

A Salute to the Grounds Crew

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John Katterheinrich and Staff Had Interlachen In Superb Condition for Walker Cup Matches

In 1910 William Watson designed nine holes of what is now known as Interlachen Country Club in Edina. After formally opening in late July of 1911 with nine holes in play, the beginning of golf history in Minnesota had started a new chapter. In 1919 Donald Ross, the famed Scottish architect, was brought in from Aberdeen to complete the task started in 1910 and finish designing the front nine. Ross was known for his use of contours, matching the land to the hole, but little did Watson and Ross know that their combined design would be a golf course that golf legends were made of.

Over the years Interlachen has been host to the 1930 U.S. Open Championship, 1935 U.S. Women's Amateur Championship and, in 1986, the U.S. Senior Amateur Championship. The membership is well-recognized as a largely supportive, volunteering group that will cooperate to the tune of 110% and still find a way to give even more. The reputation of the golf course is legendary; not only is it a championship layout, but a golf course that is finely groomed everyday from the start of the season until the snow flies. The responsibility of the care of the golf course solely belongs to the grounds staff.



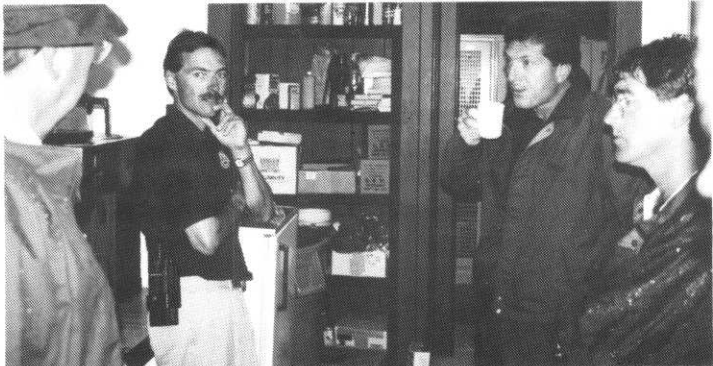
THE TWO CHAMPS

Accomplished Golf Course Superintendent John Katterheinrich and detail-oriented Assistant Superintendent **Jim Kassera**, along with 27 diligent, self-motivated, positive individuals who make up the grounds staff, did everything from cutting the putting surfaces to recovering the trash to keeping the cutting edges of all mowers razor sharp for the 1993 Walker Cup matches. The golf course was ready to accept the challenge of the 20 finest amateur golfers from the United States, Great Britain and Ireland.

When you toured the golf course Tuesday afternoon, you could plainly see that everything was in pristine condition.

Fairways were tight. When you hit a fairway, you could almost be guaranteed of not having a bad lie. The greens were in the finest condition imaginable. When one thinks of Interlachen, one thinks of immaculate putting surfaces. However, the greens for the Walker Cup and for the three weeks prior to the competition exceeded everyone's expectations.

Prior to the opening ceremony, John Katterheinrich had only one concern: the weather! He was extremely confident that the golf course was ready. At 5:45 a.m. Wednesday, the skies were ablaze with an extraordinary light show of heavenly origin. John's concern was in fact reality. The weather report just prior to Tuesday's opening ceremony was for a half-inch during the late night. At 6:25 a.m. Bob Distal, Superintendent at Wayzata Country Club, reported that



Interlachen's John Katterheinrich with Tom Morgan, USGA agronomist and Jim Kassera discussing the rain.

nine-tenths of an inch of rain had already fallen. The frequency of the light show picked up, along with the wind. A storm bordering on severe limits was now playing Interlachen to the tune of 40 m.p.h. wind gusts and delivering 1.8 inches of rain. Inside the maintenance facility, the staff knew what to do; squeegees were being assembled, pumps were being looked at, and the staff knew that it would be bunkers and greens first, then the rest of the golf course. But first the situation around the building came first. Why was there water draining through all the doors? The rain and wind came with such furor that the drain that was under the media center had clogged with plants and other material, so much that the media center now had a foot of water in it. The squeegees first use would be in the media center.

After a five-hour delay play was underway. Strategies concerning the golf course maintenance had been changed, but still it played well.

Thursday morning there was no threat of inclement weather. In fact, after a few morning clouds, the sun had come out to deliver a great day for golf. Tees had been

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DURING MINNESOTA LPGA CLASSIC

Tom Fischer, Staff Draw Accolades for Work At Edinburgh U.S.A.

Edinburgh U.S.A. advertises itself as a municipal golf course with championship playing conditions. That's one claim that you can definitely take to the bank.

In Tom Fischer's eight-year tenure at this fine golf facility, you can see the great pride he takes in hosting such a fine LPGA event. The Classic has completed its fourth year, and it is continually getting stronger. This year the addition of a corporate village, and a most awesome sky-box overlooking the incredible 17th hole, really added to the growth of this tournament site.

Once again, as with past tournaments, it was up to the grounds staff at Edinburgh U.S.A. to put up all the scoreboards, set up the ropes, take care of "ecology" and still maintain the golf course to championship levels during the course of the golfing season. Monday came, and it was business as usual for Tom and his staff. The only difference is that the ropes put up had to come down as well as the scoreboards.

In talking with Jane Reynolds, LPGA tournament official, it was clearly evident that her experience with the staff at Edinburgh has been an extremely good one. When asked to sum up here experiences with this site, she said, "I wish we could take Tom Fischer with us to all of our sites. He's extremely well-organized and just a super person to work with. That makes our job a lot more enjoyable."

Walker Cup —

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moved Wednesday evening, and greens had also been mowed once that evening.

With a multitude of mowers out mowing greens, aprons and fairways, everything was coming into shape, again! The greens were stimping at a smooth 10'6", with no signs of stress anywhere to be seen. Of course, during the preparation of any tournament, little gremlins do find a way of trying to mess up your day. These bothersome little creatures even show up weeks prior to the tournament. When the USGA accidentally forgot to bring the tournament flags, it was not acceptable to have just a yellow flag sitting atop the flagstick. Katterheinrich immediately contacted MGCSA member, Steve Garske, president of Par Aide Golf Products Company, to come up with a flag that would symbolize the importance of the 34th Walker Cup Competition.

In the final analysis, the playing conditions at Interlachen are some of the finest anywhere within North America. The grounds were maintained exclusively by Interlachen's excellent grounds department. Many of the media and the players gave rave reviews of the golf course. U.S. player Tim Herron from Wayzata said "The greens were great . . . soft, and pure." George MacGregor of the GBI team



Edinburgh USA's Tom Fischer with Minnesota native and Classic runner-up Cindy Rarick.

With Tom's positive outlook and "we can do it" attitude, look forward to many more tournaments to make their way to the impressive Edinburgh U.S.A. layout. Next year watch for the Minnesota LPGA Classic to move to a late June date. I'm sure Tom will appreciate the support from our Association that he has always given to the Association.

—Dale Wysocki



A sold-out crowd at Interlachen enjoying great golf at the 34th Walker Cup.

said after Wednesday morning's rain, "The course was absolutely playable . . . If the weather had an effect, it was the waiting . . . I certainly wouldn't use that as an excuse."

—Dale Wysocki