

Dave Radaj -N-



The Radaj family: Dave and wife Tracy with daughter Kathryn and son Jack.



On August 26, the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents will be treated to a great day of golf with our host Dave Radaj, CGCS at Green Acres Country Club in Northbrook. Having started there in 2000, Dave is now in his third season at Green Acres. Dave is originally from Greendale, Wisconsin, so the Green Acres position appealed to him since he would be a little closer to family.

Prior to Green Acres, Dave held the head position at the Wakonda Club in Des Moines, Iowa. Much of what he has accomplished in his career he attributes in part to working under longtime Medinah golf course superintendent, Danny Quast. Dave was the course superintendent on Course No. 1 at Medinah for two years and on Course No. 3 for his last year.

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Dave initially became interested in the golf management profession through his brother-in-law, who was the manager at Blue Mound Golf and Country Club in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Dave's brother-in-law arranged for him the opportunity to work on the grounds staff one summer, where he quickly discovered his passion for the golf maintenance industry. Upon graduating from high school, Dave entered the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and returned to Blue Mound the following summer. It was during that second season that Dave became hooked. He moved to Michigan, establishing residency, and worked on the grounds staff for Kurt Thuemmel at Walnut Hills Country Club in Lansing. Dave graduated in 1993 from Michigan State University and began his career working in Illinois.

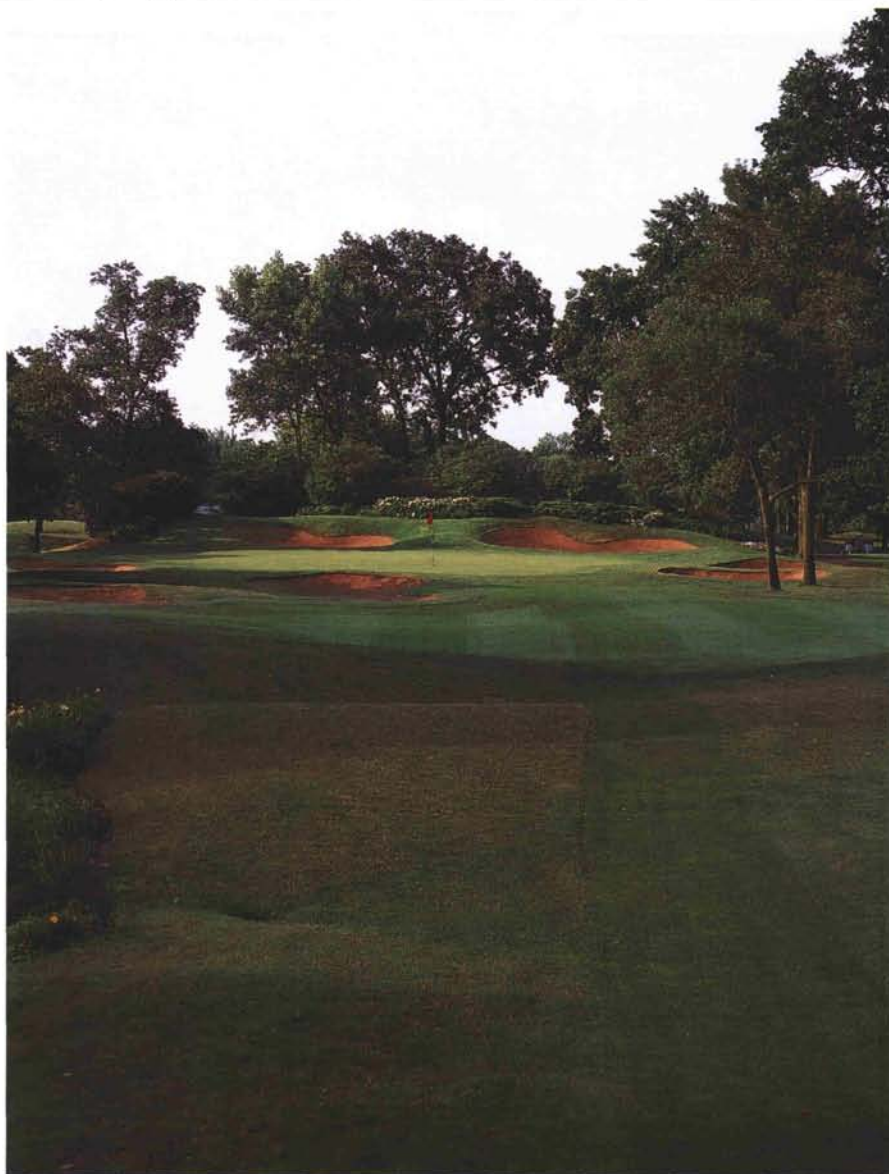
Green Acres is a spectacular golf course, with every square foot of the property manicured to perfection. The tree-lined fairways and breathtaking gardens offer a serene atmosphere to escape from the hectic world and enjoy a round of golf. Although 6,714 yards from the tips is not lengthy by today's standards, there are plenty of ways to get in trouble on this course, including some 2,300 trees and nine ponds, as well as a spectacular waterfall by the clubhouse. The small greens have subtle undulations and are well-guarded by bunkers. With green speed that can be described as slippery, the best option is to play the ball below the hole.

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Green Acres is also a great walking course. In fact, of the 12,000 rounds played annually, 8,000 of them are walking rounds. Encompassing 140 acres, the course was originally designed by none other than A.W. Tillinghast and redesigned later by Roger Packard. Presently, the club is working with golf course architect Roger Rulewich on developing a master plan. This will be the last season for the no. 2 green, as it will be rebuilt this fall. When we play the course, we will see soil stockpiled near the existing green in preparation for the project. The present green is being rebuilt because the membership is not fond of the shape and mounding.

Dave has been busy since his arrival at Green Acres. During his first season, he installed a new irrigation system and pump house. The system has more than 1,400 heads that offer the ability to water every area of the golf course with great flexibility. The bunkers have been reworked since his arrival. Utilizing different sand-retention products, Dave and his staff have perfected the art of flashed sand with limited washouts. The bunkers add a strong complement to the rest of the layout. Under Dave's direction is a staff of 22 headed up by his two assistants, Jeff Everson and Jason Higgins. Dave attained professional certification from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America this past April.

Dave and his wife Tracy reside in Gurnee with their two children, Kathryn, who is two-and-a-half, and her new baby brother, Jack. Dave's interests beyond golf are playing with his children and taking family cruises in his recently acquired 1971 Buick Skylark convertible. Don't bother asking Dave what he thinks the Bears will do this year; his only concern is that the Packers win two games by beating the Bears twice.



Hole no. 6, a par 3.



Hole no. 16, a par 3.

Photos by Jim Trzinski.