

# One Superintendent's Perspective

By **GREG IDEN**  
Chomonix Golf Course  
Lino Lakes, Minnesota



Chomonix is an 18-hole golf course outlined by trees and water that measures 6,500 yards with a slope of 129. Built as a nine-hole course in the mid-'70s it was expanded to 18 in the mid-'80s. Since 1995 the course has undergone various improvements addressing drainage, playability and aesthetics. This challenging, yet fun, layout is within the Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Regional Park Reserve located in Lino Lakes, Minn.

I have been in the golf industry for the past 29 years. My first position was at Brookings Country Club in South Dakota where I began as night waterman and advanced to Assistant Superintendent. I went on to pursue a horticulture degree and now have 24 combined years as a Superintendent. I have served the last 14 years in my present position at Chomonix.

After being discharged from the United States Marine Corps, I started looking for a temporary job so I could figure out what to do with the rest of my life. I accepted the position at Brookings Country Club and that was the beginning of a love affair with the industry. The rest is history.

## Who was your professional mentor and why?

I have come in contact and learned a great deal from a wide array of professionals throughout my career. The most significant was my dad, a former golf coach and teaching pro. He gave me the insight on the importance of maintaining a course from a

golfer's perspective. Carlos Stimpson and Ted Evans are two Superintendents I have had the pleasure to learn under. They gave me the needed experience, knowledge and the latitude to make mistakes – all valuable tools to be successful in our industry. My educational mentor was Brad Pederson, a retired professor at the University of Minnesota.

## What have been the highest and lowest points in your career?

During my career I have had some memorable moments. It's always a high point when former employees call to thank me for being a positive influence in their lives and helping them become successful no matter what profession they have pursued.

My first spring at Chomonix. While looking at an ocean of snow mold on our front nine, the assistant said to me, "Oh that's not so bad, we get that every year. Wait 'til you see the back nine!" That's when I asked myself "I took this job - 'cause why?"

## What are your greatest agronomic challenges?

Maintaining a course with poor air movement, undesirable soil types with constantly wet conditions on a limited budget. All this while trying to provide a venue that meets the expectations of today's golfers. This makes for some trying times.

At Chomonix something nasty is always trying to rear its ugly head such as dollar spot and snow mold. Through cultural practices, a sound fertility program and today's chemical technology we seem to keep things in check.

## Is it hard to find good help in your area of the state?

We are fortunate to have a high employee return rate. When we do need to fill a position, staff is fairly easy to come by.

## Where will our industry be in 10 years?

The reality of the current economic challenges will set in due to budget constraints, environmental issues, regulatory restraints and player participation. I'm confident our industry will adapt through research and technology enabling us to become more effective and efficient.

## Where would you like to be in 10 years?

Depends on the stock market and/or the lottery numbers whatever works out best! No matter what happens I hope to be happy, healthy and employed.

## What is your perspective of our state association and what would you change?

I believe over the years the MGCSA and the directors have worked hard to become more proactive rather than reactive in dealing with the many issues they have faced. Their commitment and dedication in serving our membership should not go unnoticed. Their dedication certainly has helped our membership evolve into a stronger and more viable association.

## Name your foursome:

I'd want a day on the course with my dad, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer. Just being able to hang out with these class acts, both personally and professionally, would be a great way to spend a day.



4830 Azelia Avenue N. #100  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429  
763-592-5610 / 800-362-3665



**THE MIDWEST'S LARGEST  
USED EQUIPMENT DEALER**



View our entire inventory online at  
[www.mtidistributing.com](http://www.mtidistributing.com)