Islands are at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia in the Baltic Sea. Here, in the most spectacular island location, is one of Finland's finest golf courses, the Ålands Golf Club. Across the Slottsundet bay from a mediaeval castle Kastelholm, the club is famed for its two magnificent 18-hole courses, the Kings Course and the Castle (Slottsbanan), a fine parkland track designed by Jan Sederholm and built in 1983.

Slottsbanan 2.0 is a bold renovation of the Castle Course that redesigns holes and reroutes greens over water and capitalises on the stunning scenery. When completed in 2020, golfers will enjoy sublime views across water wherever they play.

"We have a very unique and historically important site. Our main aim was upgrading the visual appeal of the course and taking advantage of all the natural features around us including the bay and castle. We want to enhance the player experience and make the course more fun to play so every golfer at every level enjoys success and gets a real sense of achievement."

— Åsa Nordström
Ålands Golf Club Course Director



SOLUTION

The project involves upgrading the existing Nimbus™ II Central Control currently running a decoder system and replacing the original 30-year old PVC pipes with 19,500m new HDPE polyethylene piping and 23,000 metres of 2-core control cabling.

With Rain Bird's exclusive hybrid solution, Ålands is able to have the 18 holes with the new IC System at Castle Course run on the same centrally located PC as the 18 holes on the Kings Course that is still running on the decoder system. Having two systems running effectively as one enabled the Castle Course to be upgraded, leaving the other Kings and Princess Courses to remain open for play. The club has the ability to make upgrades and extend the course in the future, if necessary, on a hole by hole basis, keeping disruption to play to a minimum and allowing for renovation costs to be carefully phased.

As land over 15 holes rises from 2 metres to a height of 28 metres before going over a hill, with 3 holes some 1.5km away from the pumping station, a comprehensive hydraulic analysis was carried out to ensure the pump could meet the unusually demanding conditions.

The site can be windy and is prone to extreme weather conditions, the ground is rocky and in places, solid rock had to be fractured by the contractor as part of the irrigation installation work.

RESULTS

Ålands Golf Club will use less resources in terms of staff hours, generating cost savings. The new system will allow the club to be more accurate, use less water, achieve a better result and meet targets, improving the quality of greens at the start of the season and extending the season overall.

"The location and scenery of Ålands Golf Club is as good as it gets. Mature trees, rolling land, rocky outcrops, direct views to a neighbouring 700-hundred-year-old castle and 6 holes along the coastline are just some of the features. The new course will be truly unique and full of character. It will, without a doubt, be one of the most spectacular courses in Europe once completed."

— Philip Spogård
Golf Course Architect