

TOP Assistants

Tyson Rutter does what it takes to get the job done

Editor's note: If you'd like to nominate someone for the Top Assistants feature, please send an e-mail to Larry Aylward at laylward@questex.com.

Here's how Tyson Rutter's boss describes him: "He is one of the hardest-working, do-whatever-it-takes-to-get-the-job-done assistant superintendents I have ever employed," says Donny Latham, golf course superintendent of the Republic Golf Club in San Antonio, Texas.

Talk about an endorsement! And there's more.

"Tyson has spent several years at some of the best clubs in America and his attention to detail and desire to produce the best product possible is very impressive," Latham says. "I've spent a lot of time teaching him the ins and outs of growing bermudagrass in the South, which is something new to him. I keep stressing to him, 'It's just grass, just grow it.' He has taken up the challenge, and we're starting to see great results."

Rutter has worked in the golf course maintenance industry for 12 years. In 2003, he received a bachelor's degree in turfgrass science and an associate's degree in agriculture business from The Ohio State University.

From his very first job working on a golf course out of high school, Rutter says he knew he would pursue a career as a superintendent. "I enjoyed everything about it — from the work environment to the hard work itself," he says.

Golfdom caught up with Rutter recently to talk about the profession he loves.

■ What's your favorite part of the job?

I enjoy the trouble-shooting demands of the job — working hard to determine the best approach to solving unexpected problems, no matter how little or big the problems may be. However, one of the very best parts of this job is the simple gratification of seeing an outstanding, well-maintained golf course at the end of the day.

■ Who has been the biggest influence on your career and why?

I have been very fortunate to work with some of the finest people in the golf industry. These people have helped shape me to be a very diverse, clear thinker in analyzing various situations. Fred Dickman, certified superintendent at the Broadmoor Golf Club in Colorado Springs, Colo., is a top individual in all aspects. I learned from his incredible work ethic and never-quit positive attitude. I'm grateful for the countless hours he spent with me after work early in my career. He genuinely cared for me and taught me so many important things about how to run a course as well as other aspects of the golf industry. I will be forever grateful to him.

■ What's your favorite product or piece of equipment and why?

The soil probe. Not only does this piece of equipment allow you to check soil moisture, but it provides you with a great deal of information like root depth, root density, thatch accumulation and knowledge of what is going on below the surface.

■ If you could change something about the industry right now, what would you change?

I would suggest that prospective employers not overlook younger but qualified turf professionals and seriously consider them based on their accomplishments and potential.

■ Describe yourself in one word.

Reliable.

■ What is your favorite hobby and why?

My favorite hobby is working cattle with family and friends on our Kansas ranch.

■ What's your favorite vacation spot?

Lake Dale Hollow in Albany, Ky., where I enjoy house boating and water skiing.

■ What's your favorite golf course besides your own?

Andalusia at Coral Mountain in La Quinta, Calif. I had the privilege of working with architects Keith Evans and Rees Jones during the construction of this amazing course.

■ If a movie were made about your life, what famous actor would play you?

Will Ferrell, because I would want it to be funny.

■ It's your last day on Earth. What do you do?

I would have a cook out with my family and friends, and enjoy the day with the people I care about most. ■

