

The Minikahda Club Prepares to Host MGCSA Championship on September 8

The Minikahda Club, Minneapolis, was established in 1898. Jeff Johnson has been the Superintendent since 2002.

The par 73 course measures 6,775 yards.

Willie Watson and Robert Foulis were the original architects. In 1917 the club hired Donald Ross to complete a redesign of the existing layout.

In 2002 the club hired Ross expert, Ron Prichard, to complete a total course restoration.

Greens were re-established to the original fill pads, fairways were widened, all bunkers were rebuilt, all tees were rebuilt, over 350 trees were removed, and a new Toro irrigation system was installed.

Prior to our restoration, this golf course was beginning to look like so many other clubs throughout the Midwest. The golf course had been over-planted with trees, the greens had become your basic round greens, and the bunkers were in dire need of being rebuilt.

The greens had lost much of their original shape due to years of triplexing as well as trees planted too close to the green surfaces which caused competition between the turf and the trees. It was easier to bring the greens in than to deal with the removal of a tree, thus the surfaces had shrunk considerably. Now green surfaces have been pushed to the edge of the fill pads and we have reestablished many hole locations that were once a thing of the past.

Since the club had the original Donald Ross plans many of the bunkers that were once removed were added and the original classic look of steep bunker faces with flat bottom bases were reintroduced. Prior to the restoration there were 78 bunkers and now a golfer must navigate over 99. One of the most unique features to these bunkers is when they were built, Ron Prichard insisted on having all bunkers sodded with a fescue/bluegrass blend. By using fescue as the dominant

grass species we have been able to virtually eliminate the need for fertilizing the green surrounds and the bunker faces. We have also been able to greatly reduce the amount of water that is applied to them. Another unique feature has been the fact that during the past three years we have allowed the fescue to grow on the bunker faces. Although this has been a bit controversial and we have had to make some modifications throughout the management of these areas, it does give the golf course a traditional look.

Additionally, when it comes to bunker maintenance you will not find a crisp, clean, perfectly edged bunker at Minikahda. In order to maintain the classic look and feel we allow the turf to grow in and create a laced edge. When we feel it is time to "edge" a bunker, a four pronged pitchfork is used to rip an edge.

(Continued on Page 6)

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About Excel Turf & Ornamental

Excel Turf & Ornamental provides products and expertise to the entire green industry in the Upper Midwest (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa). Our goal is to provide better agronomic services, better products and the best service to our customers. To contact Excel Turf & Ornamental call 651-681-8050 or email us at david.oberle@comcast.net

The Minikahda Club-

(Continued from Page 5)

Power edgers would destroy the integrity of the design and in a short period of time the bunkers would be back to the same situation they were in prior to the restoration. Mechanical power edgers are not allowed in the bunkers.

The club prides itself in its long standing tradition of golf and involvement within the golfing community. The Minikahda Club has played host to the 1916 U.S. Open (won by Chick Evans who started the Evans Scholarship program), 1927 U.S. Amateur (won by Bobby Jones), 1957 Walker Cup, 1988 U.S. Women's Amateur, the 1998 Curtis Cup, and numerous Trans-Mississippi Championships as well as State MGA events.

Minikahda also provides a strong caddie program. Since the course is very walker friendly a third of our rounds are by golfers carrying their own bag, a third hire the use of a caddie and only a third of our membership utilizes the use of electric carts.

Superintendent Jeff Johnson

Married to my wife Sue for 12 years. Sue is an elementary school teacher in Edina and runs the show at home. We have two boys, Owen 4 fi and Eddie 20 months. I graduated from the University of Minnesota, Waseca in 1991 and the University of Minnesota in 1994. My career began at the St. Cloud Country Club working for Kerry Glader, I then worked for Scott Austin at Midland Hills Country Club, first as technician for two years and then as Scott's first Assistant for two years. I also had one summer at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Indiana, working for Chris Hague.

I became the Assistant Superintendent at Minikahda in 1996, where I had the pleasure of working with Doug Mahal for six years. Following Doug's departure in 2002, I was hired as the Superintendent.

First Assistant Nick Folk

I have the privilege to work with an extremely experienced and talented staff. Nick Folk, First Assistant (the rookie of the group) is only in his second year at Minikahda, and has a strong background with some top notch clubs. Nick has had the opportunity to work at both Oakland Hills Country Club and Olympia Fields Country Club. Nick has been able to bring his experiences at these clubs to



The Grounds Staff at The Minikahda Club

Minikahda, incorporating much of what he has learned toward keeping the crew operating smoothly. Nick is engaged to be married later this month to his fiancée Valerie. He enjoys hunting with his yellow lab, Cooper, fishing, golfing and spending time at his in-laws' cabin in northern Minnesota. Nick has been in the golf business since 1998.

Second Assistant Rick Krause

Rick has been at Minikahda since 1986. His main focus is on irrigation upkeep as well as any construction project. Due to Rick's years of experience he has a great depth of knowledge regarding the irrigation system. When it comes to digging an irrigation head, I have never seen anyone do it faster or cleaner.

Third Assistant Johnny Jarosz

Johnny also has been on the staff since 1986, but has really grown up at the club as he began his career here as a caddie at age 12. His father, Serge, was the pastry chef here for over 30 years. Johnny's main duties include fertilizer and pesticide applications as well as operating the Skeet Shooting range in the winter. Johnny has the uncanny ability to complete almost

every application "right on."

Head Mechanic Ken Diethert

Our full-time staff also includes Head Mechanic Ken Diethert who has been here since 1989 and newly acquired Assistant Mechanic Ryan Parris. They do an excellent job maintaining our large fleet of equipment and keeping the staff going on a daily basis. The last long time member of our staff is our Gardener, Dick Axum, Dick has also been on staff since 1989. Take some time to admire the roses at the 10th tee house and outside the main ballroom -- that's Dick's handy work.

2008 MGCSA Championship

We are extremely proud to be the host site of this year's MGCSA Championship. I think everyone will find it to be a very enjoyable golf course to play. I would also encourage those of you that are able to walk, to leave the golf cart at the hole you drive it to and carry your bag. Minikahda is a very walkable golf course and there is really no better way to enjoy a round here than to walk it. On behalf of the Grounds Department at Minikahda, welcome to all that attend our association's Championship. -- Jeff Johnson