

SUPER -N- SITE  
Brian Moesch, *Chicago Golf Club*

# Dave Groelle, CGCS -N-



ROYAL MELBOURNE  
COUNTRY CLUB

*For the past eight years Dave Groelle, CGCS has been superintendent at Royal Melbourne Country Club, a private club located in the North suburbs of Chicago. Royal Melbourne is carved into the surrounding wetlands, ponds, prairies and trees. The 6,731 yard course provides an exiting and challenging experience for golfers of all skill levels. Opened in 1992, the Greg Norman designed course was named after Alister Mackenzie's Royal Melbourne Golf Club in Australia.*

Dave got his start in the industry 20 years ago, at the age of 14, working on the cart staff at the Oak Club of Genoa, the town where he grew up. During slow times he would run down to the maintenance department, grab a push mower, and mow the clubhouse lawns. He enjoyed the "down time" so much that at the end of the season he asked superintendent, Phil Zeinert, CGCS, if he could join the maintenance staff the next season. Dave's passion not only for turf management, but also for the game of golf itself has continued to grow ever since.

Dave pursued his dream of building a career in the industry by attending Colorado State University, where he received his turf management degree. After graduation he landed his first assistant's position at Broken Arrow Golf Club. He then moved to Kemper Lakes Golf Course as an assistant. While at Kemper Lakes, Dave had the opportunity to host national tournaments for both the PGA and the USGA. After two years at Kemper Lakes, Kemper Sports Management offered Dave an opportunity to gain some knowledge in the construction/grow-in phase of golf. He became the assistant project manager of The Glen Club and the project manager of Glenview National Nine. He also helped grow both courses in under the tutelage of Tom Prichard. Once Tom established himself at both of these facilities, Dave was offered the position at Royal Melbourne. While at Royal Melbourne, Dave has overseen a complete in-house bunker renovation, greenside in 2005, and fairway bunkers in 2006. As if that's not enough,

he is also acting superintendent at Vernon Hills Golf Course, a local nine-hole municipal course about 10 minutes away from Royal Melbourne. Dave enjoys experiencing both perspectives on the game.

Dave says the most challenging thing he faces is balancing his time between work and family while still satisfying his members' expectations. Dave sees his father as his mentor. From him, he learned about honesty and integrity at the same time that he learned a work ethic which provides him the ability to maintain a great golf course and still have quality time to spend with his family. Dave and his wife of eight years, Brooke, have two children. Chase is three, and Dylan was welcomed into their family six months ago. Something tells me Dave didn't get as much rest during the off season as the rest of us did. In addition to being an avid golfer, Dave has many other interests. During the winter he likes to head up North with friends and go snowmobiling. He is also a big fan of NASCAR racing. This last Daytona 500 was the first he has missed in the last six years. But, as Dave said, his favorite races are in the South. He always comes back feeling a little better about himself, and his dental plan!



*The Groelle's.  
Brooke holding son Dylan,  
Dave and son Chase.*

According to Dave, "Creating an environment that people can enjoy with their friends and family," is the most rewarding part of his job. He also, "Loves the fact that we have a physical result that exists from the fruits of our labor...something we can touch, feel, see, and even play!" Dave says he wouldn't be able to do any of what he does without the help of his guys,

"They are the best group of guys I could ask for." It all starts with his assistant Eduardo Jaime, who has been at Royal Melbourne for 15 years. Dave says he will usually be in mid sentence when he gets the reply, "Done." Eduardo is one of those guys you just can't do without. Just as important to Royal Melbourne is the equipment technician, Mike Schapals. He has been with Dave for four years, making his job easier by insuring that the equipment is operating flawlessly. Mike is a guy who respects everyone and genuinely wants to get along with everyone. Of Mike, Dave says, "His relationship with the staff is a great asset to our team because we can all communicate freely." With the support of his team and Dave's pure passion for the game of golf he will continue to be successful and to contribute great things to our industry. **-OC**



*Images of Royal Melbourne*

*Right: The 10th, a par 3 plays at 162 yards from the tips and offers a little reprieve as you start your back nine.*

*Below: The 12th, a par 4 takes some precision shots with the landing area guarded by bunkers and the green is protected by water on the left.*

