

Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS -N- Medinah Country Club

Medinah Country Club - former host of the Western Open, three U.S. Opens, two PGA Championships, and the 2012 Ryder Cup - is now home to one of MAGCS newest members, Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS. Recently I had the privilege of sitting down with Curtis to discuss the winding road that brought him to Medinah.

In a turn of events that is familiar to many of us in the industry, Curtis's career began as a job. While working at The Country Club at Woodmore, in Maryland, Curtis decided that the golf course was where he wanted to be. Since he was already armed with a B.A. from Elon University, he decided to enroll in the two-year program at Penn State. Upon graduation Curtis moved across the country, to southern California, to work as an Assistant to Virgil Robinson at PGA West in Palm Springs.

A superintendent position at Desert Mountain in Scottsdale quickly followed. There he worked for Director of Agronomy, Shawn Emerson. This is also where he learned the fundamentals that he relies on today for operating a multi-course facility. He learned how to use a large crew to its greatest potential and efficiency as well as gaining a wide variety of construction experience. The property expanded from three courses to five while he was there and currently totals six courses.

From Scottsdale it was on to Las Vegas and Anthem Country Club, his first 18-hole course, as well as the first Superintendent position on his own. Halfway through his time at Anthem, the ownership hired Troon Golf to operate the club. It was with Troon, in 2003, that Curtis made his way back to a northern climate at Lake of Isles in Connecticut.

As the Superintendent at Lake of Isles, he was in charge of the simultaneous construction and grow-in of two championship 18-hole Rees Jones designs. Beginning to build in 2003, dropping first seed on July 1, 2003, and continuing to build and seed

until July 1, 2004, they opened all 36 holes simultaneously in May of 2005.

That brings us to today, where Curtis sits as the Director of Golf Course Operations at one of the most storied clubs in the country. In his short time at Medinah, he has been working

hard to create consistency across the board, not just in agronomic practices but also in personnel. Along with his Superintendents: Kris Kvelland, Jim Wallace, and Dave Kloss, he is working to create a team atmosphere rather than three different courses. So far the team is coming together very well and working toward that goal.

On the immediate list of projects is a new short game practice area designed by club architect Rees Jones. This will also serve as a test plot for grasses that may be used on putting greens in the future. The varieties that will be explored on the three short game greens will be Penn A1, A4, and A1/A4 mix. In addition, Seed Research of Oregon's 007, Tyee, and Dominant X-treme are also being evaluated. Currently underway is an addition to the driving range that will allow the set up to shift tees to face slightly south. When hitting

balls in the morning, the sunlight will no longer be directly in the hitter's face, as it has been for years.

The near future will bring a slight renovation to the new bunkers on Course 3. Liners will be installed, as well as new sand that will allow for a firmer, more consistent hitting surface. A renovation to the 80+ year old maintenance facility, is in the

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Curtis Tyrrell



early planning stages and is anticipated to begin in the next 12 months. Both of these changes will aid in preparing for the 2012 Ryder Cup, which is right around the corner. The club has also begun to discuss large scale projects for 20-25 years ahead. This will help assure that the younger members will have a state-of-the-art world class facility once they move into a leadership role.

Once all of this has concluded for the day, it is time for Curtis to, "go home and do my real job," out in Huntley, where

he and his wife, Bridget, are the proud parents of Kaylie who is 9 and Meredith who is 6 - both of whom are loving life and playing plenty of soccer. They have settled in an area that reminds them of their Connecticut home and have met many wonderful people as a family.

Welcome to MAGCS Curtis. If you ever get any free time, we all look forward to seeing you at some future events. **-OC**





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