

Gourlay, job well suited

By MARK LESLIE

MANHATTAN, Kan. — "This job was written for me," said David Gourlay of his position as director of golf course operations and general manager at Kansas State University's Colbert Hills Golf Course here.

At a facility where the emphasis is put preparing students to

be course managers as well as superintendents, Gourlay has already lived the aspiration after 16 years in the industry.

A graduate of Texas A&M following a two-year associate degree at Guelph University and one year at Penn State, Gourlay:

- first worked at the all-women Ladies Club of Toronto, where

there was no general manager, just an accountant;

- was superintendent/general manager at Summerlea Golf Club in Vaudreuil-Dorion, Quebec, near Montreal; and

- was superintendent at Ottawa (Ontario) at Eagle Creek when new owners fired the golf pro and general man-



David Gourlay

ager, "so I ended up running the whole thing for a couple of months."

Active in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, interested in research and having grown in two courses, Gourlay jumped at the chance for the Colbert Hills position where the superintendent would double as

general manager and Audubon International would be involved from the beginning of construction.

"Being on the cutting edge is a perfect fit for me," the Toronto native said. "I had just had Summerlea certified and had won a GCSAA [Golf Course Superintendents Association of America] Environmental Steward Award. I love research and did a lot of it at Texas A&M for Dr. [James] Beard. It was a natural tie-in for me. And they were looking for a GM and superintendent."

Meanwhile, the Jeff Brauer-designed golf course was an attraction as well.

"It's not a traditional Kansas golf course," Gourlay said. "It's located in the flint hills, so it's pretty rolling. There are 100-foot elevations everywhere. You cannot believe it."

The 18-hole course contains more than 100 bunkers and all its green are U.S. Golf Association-spec.

K-State program

Continued from previous page

Vaudreuil-Dorion, Quebec and at Eagle Creek in Ottawa, Ontario, Gourlay said the golf courses were built to meet all needs.

"It's unique here," Gourlay said. "We're in the transition zone and we have everything."

The championship course has zoysiagrass tees and fairways; L-93 bentgrass greens; Kentucky bluegrass roughs bordering the fairways; fescue roughs outside the bluegrass; and native Kansas prairie grasses and some buffalograss outside the roughs.

On the par-3, for research purposes, each green has a different bentgrass: A-4, G-2, Penncross, L-93, Providence, Cato, Putter, SR-1020, Dominant Plus.

The par-3's fairways have various varieties of perennial ryegrasses, dwarf Kentucky bluegrasses, turf-type tall fescues, and some blends of each of bluegrasses and tall fescues.

Meanwhile, the driving range tees boast Bermudagrass.

"The students coming out of here will be the most prepared for the industry because of the grasses, the affiliation with Audubon, working in conjunction with some of the tournaments we will have, and because we have the National Academy of First Tee," Gourlay said.

As Gourlay left to speak to a class on "So You Want To Be a General Manager" he added: "More and more people are doing it [moving into general manager jobs]. There are a multitude of reasons. One is economics. A lot of clubs can't pay top dollar to all three — the pro, clubhouse manager and superintendent. So, some superintendents are getting the opportunities. There are a lot of qualified superintendents who can jump into that position if that is the direction they want to take in their careers." ▶

BUT HOW ARE YOUR BUNKERS?

Introducing The New Tournament Rake.

Our new-design finish implement delivers the perfect sand conditions for the best bunker play. So revolutionary it is being patented. Constructed of high grade, rust-proof stainless steel, its new and flexible raking teeth and specially designed blades create the ideal firmness and finish for bunker sand. And it operates silently. Only from Smithco.



SUPER STAR Bunker Rake

Our Speed Boss Invention. The patented, bunker finish speed control that prevents sand throw-out and greatly reduces the time and labor required for edging. You adjust and pre-set the finish speed and the system takes over automatically when the raking implement is lowered, then restores the normal ground speed when it is raised. So, you're the boss. Only from Smithco.



SUPREME Bunker Rake

Many Other New And Exclusive Features.

Our liquid-cooled gasoline engine ■ hydraulic power steering ■ extra-high ground clearance for easy bunker entry and exit ■ and our patented, silent, electric-powered "E" model ■ Only from Smithco.

Our extensive line of bunker rakes and implements, with their many new and innovative features, offers by far the widest choice of models and pricing, to meet every need and budget. Call your Smithco distributor today for a demo. Seeing is believing.



SAND STAR "E" Bunker Rake PATENTED

ALWAYS OUT FRONT
SMITHCO
WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA 19087
www.smithco.com