

SUPER -N- SITE

John Ekstrom, Hinsdale Golf Club



Dave Drendel -N- *Mistwood* GOLF CLUB

I will begin by saying that it is great to be a member of MAGCS. We are a group, over 800 strong, each individual having great stories to tell. Are we all different and distinct? Yes. What connects us, though, is that we all have a great passion for our industry and the game of golf. Dave Drendel exemplifies both traits. When I went to visit Dave in late June, I knew of him, but did not know anything about him. I left the Mistwood Turf Maintenance Center one-and-a-half hours later knowing another great person with whom I have much in common.

Being a northern Illinois native, Dave grew up spending summers at Valley Green Golf Course in North Aurora. There he worked for his grandparents who owned the course. According to him, Valley Green was a small course where people came with their families to learn how to play golf. In his summers there, Dave spent many a night as a waterman, running sprinklers around. I'm sure he did not think so at the time, but what a great experience!

Two things that Dave and I share is that we both went to high school in the Rockford area, and we also played football for the Redbirds of Illinois State University. He was a scholarship athlete who played defensive end. This being established, we spent just a few minutes discussing three-a-day practices and the business of college football. Those were the glory days. Go Birds!

From Illinois State, Dave went on to intern for one season at the prestigious Butler National Golf Club for Mike Sauls. Dave learned that only through hard work would he distinguish himself as a great superintendent.

After that, Dave moved home to Rockford where he was an assistant superintendent for Don Altman at Forest Hills CC for a few years.

Dave's last gig as an assistant was working for Ron McCarthy at Edgewood Valley Country Club. While working at Edgewood Valley, Dave polished his resume and knew he was ready to become a golf course superintendent.

Drendel is beginning his fifth season at Mistwood Golf Club. He says he has learned a great deal in his time there. Probably the biggest challenge he faced was getting through the summer of 2005 without water for most of the month of August. Not many Superintendents could go through that and

live to tell about it. Fortunately, he has an outstanding assistant in Ben Kelnhofer. Ben has been with Dave for several seasons and has a very bright future ahead.

Mistwood owner, Mr. Jim McWethy, has been very supportive of Dave and his ideas for the club. Just two years ago, the idea of a new maintenance facility came to fruition. I was very impressed with both its design and its upkeep. There are future plans for a new clubhouse and possibly a renovation of areas of the golf course. Currently, with many acres of fescue, Drendel is focusing on testing different methods of weed removal throughout the course.

Dave has been married for six years to his wife Brooke. They have two boys, David who is almost two years old and Dylan who is only three months old. Needless to say, the Drendel household is very busy.

Going into Mistwood that day, I had no idea that who Dave Drendel was and what led him to where he is today. Today I know that he is a person I could call on if I have any questions. He is a good guy to get to know. I also know that Mistwood will provide the members of MAGCS a great venue for the August meeting. **-OC**



The Drendels, Dave & Brook and sons David (2) and Dylan (3 mos).



*Above: The par 5 eighth hole at Mistwood challenges you from the tee. Play it safe to the left and experience the full 566 yards, keep it close to the water and you can shorten the hole by 40 yards.
Below: Mistwood's many acres of naturalized areas create scenic egress to adjacent holes.*

