



Superintendent Insight: Jeffrey Minske

Eastwood Golf Course

Rochester, Minnesota



Eastwood is one of three municipal golf courses in Rochester. Eastwood measures 6,602 yards from the back tees and

has a rating of 72.2 with a slope of 133. With four sets of tees we can play as short as 4,775 yards. Eastwood underwent enormous change in the last four years as a new back nine was constructed and opened last summer. Our new holes are tree lined with a fair amount of elevation change. The greens are Dominant Extreme and the fairways and tees are low mow bluegrass; we are all looking forward to the maturation process and the many new challenges ahead.

On a personal note, I have been in the turf industry since 1978. I started as a seasonal employee at Soldiers Field Golf Course while attending school at St. Cloud State. My intended field was Photographic engineering until the turf bug bit me and now, 31 years later, I'm still at it. I have been at Eastwood since 1989 and have been the superintendent for the last six years.

It is hard to say exactly who my professional mentor is since we all get so much influence from so many different people at different stages of our careers. Tom St. George from Soldiers Field has certainly taught me that to maintain a consistent calmness in this field will be beneficial to get us all through the ups and downs that we all face in our everyday jobs. Jim Bartels,

Eastwood's only other superintendent taught me a great deal about turf and how to care for it. He also gave me the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them.

Certainly one of the most challenging things of my career was the construction of our new nine. Anyone who has undergone construction or renovation knows how exciting the planning stages and beginning of a project is; you also know that by the end of the project you cannot wait for all of the backhoes, cats and contracted crews to be gone and to leave the golf course to you and your staff to grow in and take care of. I think that one of my highest and most satisfying points of my career was our new nine

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being built. I am still waiting for a really low point.

I think that our biggest problem at Eastwood is our drainage or lack of it on some of our fairways and rough areas. We are built on the Decorah edge and it seems that every spring the frost has changed where the water wants to come out of the ground. There are times when our hillsides are running with water after a big rain event. We installed hundreds of feet of drain tile last summer and are hoping that we have a pretty good handle on the water problem.

Disease pressure is always there of course and our biggest concern is Bi-Polaris and only on our older greens.

I have been very fortunate as far as seasonal help is concerned. I have two retired gentlemen who have been with me for years and generally the remainder of the staff is usually here for 3-5 years while in school. It cuts down on having to retrain everyone every year.

Our industry, like most others, is entering into a time of change and uncertainty. Economic, environmental and political issues are at the forefront for us all. We are now expected to produce a product that exceeds the expectation of our clientele with less of a budget than in the past. We must become the leaders in conservation for one of our greatest tools, water. I am confident that as an industry we will meet these challenges head on and with a smile on our face. We truly are an adaptable group of professionals.

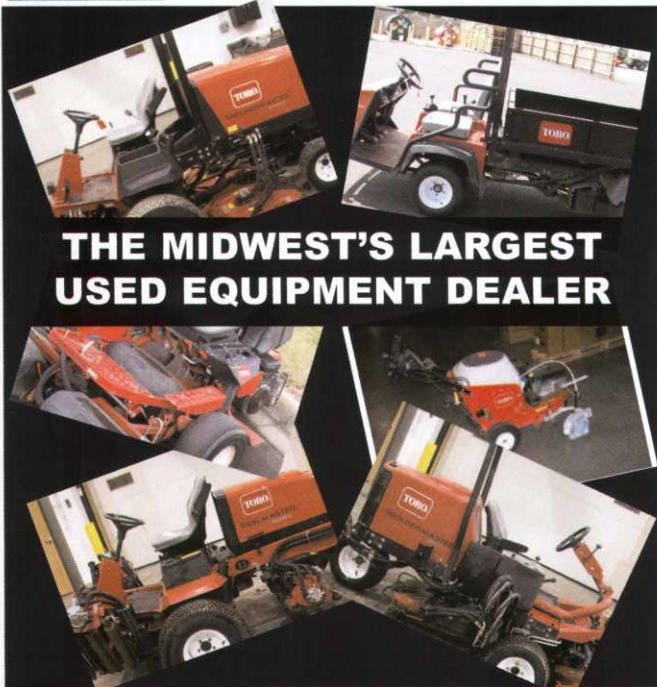
In 10 years hopefully, my wife and I will walk down a trail somewhere laughing about our children and hopefully grandchildren. Wherever we are my hope is for a healthy, happy family.

The MGCSA has certainly kept us informed of the changes in our industry. I appreciate the opportunity the association gives us to network with other professionals in our field. The association has, in my opinion, evolved into a group that makes us all feel welcome, from the smallest course in Minnesota to the biggest. The MGCSA's commitment to research and development has made all of our jobs easier.

My choice for a day on the course would have to include Lee Trevino, because I think you need some humor to play this game. Jack Nicklaus, just because he is Jack. The fourth would be my grandmother because we never got to play together.



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