



HOLE NOTES

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MAJOR, MAJOR AT HAZELTINE

Huge Success at Local Course

By Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

By now the last rope has been rolled up and the wires pulled from the ground following a very successful major event held at Hazeltine National Golf Club. Soon there will be no trace of the very exciting PGA Championship played the week of August 12 through the 18th. However, memories of the "Big Event" will last a lifetime for the participants.

Some would say the professionals who had their honor and paycheck on the line were the active participants during this event. Sure it was fun to watch Fred Funk parade down the 18th fairway with Tiger Woods, witness the disintegration of Justin Leonard's game on the final round and experience the joy of a new Champion rising from the crowd. But the true players of note were in the background facing monumental challenges and producing a beautiful venue.

Unseen were the professionals in the turf industry who began the week doing routine turf maintenance such as greens mowing and bunker raking. However, as we in the business have come to expect,



TEAMWORK made it possible to get the course ready each morning and keep it in championship shape during the 84th PGA at Hazeltine. Tour players raved about the condition.

Mother Nature is always on hand to rain upon our parade.

And rain it did! Copious amounts fell upon the course the evening of the second championship round of golf.

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PHOTO BY MIKE LIGDAY

PERIODICAL

Please Deliver Promptly

2002 PGA at Hazeltine—

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except for the ones that thought they could run to the maintenance facility and get their autograph flags. By the time they got back Tiger was long gone.



JIM NICOL, CGCS
Hazeltine National GC

Wednesday and Thursday went by without a hitch. Jim said there were many good compliments about the course and its condition. By now we were getting fairly good at our jobs.

On Friday, play had to be stopped with some players having 4 or 5 holes to play because of lightning. They would finish their rounds on Saturday.

With over three inches of rain falling Friday night and Saturday morning, the pond on

Number 8 had grown very large. Hole 1 had a new 100-yard pond in front of the green and Number 2 tee also had a similar pond. On this day the grounds crew was energized knowing that they were in the spotlight to get this course in playable shape for the finish of Friday's play and the start of the weekend.

Scott Austin, CGCS, brought a few pumps from Midland Hills and they were put to use with Hazeltine's pumps. The Chaska Fire Department with 60 people and two fire trucks pumped 6,000 gallons of water per minute from the pond to the creek on 17 which flowed into the 16th creek and eventually Lake Hazeltine. This took about 2 1/2 hours to get rid of the major water. The crew was still pumping out the bunkers and using the Sand Pro to fix the washouts. Then the staff finished their normal jobs and play went on. PGA Tournament Director, Kerry Haigh spoke to us on Sunday morning and expressed his thanks



MIKE LIGDAY, Manitou Ridge, enjoyed his week of volunteer efforts at the 84th PGA Championship at Hazeltine.

for the wonderful job the crew did.

The Championship finished with Rich Beem edging out Tiger Woods. I guess the mowers should have gotten both autographs on Tuesday.

Major, Major —

(Continued from Front Cover)

Although the audience didn't witness them, many of the bunkers were washed out and several "new" ponds had developed upon the course. Out came the pumps, shovels and rakes to restore the course back to playing condition. The television also didn't pick up on the mass human effort utilized to make Hazeltine picturesque -- again. Like magic the course was transformed into its previous day's beauty.

"The team work necessary was impressive. Everybody with golf course experience knew what had to be done and did it in a professional manner," said Scott Austin, CGCS, and Superintendent volunteer from Midland Hills. "It was a great pleasure to be a part of the camaraderie."

And so the clean up effort went. Like a well oiled machine, and so very typical of a challenge to be addressed at their own courses, the volunteers completed the monumental task without hesitation. And when guidance or representation was necessary, the very capable Jim Nicol, CGCS, was always available.

Whether giving a pre-conditioning pep talk to the crew, making observations on the course or being available for radio, television or publication interviews, Jim was ever present. According to John Steiner, CGCS, Superintendent at the White Bear Yacht Club, "Jim had more air time than the President!"

But no finer professional of our industry could have been found. Articulate, honest and humble, Jim displayed the finest of Superintendent qualities. Both on and off camera his style of golf course management was very impressive. "It was a pleasure to work with Mr. Nicol during the Championship," said Matt Johnson, Second Assistant Superintendent from North Oaks Golf Club.

Supporting Jim and his army of volunteers and employees, as well as visiting Superintendents and their guests, were the local vendors and the MGCSA who sponsored a large Chalet. The glorified tent contained fruit, snacks and beverages throughout the day as well as wonderful and nourishing meals for the troupe of course maintenance personnel. Thanks to the following companies for the support of this accommodation: Hartman Construction; M T I Distributing, Inc.; North Star Turf; Turf Supply Company; Plaisted Companies; Lesco; Simplot Partners; Precision Turf/Griggs Brothers; Syngenta; Griffith LLC; Adventis, and the members of the MGCSA.

All in all it was a wonderful event. The golfers were delighted as well as the turf masters. According to Buddy Hairston, PGA Professional and event participant, "The greens were perfect, the course beautiful and the playing surfaces were in excellent playing condition." And what more could possibly be said for a major Major.