

Michael Sauls Oversees Successful Renovation of Butler National

Michael Sauls has recently completed a major renovation of Butler National. The golf course reopened to rave reviews on June 1, 2005.

Butler National was originally designed in 1974 by George Fazio. His nephew, Tom Fazio, was on hand for much of the original construction process. Subsequently Tom Fazio has always taken a great interest in the evolution of Butler National, and it was his design firm that was awarded the remodeling contract for Butler in 2004.

Tom Fazio had a lot of personal input into the project at Butler, but the drawings and field management were handled primarily by his senior associate, Tom Marzolf, who specializes in all of the contracts that Fazio's firm performs for tournament venues, e.g., Oak Hill, Oakmont, Riviera, Winged Foot.

The goal was to bring the golf course up to speed with modern technology. Consequently, the twelfth hole, which formerly played as a par 5, is now a par 4. The Butler National card now plays to a par 71. Renovation included rebuilding eight tees and adding 150 yards to the length of the course.

Twelve fairway bunkers were added, and many of the original fairway bunkers were moved to longer locations and tighter to the driving lanes, with the effect of narrowing the landing zones. All of the greenside bunkers were rebuilt, and the style is distinctively Fazio. The bunker sand of choice was Signature Sand out of Ohio. Installation of Sand Trapper liners in every bunker should preserve the integrity of the Signature Sand from subsoil contamination.

Removal or relocation of some trees took place, and Michael has introduced many oak tree plantings to the property.

The greens were fumigated and grassed to their original contours with A-1. One year prior to the project, Michael amended the greens soils with three separate Floyd McKay drill-and-fill applications of sand. Michael has been patient to allow the A-1 to mature, and he is very excited about how well they will perform next season. They are only one year old now, but they are developing a very fine and dense texture through grooming and verticutting.

—Brad Anderson, CGCS, Midlane C.C.



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