

# Mike Bavier, CGCS -N-



Mike Bavier, CGCS (back row, far right) and assistant superintendent Brian Mores (back row, far left) head up the hard-working crew at Inverness.



INVERNESS GOLF CLUB

*Mike Bavier and Inverness Golf Club will be our hosts for this month's MAGCS/ITF Combined Golf Day, and the MAGCS college championship. Both Mike and the golf club have long, rich histories. In fact, it's still up for debate as to who came first, Mike or Inverness.*

Photo by Jim Trzinski.



A side view of par-3 no. 15.

The history of the golf course begins in 1926, when Meadow Grove Country Club opened as a nine-hole semiprivate golf club. In 1938, the McIntosh Company purchased the golf course and surrounding areas. The surrounding area was developed and is now the village of Inverness. As for the golf course, an additional nine holes were constructed immediately south of the original nine-hole course to create the new 18-hole Inverness Golf Club.

Those attending the October meeting will observe some unusual routing in a couple of areas on the golf course, requiring players to cross over holes to make their way to the next hole. That routing is a result of the two sets of nine holes being built at different times. Another point of interest on the golf course is the chokecherry tree line that served as a border between the farms that originally occupied the land. A number of these trees have been removed over the years but the tree line is still very much evident, running between several holes.

Mike's career began at Olympia Fields Country Club in 1963. After graduating from Penn State University, Mike worked as an assistant superintendent at Olympia Fields until 1964. After completing a short stint in the Marine Air Reserve, he assumed his first head superintendent

job at Calumet Country Club in 1965 at the age of 22. Four years later, in October of 1969, Mike moved on to Inverness and has been going strong ever since.

What a difference 36 years can make! When Mike arrived at Inverness, the irrigation system comprised single-row quick couplers on tees and fairways

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and center sod cups on greens. The tree-lined fairways of today were nonexistent. You could practically see from one end of the course to the other, and any trees that had already been planted stood at about eye level.

Some of Mike's professional highlights include serving as MAGCS president in 1975 and as GCSAA president in 1981. Currently, he sits on the board of the Musser Foundation, which awards an annual \$25,000 grant to a turfgrass doctoral student in his or her final year of schooling. One of Mike's proudest accomplishments has been promoting past assistants and trainees. He can clearly recall Tom Vieweg, former Cary Country Club superintendent, being his very first assistant at Inverness. Mike can't put a number on how many have followed, but it's pretty safe to say that there have been a lot.

As proud as he is of the employees that have moved on, Mike is just as proud of the ones who have not. The remainder of his staff comes from only three different families and usually consists of about 16 employees. Of those 16, 13 have worked at the club for 15 to 30 years.

When Mike does decide to get away from the course, he's usually traveling overseas. Some of Mike's adventures have taken him to South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Venezuela, England, Ireland, France, Costa Rica and Scotland (where he is a nonresident member of St. Andrews).

Mike looks forward to welcoming MAGCS to Inverness as another challenging but successful season begins to wind down.



No. 9, a 148-yard par 3.



The 172-yard, par-3 no. 5.



Photo by Jim Trzinski.

*No. 6 at Inverness, a 298-yard par 4.*