

Gourlay, job well suited

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

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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 jumped at the chance for the Creek when new owners fired the golf pro and general man-

David Gourla

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

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 Brauerdesigned 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-

K-State program

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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 jobsl. 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."

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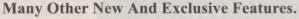
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