

LIFE AWAY FROM THE MOWER AND THE SPRAY RIG



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The golf business can be pretty intense. You must have a special passion to stay in the profession. Many people choose to get out after awhile because it can be too much and affect ones health and family situation. One must have some interests away from the course to create a balance. I come from back east and grew up watching hockey. The action is great to watch especially live. You don't have any idea how big the players are or how fast they can skate until you are there. I met some people when I moved to California who were

working in San Jose as off-ice officials for the National Hockey League. I started going to most of the games and they asked me if I would be interested in joining the crew. I now get paid to watch hockey. The crew consists of timekeepers, penalty box attendants, goal judges, and computer operators who keep all the stats. Some of the jobs don't really allow you to watch much of the action but some do. Everybody on the crew grew up playing the game and many still do. It is imperative that we know the rules in order to do our jobs. Most people think that the sport is very violent and the players are a bunch of goons but they are usually very polite and courteous. Their athletic ability is incredible. The physical conditioning must to be top notch. They can skate backwards faster than most people can go

forwards and they change direction on a dime. The fans love the game and things can get very loud as the playoffs approach and intensify with each round. We have to be in the arena 90 minutes before game time. We get a meal and can be eating next to some greats of the game such as Wayne Gretzky, Grant Fuhr, Steve Yzerman, and others. They are all friendly and love talking about the game. Hockey players are usually very good golfers as well so we have that to talk about. Golf course superintendents love watching the game. I remember at the GIS in Atlanta a few years ago, the Atlanta Thrashers were in town and there must have been at least 250 attendees at the game. We really don't have much interaction with the players. There are 41 regular season games plus three preseason plus the playoffs. It can get a little busy at times but we rarely have more than three games in a week. I want the league to send me to Toronto for training in the summer time, as I know many superintendents in the area. I also do a little collecting of memorabilia. It is a family thing. I have a flag signed by all living Masters Champions except two, Jackie Burke Jr. and Severiano Ballesteros. I also have about 10 each of US Open, PGA, and British Open champions as well as various other events. I am working on getting a flag from each of the USGA events. I have many LPGA autographs as well since I watch them about twice a year as I have a friend who has been on tour for five years. It has more meaning when you know someone playing. The only time I rooted against my hometown Mets was when a college friend was pitching for the Atlanta Braves. I have stuff from all of the major sports but the concentration is on golf and hockey. It will be a pain to move as I have lots a framed works. It is fun and gives me something to do at events besides watch.



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