



BURL GOLF CLUB ADDRESSES THE GROWING NEEDS OF THE 80'S

by TOM E. NATZEL
Superintendent Burl Golf Club

Burl Golf Club is located west of the Twin Cities metro area in Mound. The course consists of 255 acres ranging from open gently rolling land to wooded peat land. The layout offers golfers the opportunity to hit away, while demanding varying degrees of accuracy. It also contains many forms of wildlife including ducks, pheasants, fox, deer and very busy beavers!

Because of the expanding membership now reaching 320 active members, the Board of Directors made the commitment and realization that a full time superintendent was definitely needed to keep up with the demands of the general membership. Previously the superintendent was hired seasonally with routine maintenance and projects being done during the prime golfing time, including evenings and weekends. Being only part-time also left little time for the superintendent to do anything but the basic routine maintenance. As you can imagine this caused a great deal of conflict within the membership.

Upon my arrival as superintendent in late October 1984, I scrutinized the course and began drawing up a priority list of projects which changed more than a few times over the first two months. However, thanks to the unseasonable nice weather two large projects were completed in November and December. Then my attention turned to the equipment, maintenance facility and golf carts. Spending two months of work on winterizing the shop building which also only operated during the golfing months and desperately required some insulation and a good source of heat.

With that accomplished I started on maintenance and repair of the equipment. Here to with the change over from a part-time to full-time superintendent many procedures were changed as well. Previously golf carts were operated as is until they ceased to run at all. Equipment repair was done largely by a repair shop which can be costly and leaves you at the mercy of the repair shops time schedule. Thus leading to my next project, the hiring of a mechanic to work on a preventive maintenance program and to set up a shop facility that will be able to undertake all and anything that could and will arise with equipment repair.

There are many changes that have been made and that are yet to come. All of these things have not gone unnoticed and the board and members are anticipating (and expecting) a very much improved golf course in the coming years.

These changes would not have been accomplished if the club had not realized their potential and the importance of taking the steps needed to meet the demands of the golfer in the 80's. The sacrifices that were made by the club so that all available capital could be directed into my budget for course improvements, winterizing the shop, tools and new equipment purchases are very positive steps toward improving the golf course and playing surface. This can be used for the growth to an even larger membership and new events. Hopefully other smaller clubs will realize their full potential and make some positive changes in the 80's.

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Horticulture is more than just planting trees and puttering around in a greenhouse. It's identifying plant diseases. It's irrigating and fertilizing rows and rows of thriving greenery. It's building and maintaining public and private golf courses. It's designing and constructing the grounds of businesses and public property.

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