

## The 19th Hole with...

# Rick Wittenberg

General Manager, Cardinal Golf Course, Effingham, Ill.



**I'll have a Select 55.** Low-cal beer. It's as good as regular beer.

**We're a blue collar track.** It's an easy track to walk. We don't have a lot of elevation changes. The beginners and experienced golfers both have a good time.

**I watched a lot of the U.S. Open.** That was a tough course. My golfers... they would still be playing that course today.

**We have one full-time superintendent, and two seasonal staff, plus an intern.** I'm the general manager, but I spend 90 percent of my time working out on the course.

**I enjoy golfing — as long as it's at someone else's course.** I can't relax when I play here!

**I save all my Golfdoms in a pile until October or November, then I dig in.** Because it's so hectic during the season... by the time you get home from work, it's time to get ready for bed.

**The best thing about my job is the variety.** My office is a 100-some acres instead of an 8-by-10 cubicle.

**I've been married (to Debbie) 25 years.** We have two daughters, one is 22 (Alicia), the other is 9 (McKenzie). Alicia is a high school math teacher and a softball coach. She played softball in college, and now her little sister is getting into it. So we're starting all over with it again.

**Effingham is a great place to raise kids.** We love the people. Truly down-to-earth, Midwestern. They'd give you the shirt off their backs. That's why we moved back here from Florida.

**Our golfers are the salt of the earth.** We have everything from lawyers, doctors, district attorneys... you can't tell them from the farmers and the guys who work at the factory. They all play together and then they all sit in the clubhouse together. There aren't cliques out here.

**I enjoy the St. Louis Cardinals.** St. Louis is an hour-and-a-half away. We're 50 percent Cubs fans, and we're 50 percent Cardinals fans here.

**We had to turn on every head with a pair of needle nose pliers until last year.** Then we hooked



up our existing irrigation system to a Rain Bird central control system and a Freedom Radio system. That's been a godsend, especially this year. We haven't had rain to speak of in six weeks. You can tell the difference. What would have been burned up two years ago is nice and green... it's amazing.

**Other equipment we could use?** Oh gosh, how long a list do you want?

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*As interviewed by Seth Jones, June 20th, 2012.*

