



SUPERINTENDENT INSIGHT

Charlie Miller

Goodrich Golf Course
Maplewood, Minnesota

Goodrich is an 18-hole public golf course that is owned and operated by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation and is located in Maplewood. Originally built in 1964 as a 12-hole course, it was expanded to 18 holes shortly after more land was acquired. We are currently in the middle of construction of a new three-quarter irrigation pond to increase the GPM from 600 to 1,200 and allow a much more efficient watering schedule.

In 1987, while working as a stock broker, I needed a change of profession after the Crash of the market. Professor Don White reluctantly took me in at the U of M. I graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Agriculture in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science after 14 years of study. Along the way I played tennis for the University of Southern Florida and Hamline University. I have been involved in the golf industry in some capacity since then, working as a custom applicator of fertilizer in Chicago, soft goods delivery driver, assistant superintendent, spray technician in Tampa, Florida and on and on.

Who is your professional mentor? My mentor continues to be Bob McKinney who is the Superintendent of Mendakota Country Club in Mendota Heights. He taught me not only the job skills that were needed to perform the various tasks on a golf course but also the passion for making everything the best that it could be. His work ethic, his dedication to basic agronomic principles and commitment to the golf course success have guided my management of my own course.

Getting my job as superintendent of a golf course is by far the best thing that has happened in my professional career. It takes a combination of hard work, persistence and luck to be in the right place at the right time. I am grateful to enjoy each day I come to work and accept the challenges that position brings me.

Lowest point? While working for Scotts Company in Chicago I received a call that I had a meeting at O'Hare the next day. If you ever have a meeting scheduled at an airport it can't be good news! We were all fired in 15-minute intervals.

Challenges? My first and foremost challenge is agronomic. The soils on my course vary from bad to worse and the greens are push up, 60/40, 70/30 and 80/20. By implanting basic agronomic principles over the last two years we have seen the greens make tremendous progress and with a new pump station we hope to continue moving forward. The other challenge I faced when coming here was getting the staff to sign on to my way of doing things. Coming from the private sector into government work it was sometimes difficult to motivate staff. Only a few staff members are left from when I started and I now have a great group of people who are committed to the day-to-day standards that I feel are needed to compete in today's market.

The most difficult battle I have had at the course so far is not a turf disease but a Japanese beetle infestation that I inherited from the previous superintendent. It has been a two year battle to reduce the population to tolerable levels by using the insecticide Arena but I think this summer we will be at acceptable levels. We will be removing vines that were planted along the fence lines

because they are the food of choice for the insect.

Is it hard to find good help in your area of the state? No, between the numbers of retired friends I have at the cigar club I belong to and the number of relatives and friends that have children in high school and college I have a great staff. I have know my assistant since he was about 10 years old and he is both qualified and motivated to providing the best golf experience possible.

Where will our industry be in ten years? I see the industry moving towards more environmental pressure from both good and bad sources. The good sources will provide us with better equipment, better fungicides, and more efficient water use. The global warming cult along with the chemical/fertilizer bad group will continue to attack our industry with false claims and junk science.

Where would you like to be in ten years? Ramsey County with five years left before I retire to Ft. Myers, FL.

What is your perspective of our state association and what would you change? I think our association does a great job supplying the membership with educational opportunities along with events that allow us to share ideas, laughs and bad golf. I wish more people would come to the events and enjoy the opportunity to be with friends.

Name your foursome, who would you play with and why. My father who recently passed away because I miss him so much. My fiancé because I love being with her and she makes my game look good and Jack Nicklaus because he is Jack.

BIGGER AND BETTER SELECTION THAN EVER BEFORE!



4830 Azelia Avenue N. #100
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429



CHECK OUT OUR ENTIRE USED
EQUIPMENT INVENTORY AT

www.mtidistributing.com

or contact Rick DeValk

763-592-5610 or rdevalk@mtidistributing.com



FINANCING AVAILABLE!

THE MIDWEST'S LARGEST
USED EQUIPMENT DEALER