



EMAILS @ TEXTS # TWEETS

Seth,

Thank you for your editorial recognizing Matt Shaffer as a true gentleman ("An Open mind," June 2013). Matt and I grew up in Bedford/Blair Counties of Pennsylvania. Matt worked on the Iron Masters GC crew along with my father, and I followed him on that same crew.

Matt has never changed. His genuineness of character has stayed the course over the years. His success never went to his head. He is a class act and you can take that to the bank.

**Samuel R. Snyder VII**

CGCS-Ret.  
Shreve, Ohio

## // GOLFDOM WISDOM

**If your dog is chasing geese, great. If your dog is chasing away salesmen, that's fine. But if he's chasing away members, you'll soon be chasing a new job.**

#golfdomwisdom

# MOWER REBIRTH

INGENUITY AT MERION LED TO CREATION OF DEERE'S 180E MOWER

BY SETH JONES // Editor-in-Chief



This year's U.S. Open concluded on Father's Day. And for Robert Smith, equipment technician at Merion Golf Club, it was surely his most special Father's Day yet.

Smith and his wife welcomed their second daughter, McKayla, on April 16. Two days later, Smith was back at the course, working on what could also be considered one of his offspring: the John Deere 180 E-Cut Hybrid Walk Greens Mower.

Both the 180E and Smith's oldest, Annabella, might be jealous of McKayla. But Smith's a good dad... he's got time for all three of his babies.



Smith says he doesn't have a favorite — at least, when it comes to equipment. "Every piece is the same," he says. "I like working on stuff that doesn't break."

But the 180E should get more of his affection than the others. Because Smith, along with Merion's director of grounds, Matt Shaffer, helped create the innovative mower.

"We were walking past a piece of equipment that had an 18-inch head on it. (Shaffer) got this idea stirring in his mind." Smith recalls. "I brought it in the shop, reconfigured a few things... we started mowing about two weeks later."

The John Deere 180E was born. Designed after the 220E, the 180E meets the demands of superintendents who need a tight, clean cut with an 18-inch swath. Deere says the mower is ideal for courses that need maximum control on undulating greens. Deere saw the success Merion was having with the mower and took notice. In July 2012, the 180 E-cut became available to courses around the world.

## READER JOKE

AS TOLD BY **P.J. McGuire, CGCS**, American Country Club Comedians, supplier of golf entertainment. Visit [accocomedy.com](http://accocomedy.com) to learn more.

Husband and wife, avid golfers their whole lives, were also very interested in the afterlife and specifically if there was golf in the afterworld. They agreed whoever was to die first would come back one year later and report to the other on the afterlife.

The man having passed first did contact her through a medium at a seance exactly one year later.

"It's really very nice here!" he reported to her. "I get up in the morning, enjoy a little sex, have some breakfast, then it's off to the golf course. Home again for lunch, a little more sex before heading back to the golf course until dinner. Then it's a little sex before bed and I'm ready to start the next day!"

The wife, disconcerted at the amount of sex her husband is having in the afterlife without her, takes the high road and asks how his golf game is.

The husband replies, "Oh, I didn't come back a human... I'm a rabbit somewhere in New Jersey!"