

Axis tops the leaderboard for LPGA tournament security.

Wegmans LPGA Championship teams with Axis and Securitronics to drive down security costs and increase net proceeds for charity.



Organization:
Wegmans LPGA
Championship

Location:
Pittsford, NY, USA

Industry segment:
Leisure/Venues

Application:
Loss prevention, safety
and security

Axis partners:
Securitronics,
Fluidmesh, Exacqvision

Mission

The Wegmans LPGA Championship is one of four major golf tournaments on the LPGA Tour. With 100% of the net proceeds going to charity, tournament organizers were open to ideas that would increase their bottom line. One of the biggest budget line items was the contract for round-the-clock security staff. If they could augment golf course security with surveillance cameras, they could improve coverage – especially at night – with a more focused contracted security force.

Solution

Tournament organizers brought in Securitronics, a trusted NY-based security integrator and Axis partner, to install eight specially selected Axis network cameras for the event. A robust Fluidmesh wireless network transmitted the video at full frame rate and full resolution to a security trailer parked onsite, and ExacqVision server technology stored the video and allowed operators to view multiple camera feeds in real time.

It also enabled security operators to push video out to smartphones used by security staffers patrolling the 300-acre Locust Hill Country Club in Pittsford, NY.

Result

With their exceptional day/night capabilities, the Axis network cameras helped security keep close watch over vulnerable assets left unattended overnight, such as golf carts, fully-loaded ambulances, and semi-trailers filled with food and hospitality supplies. Initially intended to supplement night patrols when visibility was limited, organizers quickly recognized that the Axis cameras could provide extra eyes on daytime activity as well. Security could remotely monitor traffic at shuttle bus stops and dispatch extra personnel to alleviate bottlenecks. The cameras also monitored some 100,000 spectators funneling through the visitor expo tent that led to the viewing galleries.

"We need security 24/7 to make sure we don't lose materials and incur additional cost to the tournament. The Axis cameras give us wider coverage than we've had in the past and help us offset the high cost of paid overnight security."

Linda Hampton, tournament director for Wegmans LPGA Championship Tournament.

Driving temporary surveillance logistics

Golf tournaments by nature are temporary events. Set-up and teardown happens in a few short weeks, sometimes days. Additionally, once the sun goes down, most of the course sits in complete darkness. In its 35 years of operation, Wegmans LPGA Championship had never considered it possible to build the infrastructure needed to support video surveillance, let alone deploy the technology in such a short time span.

However, once organizers saw the potential offered by the array of Axis thermal, day/night and interior dome network cameras, they realized how the technology could benefit their bottom line.

"Combining volunteers and paid security with this technology makes the whole process more efficient," shares Linda Hampton, tournament director, Wegmans LPGA Championship. "At the end of the day, this nets us more money for our charity – the United Way's *Graduation is the Goal*."

In 2010, tournament proceeds for charity totaled \$400,000. With the help of IP video surveillance, organizers hope to increase that figure in future years.

Improving a security handicap

Nighttime on any golf course is especially challenging for physical security. At the Locust Hill Country Club, it's nearly impossible to prevent unauthorized access from adjacent properties and the public road bisecting the grounds. To compensate, tournament organizers beef up paid security overnight to cover the 300-acre property.

"During the day, we have lots of volunteers," explains Hampton. "But night is strictly paid personnel. We're hoping that the visual connectivity we get with the Axis cameras will help us pare up to \$20,000 from our night-time operating costs in the future."

Securitronics worked closely with tournament personnel to select the best mix of cameras to maximize the installation. They deployed AXIS Q1921-E Thermal Network Cameras in high-risk locations – the golf cart and

semi-trailer storage areas – which allowed security to detect activity in complete darkness. "With the open field behind the golf course and a public road providing easy access, those areas were particularly vulnerable to after-hours vandalism and theft," explains Terry Rivet, owner and executive vice president, Securitronics.

The 1080p HDTV-quality AXIS P1346-E helped security watch over the operations building, which housed expensive maintenance equipment and the fully-loaded ambulances left onsite. These day/night cameras were also used to monitor the traffic circle where the shuttle buses dropped off and picked up attendees.

"The security officer monitoring the drop off area told us that the live video helped her stay on top of the situation and make sure that traffic was being handled correctly," shares Rivet.

The remaining vandal-resistant AXIS P3344-V Fixed Domes gave security HDTV-quality images of the visitor expo tent, a high traffic area where vendor partners setup displays with expensive equipment and free samples. The cameras' wide dynamic range capabilities provided security with clear images in varying lighting conditions. Digital zoom allowed them to focus in for live close-up views of situations when needed.

Taking the lead for future tournaments

Securitronic worked closely with Axis to select the camera models and optimum locations for the tournament using a Google map of the course. Having learned from the initial experience, tournament organizers are eager to expand the use of surveillance technology for future championship events.

Linda Hampton is quick to point out that she doesn't expect the Axis cameras to eliminate security personnel altogether. Providing player protection and managing spectators and directing traffic are services only a live person can provide. "But from a visibility standpoint, the cameras give us a broader view of what's happening and help us provide a safer experience for our spectators and players," states Hampton.

