

MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



Ryder Cup Update

As you may know (unless you've been living in an irrigation hole and you may have given this spring) this is a Ryder Cup year. It will be played at the venerated Medinah Country Club #3 Course on September 25-30. You know, the place where we have our MAGCS Annual Turf Clinic in November and they have the really cool looking Turkish Clubhouse?

This is going to be epic. You have to like the way our U.S. squad is shaping up. Captain Davis Love III or DL3 as he is known, has yet to make his Captain picks. Many of the top guys have already qualified. We have a few of the older guys like Phil, Tiger and Stricker that have a lot of experience already on the team. Plus, we've got the younger, upcoming, aggressive, "golf boys", Bubba, Hunter, Ricky and the Kuch. These guys are playing red hot, winning golf tournaments and gaining confidence.

To quote former Ryder Cup Captain Ben Crenshaw, whose team won the miracle comeback at Brookline, "I've got a good feeling about this." If you don't think these guys don't get motivated to play an exhibition match for no paycheck, think again. This event is for their country and pressure is unsurpassed. The Ryder Cup is without question the biggest event in all of golf.

I had a chance to visit with Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS MG recently and I can tell you it is all coming together. The main focus for everyone involved; Members, Medinah Staff, and the PGA of America is to create a set of conditions that favors our team to bring home a winner.

The #3 Course has been through some dramatic changes over the last few years since the PGA Championship in 2006. There has been some "major" tree removal, new hole changes, re-grassing of turf, new bunkers and new tees. The last few growing seasons have been brutal for any course going through a renovation, let alone for an event as big as the Ryder Cup. Curtis has been handling it well and taking it all in stride. Some people like the changes, some don't. This is not your Father's Medinah #3. This is going to be set up and maintained to give the U.S. Squad as much a "home turf" advantage as possible. Look for expanded and graduated rough to give our "bombers" an edge and shorter grass around the greens to promote recovery shots. The course should play "easier" than a major set up. The match play of the Ryder Cup puts the focus on the game and the competition between individuals and teams. The fans and the players will both enjoy the roar and excitement of making birdies and eagles.

The grandstands and corporate tents will start to be set up in June. DL3 will visit the course to make his recommendations for any additional "tweaks" such as expanding the graduated rough in certain spots or more tree removal depending on how the U.S. players play the course as they filter through playing practice rounds.

Tickets have been sold out for months. There are a few corporate tent opportunities left open. Medinah expects to host up to 40,000 people per day during the event! Emotions will run high and the pressure will be intense. All systems are go. GO USA! **-OC**