

SUPER-N-site

Michael Heustis & Chicago Highlands Club

Billy Sharp, Chicago Highlands Club

PHOTOS: LUKE CELLA

Only a handful of Superintendents in the present day are able to watch their future course come together from beginning to end.

Michael Heustis, Superintendent of The Chicago Highlands Club in Westchester, IL, was fortunate enough to be brought in just as ground was being broken and soil was beginning to be moved and shaped into what would make up this undulated, challenging "Scottish-Links" style course.

In April of 2008, Michael was selected to become the



Mike Heustis, Superintendent of Chicago Highlands and ever present Molly, his faithful Yellow Labrador, enjoy a cool morning this August.



Superintendent of the future club by the trio of club owners which includes Tom Healy, John Baxter, and Joe Hills. Not only was this giant task because of the size of the property, but also this was the time in which the recession hit the economy hard. But after two years of hard work, cautious spending, as well as countless tweaks and changes, the 270 acre property was ready to be opened. What made this a unique project was the fact that the property was situated

A bulldozer is one of the only sounds you'll hear on the property every once in awhile as the landfill is still accepting spoils from construction sites around the area. Eventually, it will close and trees will be planted secluding the property even more so (left).



on a landfill which closed in the 1980's. As far as the course, the first year was a huge success for Michael and the staff, being awarded such honors as "Top 5 Best New Course of the Year" and the 9th hole was awarded "Hole of the Year" by Golf Digest.



The mission statement that Michael and the staff try to implement is for "Fast and Firm" conditions that make for a round of golf which is challenging, fun and unforgettable. Views of the Chicago skyline, sweeping fescue hills, and top-notch putting surfaces have helped the Arthur Hills designed course earn a great reputation in the Chicagoland area as an up-and-coming club that is regarded highly with the other prestigious courses in the area.

Michael is an Illinois native, having grown up in the Saybrook, IL area and has been involved with golf course maintenance since the age of 14. He started his career at Indian Springs Golf Club and worked there until 1997. From



The flagstick for the 13th is extra long because of the hills that protect the green. There are a couple of cupping spots on the green that make it very tough to even see the flagstick from the teeing area.



there, he attended Parkland College for two years and then transferred to The University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana to complete his degree in Agronomy. Shortly after college, Michael took an Assistant Superintendent position at Lake of the Woods Golf Course, which is a forest preserve course located in Mahomet, IL. After spending nearly 3 years there, he moved on to Peach Tree Golf Club in Atlanta, GA. In 2005, Michael volunteered for the Walker Cup which was being held at Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton, IL. Shortly after the event, he was offered the Assistant's position there at Chicago Golf, which he accepted and started in December 2005. After 2 years under the tutelage of Jon Jennings and a few interviews with the trio of owners at Chicago Highlands, Michael landed where he presently resides

Outside of the daily grind at the course, Michael is an active member of GCSAA, MAGCS, and the CAGCS. He has also volunteered at the 2012 Ryder Cup at Medinah, 2006 PGA Championship at Medinah and the 2007 Women's British Open at St. Andrews Old Course. Being a U of I alumni, he is also a huge fan of the Fighting Illini sports, and also attends many Chicago Cubs games as well. Most of Michael's family is located in central Illinois, which makes for a great get away as well as being able to visit relatives. He has one older sister, two nieces and one nephew who enjoy when Uncle Michael comes to visit. But they enjoy it even more when he brings his ten year old Yellow Lab "Molly." She has been with Michael since she was six weeks old and loves a good run on the course, but nowadays enjoys a spot next to his desk in the





office.

Michael and I both look forward to seeing everyone at this month's meeting and hope you have a great time out on the course. @

Image Above: The first tee that will be seen from the clubhouse once it is built. At present only a pool house exists. As the membership grows, a clubhouse will be constructed on 31st Street.

Image right: One of the most recognizable skylines in the world can be seen from several points on the property.

Image Below: The third hole in the foreground and the 8th in the background uses native plantings to separate playing areas and keep the vistas open and spacious.

