



Deer Run Set to Host MGCSA Spring Mixer

By TOM ABTS, Head PGA Pro / General Manager
Deer Run Golf Club

The MGCSA kicks off a new season with its Spring Mixer at Deer Run Golf Club in Victoria on May 14.

Deer Run Golf Club opened in the fall of 1989. The former McKnight Angus and Horse Farm was the perfect site for a golf course in the picturesque town of Victoria.

The club's founder - Bill Maple - designed the golf course with Hazeltine National Head Golf Pro Mike Schultz. Deer Run's original Superintendent - Pat Walton - did the irrigation, while Jeff Hartman and Tom West did most of the construction of the golf course.

The intention of the design team and construction crew was to build a course that flowed with and emphasized the natural beauty of the land. Along with being aesthetically pleasing, the goal was a golf course that was to be enjoyable and challenging, yet not overbearing.

But Deer Run was to be more than a golf course: It was to be a planned community with houses and townhouses surrounding the course. Most of the housing project occurred over the first six years, bringing with it new roads, drainage problems and other issues for Superintendent Tim George to deal with. Fortunately, Jeff Hartman and Tom West were the cavalry

that was often called to save the day.

Though the course was going through growing pains, the golf club as a business was very successful. In the '90s, Victoria was still considered beyond the fringe of the metro area, but because of strong leagues, did a surprising number of rounds. Like other courses that had a lot of play, Deer Run was plagued with slow play. So in 1997, Deer Run GC instituted **FAST PLAY FRIDAY** - on Fridays all rounds had to be played in four hours. The success of FPF led to a culture of fast play that continued throughout the week and has continued to this day.

By the year 2000, Victoria was in the heart of the upscale development happening on the western side of the metro area. Deer Run GC had to reinvent itself to capture this new market, and thus renovated the clubhouse and made changes to the golf course. New Superintendent Barry Provo worked wonders to transform DRGC from a nice golf course to a beautiful golf course.

Though there is always room for improvement, we believe that we have reached our goal of transforming Deer Run Golf Club. In fact, last year *MPLS / StPAUL Magazine* chose DRGC as one of

the best golf clubs in the western suburbs. The other chosen clubs were Interlachen, Bearpath and Hazeltine. It's been quite a journey.

Superintendent Barry Provo

Barry Provo and his wife Kary have two kids, seven-year-old Alex and three-year-old Kendra.

Barry's career in golf course maintenance began in 1980 at Bent Creek Golf Course.

Superintendent positions along the way have included Lakeview Golf Course / Red Oak Golf Course, Le Sueur Country Club and currently Deer Run Golf Club where he enters his sixth year as Superintendent.

Barry enjoys activities with his family, playing golf and snowmobiling.

Assistant Seth Swanson

Seth is a 2005 graduate of the University of Minnesota and enters his third season at Deer Run Golf Club.

Seth's hobbies include golf, softball and fishing.