

Merion Golf Club

Site of the 2005 U.S. Amateur Championship
Ardmore, PA



Internship Report

By Zach Baughman

General Overview of Internship and Golf Course

Merion History

I spent this past summer as a golf course intern at Merion Golf Club, just outside Philadelphia. The highlight of the summer was the U.S. Amateur Championship, which took place at Merion during the last week of my internship, August 20-29, 2005. Located in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, Merion has 36 holes of golf designed by Hugh Wilson. The 36 holes are split into two courses, the East and the West, that are about three blocks apart. The East Course opened for play in September of 1912, and the West Course opened the following year. Merion is a very exclusive golf-only private club with a rich history and tradition. The East Course is the better of the two courses at Merion, while the West Course is a considerably easier course, more suited to the daily play of less skilled members. Regarded as one of the most challenging tests of golf in the world, the East Course at Merion is currently ranked #7 in the United States by Golf Digest.

This summer's U.S. Amateur was the 17th USGA Championship hosted by Merion, more than any other course. Some of the most riveting competitions in golf have taken place at Merion. One of the greatest events in golf history, Bob Jones' victory in the 1930 U.S. Amateur Championship to complete the

Grand Slam, took place at Merion. Another significant event at Merion was the courageous victory of Ben Hogan in the 1950 U.S. Open only a year after his near-fatal car accident.

One of the distinguishing features of the East Course at Merion is the wicker baskets atop the flagsticks. The wickers have always been part of Merion, with the idea coming from course architect Hugh Wilson. It is believed that Wilson saw a course with wickers during his travels to the United Kingdom to study their great links courses before designing Merion. Which course Wilson got the idea from remains a mystery. Regardless of where the idea came from, the wickers add some extra tradition to a course already laden with tradition. In fact, Merion is the only course that does not have to use the USGA flags during USGA competitions.

The wickers do, however, provide some extra challenges for the green staff. The wickers must occasionally be repainted and repaired. Also, due to value of the wickers (estimated at over \$1,000 apiece), they must be collected every evening and put back out every morning.

Maintenance at Merion

The members want to keep the East Course at Merion in top condition, and are willing to spend the money to do it. The annual maintenance budget for

2005 was approximately \$2.7 million for the East Course, and the maintenance budget for the West Course was around \$750,000. As is evidenced by the budgets, the East Course receives considerably more maintenance than the West Course.

The East Course is maintained to near-championship conditions on a daily basis. The greens and fairways are kept firm and fast, with the greens almost always rolling more than ten feet on the stimpmeter. The greens are double cut and rolled almost every day. The rough on the East Course is maintained at approximately four inches, creating severe problems for the golfer who lacks accuracy. The East Course also has about 130 very penal bunkers, referred to as “the White Faces of Merion,” that are hand raked every morning. Fine fescues are allowed to grow naturally around many of the bunkers and in other areas of the rough, giving the course the “rough around the edges” appearance desired by the membership. Each course at Merion has its own maintenance facility and equipment, but sprayers and other equipment are shared on occasion.

There are many grass species at Merion. The greens on the East Course are predominantly creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), while the greens on the West contain about equal amounts of creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*). The fairways on the East are creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass with a little bit of rough bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*). The fairways

on the West Course are perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perrene*). The primary roughs on both courses are composed mostly of Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), perennial ryegrass, and tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*). One interesting piece of trivia is that the first leaf spot resistant variety of Kentucky bluegrass was discovered behind the 17th green at Merion in 1937 by Superintendent Joe Valentine. Ironically, there is no sign of Merion Kentucky bluegrass on either of Merion's courses today.

My internship lasted from May 12, 2005, to August 28, 2005. During this time, I met a lot of new people and learned a lot of new things. I had the privilege of working under several very knowledgeable golf course managers. Matt Shaffer is the Director of Golf Course Operations at Merion Golf Club. Matt oversees the maintenance of both golf courses. Each course at Merion has a superintendent. For most of the summer, John Kelly was the superintendent on the East Course and Jamie Kapes was the West Course superintendent. However, about a month-and-a-half before the tournament, John was promoted to tournament liaison to help Matt with a lot of the behind the scenes work for the U.S. Amateur. Jamie Kapes then became the East Course superintendent, leaving assistant superintendent Mike Dachowski in charge of the West Course. The East Course also has two assistant superintendents (Jason Harrison and Ryan Tuxhorn), one irrigation technician (Scott Bordner), two spray technicians

(Jed Fedor and Jesus Moreno), a mechanic (Craig Cassidy), and a crew of about 30 that is mostly Hispanic. In addition to the superintendent, there is also an assistant superintendent (Mike Dachowski), a spray tech (Chad Hultquist), and a mechanic (Rick Gropp) on the West Course. The crew on the West Course consists of about ten workers, most of whom are Hispanic. In talking with and observing all of these individuals, I learned that communication, organization, dedication, and teamwork are required to successfully maintain such a prestigious golf property.

Internship Experience

There were ten interns at Merion this summer. Two or three of the interns would work on the West Course for about a month and the other seven or eight interns would be on the East Course. The interns would be rotated so that each intern could spend one month on the West Course. All interns however, were on the East Course for the month of August to prepare for the U.S. Amateur.

From an internship point of view, each course had its benefits. Working on the East Course provided the opportunity to learn how to maintain a very high-budget course to extremely high standards and how to prepare a course for a major championship. Working on the West course provided the intern with more responsibility and a less stressful learning environment. On the West

Course, interns were treated almost as assistant superintendents, getting the opportunity to oversee more of the daily maintenance operation of the golf course. Also, interns were taught how to hand water greens while on the West Course, something that was done only by the assistants on the East. Monitoring and hand watering greens was considered the most important maintenance task at Merion Golf Club. Working on both courses, I experienced nearly all aspects of golf course maintenance.

The internship at Merion also had a lot of added benefits. Housing was provided free of charge at an apartment complex about five minutes from the course. There were three or four interns in each two-bedroom apartment. I lived with three other interns: Ben Stover from Iowa State, Bryan Boles from Penn State, and Nick Rothweiler from Kansas State. Interns were allowed to play golf on the East Course on two occasions this summer and on the West Course multiple times. The internship also paid well. I received \$9.50 per hour and time-and-a-half for anything over 40 hours in a week. I worked an average of 70-80 hours per week this summer, and over 100 hours per week the week before and the week of the tournament. Overall, Merion Golf Club provided me with a great learning experience that will benefit me in my future career.

Maintenance Practices

Matt Shaffer, the Director of Golf Course Operations at Merion, is known throughout the industry for his ability to think outside the box and his ability to maintain championship quality greens. The greens at Merion are the original push-up greens from 1912, but have been modified with sand throughout the years. Shaffer says that trying to grow grass on the greens at Merion is like trying to grow grass in a bathtub. When it rains, the greens remain soggy for a long period of time due to the high clay content and lack of internal drainage. Shaffer's goal is to try to get as much water to surface drain off the greens as possible. He believes that maintaining surface tension on the greens is crucial in getting the water to run-off. To avoid disrupting the surface tension, the greens at Merion are very rarely verticut or topdressed, and wetting agents are almost never used on the greens. Topdressing is typically only done in the spring and fall after aerification. After heavy rains, any standing water on the greens is pushed off with squeegees. To prevent excessive shoot density and thatch accumulation, the greens are rolled with Salsco greens rollers almost every day.

Also, all of the greens at Merion are hand watered. The only time the irrigation heads are used to water greens is to water in fertilizer or pesticides. The hand watering is done to ensure uniformity across each green and from green to green. The greens are prepped every morning after they are mowed and rolled. The greens are given just enough water to get them through the day.

Throughout the day, the greens are closely monitored for wilt, and any wilt spots are given water. The greens are then put down for the night by giving them a little bit of water to help them recover during the night. During mild weather, the morning prep and/or the evening watering may be skipped.

Some of the maintenance practices at Merion may seem a little unusual to many in the turf industry. The reason for this is that playability is Matt Shaffer's number one concern. The health and appearance of the turfgrass take a backseat to the playability of the course at Merion.

Wrestling with Mother Nature

This summer was a challenge for the green staff at Merion. The Philadelphia area had one of the hottest summers on record. It seemed like almost every day in July and August had temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit and humidity above 70 percent. Conditions were so extreme that several courses in the area closed down in late July and August. There were also several superintendents in the area that lost their jobs because of losing grass to the heat. A few of the greens at Merion were almost lost to the extreme stress about a month before the Amateur. The three greens were aerified with star tines to get more air into the rootzone. Some spots on the greens had to be repaired with hex plugs. This was of great concern leading up to the Amateur,

but with a little TLC, the greens were almost back to 100% for the tournament. In fact, we received many compliments from the golfers about the smoothness of the greens during the tournament.

The heat also wreaked havoc on the fairways on the East Course. Some of the fairways contained patches of *Poa trivialis* and some *Poa annua* that died in the extreme heat. The worst areas in the fairways were hex plugged with bentgrass from the nursery.

The collars took the worst beating on the course. At first, we thought they had some type of disease, but it turned out to just be damage from spinning the greens mowers around on them. Throughout July and August, we covered the collars with thin plastic mats while mowing greens to reduce injury to the leaf blades. This seemed to help out, but the mats did get stuck in the reels of the mowers from time to time. Some of the worst spots on the collars were also hex-plugged prior to the Amateur.

Disease pressure was also extremely high with the severe heat and humidity. There were some minor instances of pythium and brown patch, but these were treated immediately and we never had any severe outbreaks.

The U.S. Amateur Championship

Preparing the East Course for the U.S. Amateur was definitely the highlight of the summer. Shaffer really wanted to dry the greens and fairways out to firm them up for the Amateur. Due to the extreme heat we weren't able to withhold water as much as we wanted, but with careful monitoring and hand watering we were able to get the course pretty firm. Everyday for about two weeks leading up to the tournament, all of the interns were carrying hoses around the course and watering hot spots on fairways and tee boxes. We were not allowed to haul our hoses in carts because we were trying to keep cart traffic to a minimum.

Tournament week was very exciting. Over 150 turf professionals volunteered for the tournament. This made for a lot of great networking opportunities. We had a huge air-conditioned tent for the green staff and volunteers, complete with a big screen TV and plenty of air mattresses for napping. All week long, we were served three meals a day prepared by the chefs in the clubhouse.

Interns had to arrive at the course at 3:45a.m. during tournament week, compared to 5:00 or 5:30 for most of the summer. We had to make sure all of the equipment was out and ready to go for the morning assignments. At 4:30a.m., the green staff and volunteers met in the tent to receive morning assignments. My morning job during tournament week was mowing greens.

We worked in teams of two for mowing greens, one Merion green staff member with a volunteer. My partner for the week was an intern from Hamilton Farm Golf Club. Greens were double cut every morning during the tournament. The way we double cut greens at Merion was to go down and then come back on the same pass. Mowing this way made no stripes on the greens, which was how Matt Shaffer liked it. My partner and I were responsible for mowing both of the putting greens, the chipping green, and the 15th green all week. Much to my excitement, the final match on Sunday ended on the 15th green.

My evening assignments during tournament week were a little more varied, but usually I was mowing greens again or hand watering fairways. Some nights during tournament week we mowed greens, but other nights we held off. The decision was based on the green speeds. The USGA wanted green speeds around 12 on the stimpmeter for the week. We were able to deliver green speeds around 12 almost everyday of the tournament. Generally, if we were off on green speeds, it was a little on the fast side.

Early in the week, we had to be off the course by 7:00 a.m. due to the large field and early tee times. It was amazing how fast all of the greens, tees, fairways, and approaches could be mown and bunkers raked in the morning. It was definitely nice to have so many volunteers. Later in the week, when the

field was narrowed down and tee times were pushed back, we were able to stay on the course a little longer and make sure everything was as perfect as possible.

The tournament went very smoothly with no major problems. The USGA was extremely pleased with the playability of the course, and the overall opinion of the golfers seemed to be that the course was very tough but fair. The 2005 U.S. Amateur was certainly an event that I will never forget.

Merion East Course Granular Fertilizer Applications

Date	Area Treated	Products Applied	Rate
4/27/2005	Greens, Approaches	Nature Safe 8-3-5 superfine	0.5 lb.N/M
5/31/2005	Greens	Nature Safe 8-3-5 superfine	0.5 lb.N/M
6/7/2005	Greens, Approaches	Sanctuary 8-3-6	0.6 lb.N/M
7/23/2005	Greens, Approaches	Lesco 0-0-50	0.5 lb.K/M
7/29/2005	Greens, Approaches	Lesco 0-0-50	0.5 lb.K/M
8/6/2005	Greens	Lesco 0-0-50	0.5 lb.K/M

Merion East Course Foliar Fertilizer Applications

Date	Area Treated	Products Applied	Rate
4/6/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	1.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	3.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	4.00 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	3.00 oz./M
4/11/2005	Greens, Approaches	Calphlex	3.00 oz./M
		Maxiplex	3.00 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
		Defense Man	0.07 lb./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	3.00 oz./M
4/14/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M

		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.50 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.50 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
4/22/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.00 oz./M
		Carbon K	2.00 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
4/28/2005	Greens, Approaches	Defense Man	0.09 lb./M
		Calphlex	5.00 oz./M
		Maxiplex	3.00 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	2.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
5/4/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M

		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.00 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
5/12/2005	Greens, Approaches	Trical	0.30 lb./M
		Maxiplex	2.00 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
		Defense Man	0.07 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	3.00 oz./M
5/13/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.00 oz./M
		Carbon K	2.00 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
5/23/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.50 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.50 oz./M

		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
5/25/2005	Greens, Approaches	Defense Man	0.09 lb./M
		Calphlex	5.00 oz./M
		Maxiplex	3.00 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	2.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
6/7/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.50 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.50 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
6/9/2005	Greens, Approaches	P.K. Fight	1.75 oz./M
6/16/2005	Greens, Approaches	Trical	0.30 lb./M
		Maxiplex	2.00 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
		Defense Man	0.07 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	3.00 oz./M
6/17/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M

		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.00 oz./M
		Carbon K	2.00 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
		Perk-Up	1.00 oz./M
6/25/2005	Greens, Approaches	Knife	0.50 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Perk-Up	2.00 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	1.50 oz./M
		Carbon K	1.50 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
6/29/2005	Greens, Approaches	Trical	0.30 lb./M
		Maxiplex	2.00 oz./M
		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.40 oz./M
		Defense Man	0.07 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	3.00 oz./M
7/1/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	0.50 oz./M
		Knife	0.75 oz./M
		Renaissance	0.50 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 oz./M

		Floradox Pro 2-2-3	1.50 oz./M
		Turgor 0-0-5	1.00 oz./M
		Carbon N 20-0-4	2.50 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	1.50 oz./M
7/15/2005	Greens, Approaches	Turgor 0-0-5	1.50 oz./M
		P.K. Fight	2.00 oz./M
		Renaissance	1.25 oz./M
		Knife	0.50 oz./M
		Perk-Up	1.50 oz./M
7/20/2005	Greens, Approaches	P.K. Fight	2.00 oz./M
7/31/2005	Approaches	Per "4" Max	1.50 oz./M
		P-48	5.00 lb./A
8/4/2005	Greens, Approaches	Per "4" Max	1.00 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.50 gal./A
		Perk-Up	1.00 gal./A
		FG-20	1.50 oz./M
		Renaissance	1.50 oz./M
8/11/2005	Greens, Approaches	Synatek 10-2-10	0.10 lb.N/M
		Renaissance	1.50 oz./M
		Astron	1.50 oz./M
8/18/2005	Greens, Approaches	Per "4" Max	1.00 oz./M
		Astron	1.00 oz./M
		Protesyn	1.00 gal./A

		Renaissance	1.00 oz./M
8/19/2005	Greens, Approaches	Astron	1.00 oz./M
		Per "4" Max	2.00 oz./M
		Protesyn	2.00 oz./M

Merion East Course Pesticide Applications

Date	Area Treated	Product	Class	Rate	Targets
4/22/2005	Greens, Approaches	Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	5.00 lb./A	broad spectrum
5/4/2005	Greens, Approaches	Delta Guard	insecticide	32.0 oz./A	BTA
5/12/2005	Greens, Approaches	Talstar	insecticide	15.0 oz./A	BTA, cutworm
5/13/2005	Greens, Approaches	Medallion	fungicide	0.50 oz./M	broad spectrum
		Endorse	fungicide	11.0 lb./A	broad spectrum
5/28/2005	Greens, Approaches	18+	fungicide	4.00 oz./M	broad spectrum
		Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	5.00 lb./A	broad spectrum
6/7/2005	Greens, Approaches	Primo	growth regulator	0.125 oz./M	growth
6/9/2005	Greens, Approaches	Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	7.50 lb./A	broad spectrum
		Aliette Signature	fungicide	4.00 oz./M	pythium, yellow tuft
6/22/2005	Greens, Approaches	Compass	fungicide	0.15 oz./M	brown patch, anthrac
		Emerald	fungicide	8.50 oz./A	dollar/bent dead spot
		Banol	fungicide	1.50 oz./M	pythium
7/6/2005	Greens, Approaches	Banol	fungicide	1.50 oz./M	pythium
		Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	6.50 lb./A	broad spectrum
7/11/2005	Greens, Approaches	Delta Guard	insecticide	30.0 oz./A	BTA, Hyperodes
7/18/2005	Greens, Approaches	Heritage	fungicide	4.00 oz./M	brown patch
		Curlan	fungicide	2.75 lb./A	dollar spot
7/20/2005	Greens, Approaches	Primo	growth regulator	0.125 oz./M	growth
7/25/2005	Greens, Approaches	Banol	fungicide	1.50 oz./M	pythium
		Emerald	fungicide	0.15 oz./M	dollar spot

		Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	5.00 lb./A	broad spectrum
7/26/2005	Greens	OARS	wetting agent	6.00 oz./M	soil
		Alleviate	wetting agent	6.00 oz./M	soil
7/27/2005	Greens, Collars	Prostar	fungicide	4.50 oz./M	fairy ring
		Oxyflor	wetting agent	2.00 gal./A	soil
7/30/2005	Greens	Prostar	fungicide	6.00 oz./M	fairy ring
		Bayleton	fungicide	1.00 oz./M	broad spectrum
8/8/2005	Greens, Approaches	Insignia	fungicide	0.90 oz./M	brown patch
		Subdue	fungicide	1.00 oz./M	pythium
		Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	6.50 lb./A	broad spectrum
8/10/2005	Greens, Approaches	Primo	growth regulator	0.125 oz./M	growth
8/12/2005	Greens	Prostar	fungicide	6.00 oz./M	fairy ring
		Pervade	wetting agent	1.00 oz./M	soil
8/13/2005	Greens	Prostar	fungicide	6.00 oz./M	fairy ring
		Oxyflor	wetting agent	2.00 gal./A	soil
8/14/2005	Greens 2 & 12	Blackout	biological agent	24.0 oz./M	algae
8/17/2005	Greens, Approaches	Daconil Ultrex	fungicide	10.0 lb./A	broad spectrum
		Touche	fungicide	2.75 lb./A	dollar spot
		Banol	fungicide	1.5 oz./M	pythium
		Primo	growth regulator	0.120 oz./M	growth

Pictures of Merion Golf Club (East Course)



Hole #1-Par 4



Hole #2-Par 5



Hole #3-Par 3



Hole #4-Par 5



Hole #5-Par 4



Hole #6-Par 4



Hole #7-Par 4



Hole #8-Par 4



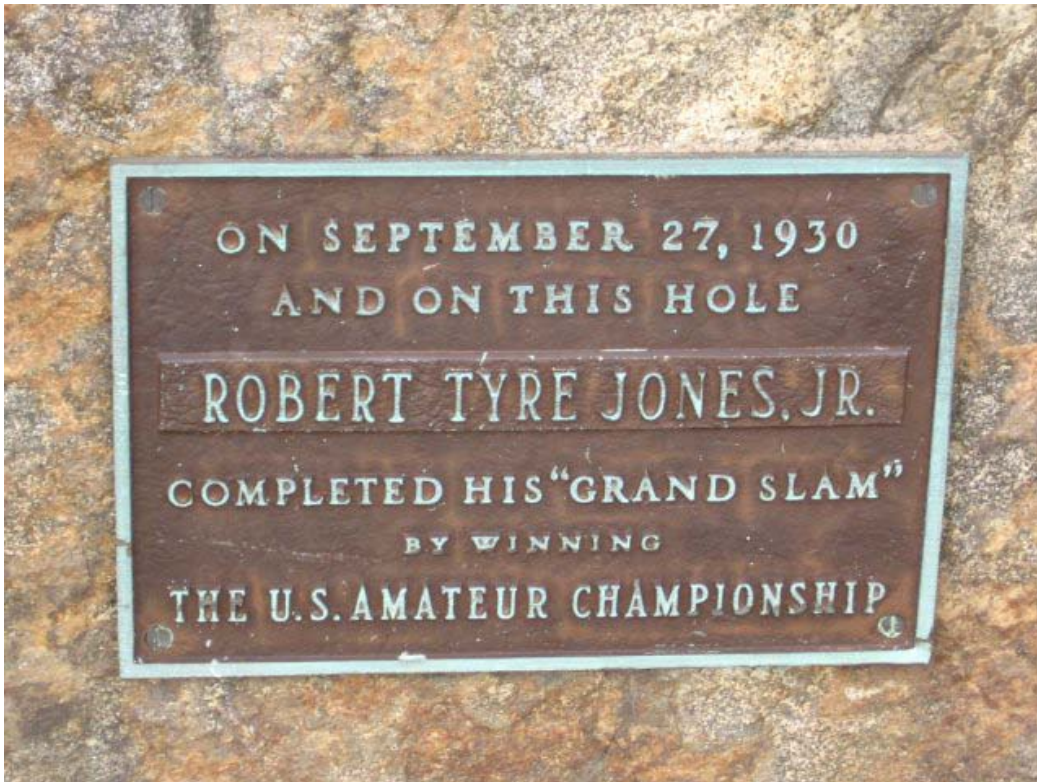
Hole #9-Par 3



Hole #10-Par 4



Hole #11-Par 4



The Bobby Jones Plaque next to the 11th tee



Hole #12-Par 4



Hole #13-Par 3



Hole #14-Par 4



Hole #15-Par 4



Hole #16-Par 4 (The famous “Quarry Hole”)



Hole #17-Par 3



Hole #18-Par 4



The Ben Hogan Plaque in the 18th fairway



The gallery crowded around the 16th green and 17th tee during the U.S. Amateur



The gallery surrounding the 18th green during the U.S. Amateur



One of Merion's famous wickers



Early morning mowing



Volunteers fluffing the rough and rolling the approach on #15



Interns hand-watering the 1st fairway after a round of the U.S. Amateur



Equipment ready to go back out for the evening after the conclusion of the day's play



The green staff volunteer tent for the U.S. Amateur

Merion Daily Log

Thurs. 12 May- Course set-up with David Petfield (cut cups & put out wickers, moved tee markers, filled divots, marked collars at 26", topdressed old hole plugs & brushed with paint brush), Scagged tee surrounds, bunker tie-ins

Fri. 13 May- Mowed greens with John Deere 180(chipping, 1, 5, 16); filled tee divots; dug along edge of parking lot for lot extension

Sat. 14 May- Mowed greens with John Deere 180(double cut going back over first pass)

Sun. 15 May- Mowed fairways with John Deere

Mon. 16 May- Mowed tees(3-9 dir.) with Toro; Scagged green surrounds; Hand watered fairway extensions, drain lines, new sod, tee boxes

Tues. 17 May- Mowed fairways with John Deere; Hand watered tee boxes and drain lines on clubhouse side

Wed. 18 May- Mowed fairways; hand watered drain lines on all holes

Thurs. 19 May- Mowed fairways; weed eat around trees, posts, fences, etc.; dug up old rhododendrons by Bobby Jones rock on #11 and replaced with new *Itia* shrubs

Fri. 20 May- (Raining all day) Mowed fairways; Spread mulch in planting beds near clubhouse

Sat. 21 May- Flew home for sister's graduation

Sun. 22 May- Sister's graduation

Mon. 23 May- Flew back

Tues. 24 May- Raked bunkers with leaf rakes going toward the green; Scagged tee surrounds and around trees on holes 2-12.

Wed. 25 May- Mowed tees(6-12 dir. Burning in lines) w/ Toro; weed eat wet spot on #9 hill and around #9 pond and around trees on 2-12 side of road; intern meeting with Matt Shaffer from 2:30 to 5:30

Thurs. 26 May- Mowed greens #16, 17, 18 with Jacobsen(6-12); cleaned up area to right of #10 tee to prepare for Amateur(weed eat, brush cut, cleared to ground to prepare for mulch)

Fri. 27 May- Mowed fairways, Scagged around nursery, topdressed nursery green with topdressing sand and Scotts rotary spreader set wide open and wheel to wheel, sprayed RoundUp in area to right of #10 tee, laid fine fescue sod behind #11 green

Sat. 28 May- Mowed fairways

Sun. 29 May- Mowed fairways

Mon. 30 May- Mowed fairways, cleaned up around pole barn; Wicker Duty

Tues. 31 May- Using Anderson's Rotary Spreader, Dave Petfield and I fertilized greens with Nature Safe Super Fine 8-3-5 @ 0.5 lb. N/M and fertilized tees and front circle with Simplot Vivacity 8-3-5 @ 0.67 lb. N/M; Wicker Duty

Wed. 1 June- Led bunker crew in accuforming bunkers; sprayed Round Up in pea gravel area at Wheeler Property; Mowed fairways without baskets to avoid picking up fertilizer that was applied yesterday; Wicker Duty

Thurs. 2 June- Mowed fairways; dew whipped fertilizer clumps on fairways; aerified extension in #14 fairway, drug plugs with steel drag mat, blew off remains, watered; Wicker Duty

Fri. 3 June- (Raining all day) double cut greens 3-9; scagged green surrounds on clubhouse side; collected scag piles; Wicker Duty

Sat. 4 June- Diego and I mowed collars(counterclockwise) and approaches(3-9, burning in lines) with Toro Greensmaster 1600; cleaned up around clubhouse with Ben; went back in at 5:00 pm and mowed step cut with John Deere 2653A; Wicker Duty

Sun. 5 June- Double cut greens 3-9; helped bunker crew finish leaf raking bunkers; raked up grass clippings along #11 creek bank; Wicker Duty

Mon. 6 June- Ernie Els and Chad Campbell played the course today as part of an outing for their sponsor SAP. Neither of them got to complete the entire course because they each had to play at least one hole with each group. Els said it was the most well-conditioned course he has played this year, and he would definitely like to come back sometime and play the entire 18. Mowed tees 6-12 in the morning; came back in at 3:30 and Scagged green surrounds until lightning was detected.

Tues. 7 June- Single cut greens 3-9; Finished Scagging green surrounds, tee surrounds, etc.; weed eat clubhouse side

Wed. 8 June- Bunker crew leader; miscellaneous Scagging

Thurs. 9 June- Hose man for Jesus on spray hawking greens: applied Daconil Ultrex, Chipco Signature, and Floratine P-K Fight

Fri. 10 June- (Member-Guest Tournament started today at 9:15 am) Mowed tees 6-12; cleaned up from bunker tie-ins; went back in at 4:30 pm and single cut greens 3-9

Sat. 11 June- (Member-Guest Day 2) Double cut greens 6-12; went back in at 4:00 pm and single cut greens 3-9

Sun. 12 June- (Member-Guest Day 3) Mowed tees 6-12; Green Staff Appreciation Breakfast at clubhouse

Mon. 13 June- Mowed tees 3-9; Hand watered sodded and seeded areas on holes #7, 9, 11, 12 (side note: The fairways are very discolored and splotchy. Paul Latshaw happened to stop by today. He believes that the fairway discoloration is due to spraying Proxy a couple weeks ago which tends to make the grass puffy, thus raising the crowns and leading to a slight scalping. He also believes that spraying Primo last week could also be a contributing factor. Also, there is an odd disease on the collar on #11 which could be Pythium or gray leaf spot. A sample has been sent to Penn State.)

Tues. 14 June- (Annika Sorenstam played the course today) Bunker leader, leaf raked bunkers perpendicular to normal line; Miscellaneous Scagging around tees and trees; Hand watered dry spots in rough

Wed. 15 June- Mowed tees 6-12; Hand watered dry spots on tees and fairways

Thurs. 16 June- Mowed fairways; Hand watered dry/stressed spots in fairways

Fri. 17 June- Mowed tees 6-12; Hand watered dry spots on tees

Sat. 18 June- Mowed fairways; Went back in at 4:00 to mow rough with Progressive

Sun. 19 June- Mowed approaches with Toro with groomers; Went back in at 4:00 to mow rough with Progressive

Mon. 20 June- Mowed tees 3-9; Scagged around greens, tees, etc. on 2-12 side; picked up Scag piles

Tues. 21 June- (Arnold Palmer played the course today) Mowed collars and approaches; Intern class on turf math and spreader and sprayer calibration; Leveled sprinkler heads on range with Scott

Wed. 22 June- Mowed tees 6-12; Hand topdressed bad areas in green clean-ups

Thurs. 23 June- Mowed collars and approaches 6-12 using plastic mats to turn around on collars; mowed sod nursery and seed nursery; pulled crabgrass from nursery; used backpack

sprayer to spot spray thin/bare spots in nursery with Floratine Carbon Power, Floratine PK Fight, Floratine Renaissance, and Floratine Experimental Product (divot recovery)

Fri. 24 June- (MLB Pitcher David Wells played the course today) Mowed tees 6-12; Miltona forked dry spots on tee boxes using wetting agent pellets

Sat. 25 June- Day off; went to Red Sox vs. Phillies game

Sun. 26 June- Day off

Mon. 27 June- Mowed tees 3-6; Scagged around greens, tees, etc. on clubhouse side; raining most of the day

Tues. 28 June- (Course closed today for aerification and DryJect) Bunker work: pulling all weeds and exposed bunker wall, checking depth(2-3" on faces and 4-6" on bottoms), shoveling sand around to meet specified depths, packing shoveled sand with shovels and accufoms, rechecking depths, repeating process until perfect[with a crew of 10, we completed 3 holes in 6 hours]; broomed in excess sand from DryJect on green clean-ups and collars, brooming it out toward two-pass

Wed. 29 June- Mowed tees 6-12; spiked fairways 1, 14, 15 with SandPro with spiker attachment; prepped and laid sod on area in right rough on #2 where tree was removed

Thurs. 30 June- Mowed tees that did not get mowed yesterday; spiked fairways 18, 12, 11, 10; broomed in sand on SPG to fill aerification holes and LPG

Fri. 1 July- Mowed tees 6-12; Used stump grinder to grind stump on #2; Hand broomed in topdressing sand around fairway bunker on #5; Learned how to change and grind bedknives

Sat. 2 July- Bunker leader; Mowed nursery sod and seed; Went back in at 5:00 pm and Scagged sodded area left of #7 green and blew off step-cut with Buffalo Turbine

Sun. 3 July- Mowed collars and approaches; Went back in at 1:30 pm to hand water dry spots on tees, fairways and surrounds on holes 13-18

Mon. 4 July- Mowed tees 6-12

Tues. 5 July- (Started on West Course today) Mowed greens 2-8; Emptied trash cans and filled ballwashers; employee luncheon at Clubhouse followed by employee golf outing

Wed. 6 July- Sprayed fairways with Mike Dachowski with Manicure and Phytosphos; Mowed green clean-up with Jacobsen with smooth roller; Sprayed greens and tees with Mike with Talstar insecticide

Thurs. 7 July- Mowed greens 3-9; Calibrated rotary spreaders with Nick to apply .25lb. N/M, but Mike decided not to fertilize until next week due to the expected heavy rain; Nail-boarded bad areas on greens; Marked the course

Fri. 8 July- Raining all last night and today-No Work

Sat. 9 July- Course clean-up (blowing off tees, picking up branches); dew whipped collars and approaches; Wash pad duty

Sun. 10 July- Mowed collars and approaches; Wash pad duty

Mon. 11 July- Mowed fairways 3-9; Filled tee divots

Tues. 12 July- Mowed greens 6-12; Supervised crew mowing and trimming bunker surrounds

Wed. 13 July- Fertilized greens with Vivacity 8-3-5 at .25 lbs. N/M (Lesco broadcast wheel-to-wheel); Fertilized tees with Sanctuary 8-3-6 at .50 lbs. N/M (Lesco broadcast wheel-to-wheel); Helped Alex seed thin spots around #6 green

Thurs. 14 July- Sprayed bunker surrounds using ChemPro 160 gallon sprayer with gun with 9-9-9 at 0.10 lbs.N/M; Backpack sprayed nutsedsge in rough with Manage; Marked collars

Fri. 15 July- Day Off

Sat. 16 July- Day Off; went to Center City Philadelphia

Sun. 17 July- Day Off

Mon. 18 July- Spray hawked greens with Josh with Fore, Manicure, Banol

Tues. 19 July- Mowed greens; Weed eat bunker edges

Wed. 20 July- Mowed fairways; Spread Subdue Granular fungicide on driving range tee with broadcast spreader; Mike taught me how to hand water greens

Thurs. 21 July- Sprayed fairways with Phytophos and Compass; Hand watered greens with Jed

Fri. 22 July- Mowed greens; Walk mowed driving range tee; Hand watered greens

Sat. 23 July- Mowed greens; Hand watered greens and popped heads on fairways, tees, and surrounds

Sun. 24 July- Mowed fairways; Walk mowed driving range tee; Hand watered greens and popped heads on fairways, tees, and surrounds

Mon. 25 July- Fertilized greens with Scotts rotary spreader and Lesco 0-0-50 Sulfate of Potash; Boom sprayed fairways with Sevin; Spread Subdue GR fungicide on #4 green at 0.5 lb/M using Scotts rotary spreader

Tues. 26 July- Sprayed driving range tee with 9-9-9 at 0.10 lb.N/M; Cleaned up pump house; Hand watered greens

Wed. 27 July- Mowed rye tees; Picked crabgrass on range tee; Hand watered greens; Sprayed remaining fairways with Sevin

Thurs. 28 July- Course clean-up (blowing off greens and tees, picking up branches); Hand watered greens

Fri. 29 July- Sprayed fairways with 9-9-9 at 0.15 lb.N/M; Hand watered greens

Sat. 30 July- Mowed greens; Went back in afternoon to water greens and picked crabgrass from driving range tee

Sun. 31 July- Mowed greens; Went back in afternoon to water greens and hex plugged collar on #7

Mon. 1 August- Mowed fairways; Finished hex plugging collar on #7; Built hose rack out of steel rebar and PVC pipe

Tues. 2 August- Sprayed fairways with Manicure at 3 oz./M and Phytofos at 3 oz./M; Hand watered green and bunker surrounds

Wed. 3 August- Mowed fairways; Hand watered greens

Thurs. 4 August- Mowed greens; Hand watered tees, fairways, rough

Fri. 5 August- Hex plugged collar on #7; Watered tees, fairways, rough

Sat. 6 August- Mowed tees; Returned in afternoon to water fairways, tees, and rough

Sun. 7 August- Mowed greens

Mon. 8 August- (Returned to East Course today-working split shifts this week: I am PM shift- 10:00am to ~7:00pm) Scagged green and tee surrounds

Tues. 9 August- Hand topdressed scalped areas in green clean-ups; mowed step cut; helped Dario hex plug collar on #8

Wed. 10 August- Topdressed collars and approaches with drop spreader and tees with rotary spreader; Spray hawked greens with DeltaGuard insecticide with Jason Harrison

Thurs. 11 August- Hand watered tees, fairways, and rough all day

Fri. 12 August- Went in at 4:00am to mow greens (All bentgrass was mowed at 4:00am this morning to avoid mowing it during the heat); Went back at 12:30 to hand water

Sat. 13 August- Course detail until 10:00am; Went back at 11:00 to hand water

Sun. 14 August- Mowed greens; hand watered

Mon. 15 August- Cut out and pulled weeds in the quarry on #16 and sickle barred a few areas in the quarry

Tues. 16 August- Quarry clean up all day; NBC fly over was today

Wed. 17 August- Finished quarry clean up; NBC did another fly over today; Mowed greens at night

Thurs. 18 August- Mowed greens; Roped off greens and tees on entire course with Scott Bordner, Jamie Hunt and Tim Flaherty, USGA Director of the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Senior Open; Hand watered wilted areas in fairways; Double cut greens after they were hand broomed

Fri. 19 August- Double cut greens; Break; Accuformed bunkers; Went to Philadelphia Country Club with Tim Flaherty to rope off #1 and #10 tees and #9 and #18 greens; Filled divots on West Course driving range tee

Sat. 20 August- (Practice rounds began today) Double cut(6-12) Small Putting Green, Large Putting Green, #15 Green, and Chip Green with Brian, an intern from Hamilton Farms; Breakfast in tent; Cut around yardage markers on tees using a 6" cup cutter with Chris Allan, a Merion intern two years ago and now Asst. Supt. at Fiddlesticks in Florida; Double cut(3-9) the same greens with Brian

Sun. 21 August- (Day 2 of Practice rounds) Double cut greens in morning; Single cut greens at night

Mon. 22 August- (Day 1 of Stroke Play) Double cut greens in morning; Hand watered fairways at night

Tues. 23 August- (Day 2 of Stroke Play) Double cut greens in morning; Hand watered fairways at night

Wed. 24 August- (Day 1 of Match Play) Double cut greens in morning; Hand watered fairways and green surrounds in afternoon/evening

Thurs. 25 August- (Day 2 of Match Play) Double cut greens in morning; Hand watered tees at night

Fri. 26 August- (Day 3 of Match Play) Double cut greens in morning; Single cut greens at night

Sat. 27 August- (Match Play Semifinals) (Light rain in morning) Double cut greens and fluffed rough with leaf rakes in morning; Single cut greens at night

Sun. 28 August- (Final Round of U.S. Amateur) (Raining almost all day) Double cut greens; Stayed ahead of golfers to take care of any bunker wash-outs if necessary

Mon. 29 August- Exit interview with Matt Shaffer and Jamie Kapes

Employer Contact Information

Matthew Shaffer
Director of Golf Course Operations
Merion Golf Club
Ardmore, PA 19003
(610) 642-5600

John Kelly
Golf Course Superintendent
Merion Golf Club
Ardmore, PA 19003

Jamie Kapes
Golf Course Superintendent
Merion Golf Club
Ardmore, PA 19003