

Northland CC is Proud to Host the MGCSA Championship on September 14 in Duluth

By Chris Tritabaugh

Superintendent, Northland Country Club

Northland Country Club was established in 1899 and is the fourth-oldest club in Minnesota behind Town & Country Club, White Bear Yacht Club and The Minikahda Club.

At the time Northland CC was established, there were more millionaires per capita in Duluth than any other city in the United States. This was due to the strength of the mining, shipping, forestry and railroad industries at the turn of the century. In 1922 the members of Northland enlisted the services of noted golf course architect, Donald J. Ross, to design them a golf course on the stunning piece of property recently purchased by the club. A historical document detailing Northland's history and letters from the Tufts Archives in Pinehurst, North Carolina confirm that Ross made two separate visits to Duluth during the planning

and construction of the golf course. The golf course opened for play in 1927 and is essentially the course played today.

The golfing experience at Northland Country Club is truly one of a kind. Northland is an out and back routing with #9 finishing far from the clubhouse; this type of routing was not typically favored by Ross. However, when the property did not allow for returning 9's he was not adverse to an out and back routing.

The golfer's journey begins on number one, at the low point of the property. In the first three holes the golfer has already climbed 150 feet of the property's 300 total feet of elevation change.

Number three on its own rises 95 feet from tee to green. Turning around after reaching the green one can hardly believe they have climbed so high. The third green sits roughly 330 feet above Lake

Superior and the view is stunning.

Holes 4-9 bring the golfer gradually up another 100 feet and away from the Lake. The back nine begins with the uphill 10th hole, considered by most members to be the toughest hole on the course. At 391 yards the hole is not overly long but it rises 50 feet from tee to green and the dramatic volcano green punishes anything short with the possibility of a ball rolling back down the fairway.

Beginning with #13, the golfers begin to work their way back down the hill and towards the lake. Tree removal behind the 13th green leaves the flagstick, with a back hole location, appearing to rise out of Lake Superior. The 14th offers a diabolical green and the 15th another breath-taking view of Lake Superior and the Lakeside Valley. Sixteen and 17 are solid holes

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Northland CC-

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before the long uphill 18th; a hole sure to figure highly in any discussion of the best finishing holes in Minnesota. All of this without mentioning the confounding "break towards the Lake" tendency of the greens, a feature, which leaves most visitors and some members scratching their heads. In so many ways, golf at Northland CC is a one-of-a-kind experience.

I began my time as Golf Course Superintendent at Northland in January of 2007. From the very beginning my goal was to bring about a renaissance of the golf course and return playing characteristics befitting this golden age gem. The course plays fast, firm and fun when the weather is dry. Keep your fingers crossed that the weather is dry in the middle of September. The club has recently retained the services of Golf Architect Ron Prichard. Mr. Prichard is a noted Donald Ross restoration expert and is currently working on the completion of an architectural Master Plan.

The full-time turfgrass management staff at Northland consists of Assistant Superintendent Jake Ryan, Golf Course



NORTHLAND COUNTRY CLUB TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT STAFF

Front row: (l to r) Ben Kimmes, Alex Huesman, Jake Lyttle, Dan Peddicourt, Zach Varty, Asst. Supt. Jake Ryan, Equipment Manager Chad Terch. Back row: Technician Rob Tripp, Jerry Schullo, Ted Nast, Intern Joe LeVoi, Kevin O'Connell, Mike Kantor, Mike Soltis, Scott Bader, Charlie Pillsbury and Superintendent Chris Tritabaugh.

Technician Rob Tripp, Equipment Manager Chad Terch and Assistant in Training Joe LeVoi. In addition to the full-time staff we also have a season staff of 15 hard-working, dedicated employees who take great pride in producing wonderful conditions on a daily basis.

I am very proud of the Club, the course and my wonderful staff. It is an honor to be hosting the 2009 MGCSA Championship. I hope many of you can find time in your busy schedules to come up and experience Northland Country Club and Duluth. - Chris Tritabaugh

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