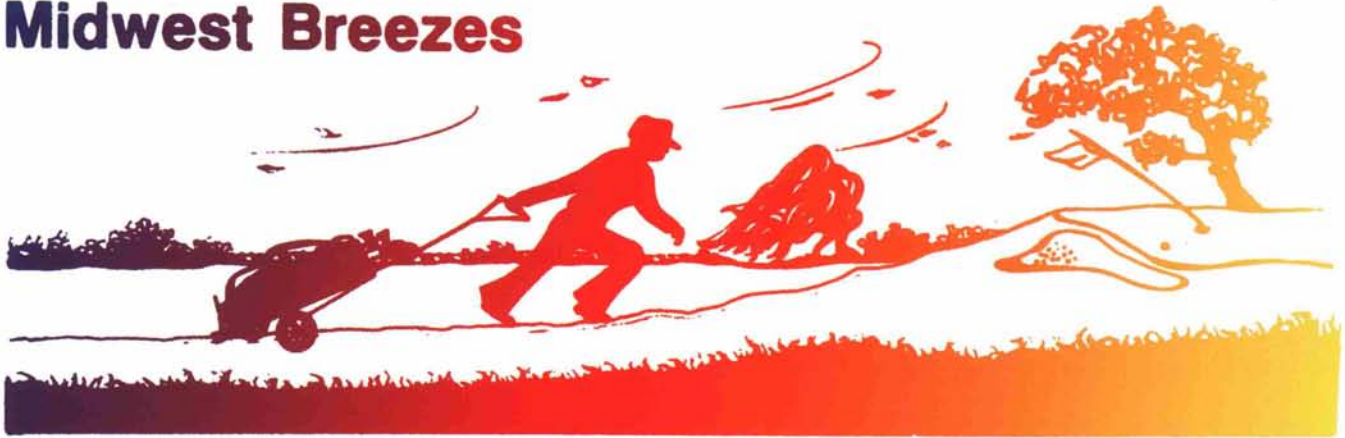


Midwest Breezes



Thunderbird Country Club's Rebirth as Makray Memorial Golf Club



On June 17, 2002, Thunderbird Country Club closed its doors to undergo a large-scale renovation and redesign. After two long years and a lot of hard work and dedication on the part of course superintendent Gordon Kappe and grow-in superintendent turned director of agronomy Chris Blake, the course reopened this past Memorial Day weekend under its new name, Makray Memorial Golf Club.

Though much of the old layout is still evident, several significant changes have been made. For starters, the front and back nines have been switched. Also, holes 4, 7, 8 and 17 underwent redesign. The par-3 fourth hole, for example, used to play uphill to the green. The direction of the hole, now reversed, plays downhill from an elevated tee to a narrow 50-yard-long green that is tightly guarded by a pond all along the right side.

To make all of the necessary changes required hauling in 1,000,000 cubic yards of clay. A large portion of that extraordinary amount of fill was used to construct a berm along the entire south edge of the course, which runs parallel to Northwest Highway. The berm, which has been seeded with a wildflower mix, stands 15-20' high and has helped reduce noise coming off the busy road. The rest of the fill was dedicated to extensive shaping and mounding that is featured on the course. In stark contrast to the relatively flat Thunderbird Golf Course, the new Makray Memorial is anything but. The creation of mounding not only adds to the aesthetic appeal of the course, but also should improve drainage.

While all of that fill dirt was coming in, removal of a large amount of problematic peat occurred from the area that is now the 18th hole. All of this peat was hauled to an out-of-play area located behind the driving range and

buried in three holes measuring approximately 90' wide by 70' deep, then capped off with clay.

Also rebuilt were all 18 greens, tees and fairways of the new Makray Memorial. Greens were built with a 90% sand/10% sphagnum peat moss mix and seeded with G-2. Tee construction used a 70% sand/20% sphagnum peat moss/10% humus mix. After careful research, Princeville was the choice for seeding tees and fairways. The primary reason for the selection of Princeville was its excellent heat-tolerance.

Like the greens, tees and fairways, all of the bunkers have also been rebuilt, with some added, some removed, all reshaped and deepened. A mechanical rake cannot get into many of the new bunkers. Therefore, all 31 bunkers will be hand-raked. A three-man crew accomplishes this task each morning. The sand selected for the new bunkers was from Best Sand in Ohio. It is a white sand and drainage and playability have reportedly been good thus far.

Also installed during the construction were a new pump station and irrigation system. The new pump station is a Wadsworth VFD with two 75-horsepower pumps and one 15-horsepower jockey pump. The irrigation system is a modified double-row with approximately 900 Toro 750- and 780-series sprinkler heads and Toro Sitepro central control.

Aside from the course itself, other project highlights include a 60,000-square-foot bentgrass driving-range tee, a new 4,500-square-foot maintenance shop, and a 24,000-square-foot clubhouse that is currently under construction.

—*Brian Mores*
Inverness Golf Club

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Paving the Way With Brick at Hinsdale Golf Club

Several years ago, the board of directors at Hinsdale Golf Club budgeted to install paths to five teeing areas. Prior to this, there were no paths on the golf course and wear areas were beginning to develop.

Superintendent Bob Maibusch, CGCS, states, "My greens chairman and I began talking about whether we should use asphalt or concrete, and he was not ultimately happy with either option, so I suggested using brick pavers. He liked the idea, and told me to proceed. We ended up spending all of the money earmarked for five holes on just one hole, but fortunately the members loved the finished product and we have proceeded to use the pavers on all of our subsequent path work."

Bob contracts the work to a company called Arcadian, out of Elburn, IL. The pavers are made by Unilock in Aurora. Before Bob installed his first path, he toured the manufacturing plant at Unilock and he was impressed with the durability of the pavers and ability of the manufacturer to provide more pavers in the future to match in exact color and texture.

The pavers are installed on 8-10" of compacted stone. Four inches of base would be sufficient for carts, but Bob occasionally uses his paths for moving heavy equipment and materials, and the extra base has held up well.

"The brick pavers are certainly expensive, but they should last much longer than asphalt or concrete and they are so much more attractive than asphalt or concrete."

Bob reports no problems with traction under golf shoes or soft spikes; no frost-heaving; and no issues with durability. One other thing that Bob likes about the pavers is they can be temporarily lifted and put back in place for irrigation repairs or drainage projects. The only maintenance issue with pavers is weed growth in the cracks, which necessitates spraying two or three times a year.

—Bradley Anderson, CGCS
Midlane Country Club



What's News at Joliet Country Club

I always look around Chicagoland and wonder why folks insist that longevity is hard to come by in this business. Mark Kowaliczko is a good case in point, having been at Joliet Country Club since 1986. The University of Illinois graduate and past president of the Chicagoland Superintendents Association moved there after serving with Mike Nass at Bryn Mawr Country Club during the mid-1980s. Mark grew up in the Joliet/Lockport area and spent several seasons working for Ted Mochel at Joliet C.C during those formidable teenage years. That experience motivated him to pursue a career in turf management. He and his wife Diana have four sons: Zenon (12), Zachary (10), and 8-year-old twins, Christian and Chandler. In fact, young Zenon is cur-

rently on a student ambassador trip to England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. I didn't ask whether he took his clubs or not.

Mark tells me that his course hasn't been spared by all the May and June rains. The creek that runs through the property has come out of the banks on two occasions and while he notes no major turf problems as a result, he feels like all the time dealing with wet bunkers has prohibited him from addressing some details in his landscaped areas. Additionally, prior to the onset of any major heat, he predicted doing some small solid-tine aeration in some of his low-lying fairway areas. (Can I confess to thinking that was a swell idea and doing some

of that myself a few days after talking to Mark?) In fact, Mark said he has never irrigated any less to date than this year, but also hadn't started up the system any earlier (can we even remember that it was so dry back in April?).

The difficult economic times also have not completely spared Mark's club. Two years ago, a new clubhouse was built on the site of the 18th tee, a project that resulted in the building of a new hole. While that project was approved by 90% of the membership, it resulted in a significant membership loss. Additionally the club has changed from non-equity to equity membership. However, Mark reports 20 new members this year and (did you know?) that the Joliet and Plainfield area has been reported as being one of the top-10 growing areas in the country. On the equipment end, the club has initiated a leasing program and Mark has worked that into a line item on his operating budget.

Agronomically, Mark reported great results this spring in his initial year of using Primo and Proxy on the putting greens. He also reports experimenting with differ-

ent foliar products during the summer months, but the bulk of his fertility program is based on granular organic products.

Joliet C.C. was established in 1905 as a nine-hole Tom Bendelow layout and the greens are characteristically small, push-up soil affairs. Mark strongly feels that any success he has achieved in maintaining today's lower mowing heights can be attributed to 15 years of deep-tine aerification in the spring and fall accompanied with sand topdressing.

For those of you new to the Association, Mark is always easy to spot at our winter meetings. It's not uncommon to see his sport coat complemented by a plaid vest or a pocket square. I guess that makes him a traditionalist of sorts (and the envy of those of us who are fashion-challenged). Mark also comes across as a very soft- but well-spoken individual, no doubt one of the qualities that has contributed to his longevity at Joliet Country Club.

—Brian Bossert, CGCS
Bryn Mawr C.C.

A Solution for Aerating Poor Soils at Crystal Tree Golf & Country Club

For the last two years, Les Rutan, superintendent at Crystal Tree, has been topdressing fairways in the spring and fall with Dakota 440 topdresser at 25 tons of washed mason sand per acre.

Les has been applying the sand in two to three applications as opposed to attempting to brush the material in with one application. He started this program primarily to provide an inorganic amendment to the thatch development at the surface. The soils at Crystal Tree are so poor

that conventional aeration and core processing would not provide a suitable topdressing source for integration with thatch development.

The aeration method that has worked very well for Les is the Airway Slicer, which has done an outstanding job of loosening the soil and opening up channels for root development and water penetration.

—Bradley Anderson, CGCS
Midlane Country Club

Eradicating Moss on Greens at Prairie Landing Golf Club

Superintendent Tony Kalina has found a sure product for moss eradication on greens. The product is called Quicksilver, a turf and ornamental herbicide made by FMC. It is a concentrated form of carfentrazone, the same active ingredient of Speedzone broadleaf herbicide.

Tony has made two applications to his Pennlinks greens, which are cut at 130. The first was in mid-May at 1.0 ounce per acre in two gallons of water per 1,000-square-foot application rate. The second application was 30 days later at 0.50 ounces per acre.

Tony reports that the moss quickly turned orange-brown; it then shriveled and died, and there was virtually

no phytotoxicity. As the moss shriveled, the bentgrass immediately began tillering into the void.

As an experiment, Tony went over an area of one green at a 2x rate and later monitored no harm to the bent turf. Tony hastens to point out that anyone attempting to use this product on his green should experiment on check plots first, especially if the greens have any *Poa annua* concentrations.

—Bradley Anderson, CGCS
Midlane Country Club



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