

Joint Meeting at Brown County Golf Course

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

The Joint Northern Great Lakes Golf Course Superintendents Association (NGLGCSA) and Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association (WGCSA) meeting was held August 18th at Brown County Golf Course in Oneida with Scott Anthes as our host.

Brown County was designed by Lawrence Packard and opened for play in 1958 after being built by the Wadsworth Company. The popular tree lined links has been rated in the top 50 for public golf courses by Golf Digest and 9th for Municipal Golf Courses.

Owned and operated by the County of Brown the course has previously hosted the State Amateur and State Open.

Scott Anthes has been the Golf Course Superintendent since spring of 2008 when he replaced long time superintendent Paul DeFosse. Anthes had previously served as superintendent at Northern Bay Golf Course and Kestrel Ridge.

Anthes was not only our host but also our speaker for the day as he discussed the topic 'What To Do With Repeated Winterkill'

Anthes opened with some history of the property and how in the glory days of the business the course was so busy the staff

changed cups twice a day to scatter wear from play.

The County of Brown operates with a County Executive who is a elected leader for the departments. Scott reports not only to the executive but also a committee made up of 5 of the 26 county board members and in turn the entire board. Add in the golfers and you could say Anthes has 4 bosses to communicate with.

The greens at Brown County had little internal or surface drainage and often sustained damage during winter from ice cover and freezing and thawing but also during the summer stress periods.

In January of 2013 the course received numerous rainfalls causing ice that did not melt. In February Scott warned the executive and committee there could be damage due to the ice cover. As you may remember spring of 2014 was cool and late so the decision was made to remove as much ice as possible in March.

Having been through regular winterkill in the past Scott had that familiar bad feeling in his stomach and could not sleep at night. In April as spring finally arrived it was clear many of the greens had widespread damage. Covers, no covers, ice re-

moved, ice not removed; it didn't matter they all had damage.

Anthes had to move fast and held a tour of the course with the county executive, golf professional, and colleagues Scott Bushman, and Mark Storby along with Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab Manager Bruce Schweiger.

A game plan to re-grass the greens was created and taken to the recreation committee in May.

Plans included stripping the sod from the greens and surrounds, install slit drains, do some minor grading to reduce ponding from sand dams, low spots and to increase cupping. Then greens would be fumigated, final graded and seeded with sod placed around the greens.

Luckily Scott had some experience in green revision and had done a test green with the fumigant basamid in October of 2009. The green was seeded in March of 2010 and in play by July.

Having to move fast the job was bid out and with 4 bids returned the lowest bid was taken to the committee on June 6th and the full board on June 19th. It takes a 2/3rds board approval to change a current budget and and approve a ten year loan



The 524 Yard Par5 6th Hole from the tee (left) and from behind the green (right)

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for \$300,000 from the general fund. Over the years the course had given over 2 million dollars to the general fund so that fact along with good communication led to the loan being approved.

The course was scheduled to stay open with temporary greens and the last outing to play the regular greens was scheduled for July 15th. Anthes said he ran into a problem with mistaken forms when taking the fumigation category test from the state and ended up having to retake the test last minute to be eligible to purchase the product.

Scott decided to use Basamid rather than Methyl Bromide to allow staff to do the job themselves and do one green at a time. Methyl Bromide crews travel from project to project and want to do all the greens at one time. Cost was also a benefit with Basamid 1/5th the cost.

Under Wisconsin law when using Basamid only the applicator could go in application zone while other employees can go in buffer zone. Brown County used a air tester to make sure the area was safe for workers to enter. The main putting green was not done due to the close proximity to the clubhouse staying open to golfers and the 25' buffer zone requirement.

After the Basamid was applied the green was watered heavy the first day with less water applied each subsequent day. After 7 days workers can go in and grade the surface.

After rough grading 2" tile was installed on 6' centers 14" deep. Depending on the design some holes have smile drains on the low side and others have a center main.

Construction ended on August 16th and the greens were seeded to Luminary Bentgrass. The new turf was mowed at .175 into winter and covered with evergreen covers.

The covers were removed the second week of April and the greens were aerified with a vertidrain before being rolled with a 3,000 pound drum roller to smooth them out.



The Par 3 17th Hole plays 177 yards from the back tee over water with a sand bunker to the right.

The greens were down to .150 when they opened and were slowly lowered to .120 being mowed with solid rollers.

Most of the work was done by the contractor with the exception of the Basamid applications, head levelling and reseeding areas that may have washed out or did not come in.

If he had to do the job over Scott would make the following changes:

- Close the course during fumigation applications mainly for appearance.
- Fumigate out into the surrounds but in this project the temporary greens interfered into the buffer zones,
- Drain the collars and approaches.
- Re-grass the 2 extra greens.
- Remove trees before the project started. Scott could see the greens in the shade were not poa free but and thinner.

Overall Anthes expressed the project was a success and outside of having to hand water the tile lines in the greens during dry spells the greens have required less maintenance than

before.

The new greens and drainage was tested on the day of our event as it poured before our event, rained during it and although half the groups finished the other half were chased off the course by a thunderstorm. In result the prizes were given as part of a blind draw.

Despite the rain everyone had a good time and were treated to a great golf course and tasty lunch and hors d'oeuvres after golf.

Thank you to our host Superintendent Scott Anthes, PGA Professional Jim Ostrowski and Restaurant owner Dan Kleinschmidt for your hospitality. ✓



Top Left: 7th Hole - 185 Yard Par 3

Top Right: The group listening to Scott

Middle Right: Our Host Scott Anthes

Bottom Left: 9th Hole - 444 Par 4