



Appealing to all

Redesign work at Arlington Lakes Golf Club has created more options for quicker and cheaper rounds

Handling almost 40,000 rounds a year, Arlington Lakes Golf Club in Arlington Heights, a suburb of Chicago, has long been extremely popular with seniors and league teams. But the 37-year-old course still had many of its original features, and was becoming outdated.

The Arlington Heights Park District enlisted the help of Michael Benkusky, ASGCA, to develop a plan to improve bunkers and greens, adding to the golfing experience while reducing maintenance costs. Another important aspect of the plan was to appeal more to the community, particularly juniors and families. As a Park District facility, funded by taxpayers, it was important that the updated course had an emphasis on value for money.

“In reviewing the course and beginning the planning process, the first thing that we noticed was how the course was routed,” says Benkusky. “At that time, the course had three holes on the back nine that returned to the clubhouse. We decided to swap the nines, so the third, sixth and ninth holes returned to the clubhouse.”

This change allowed the golf operations manager to incorporate golf rates for

three- and six-hole rounds, along with the current nine- and eighteen-hole rates. This provided a low-cost alternative where adults can play from as little as \$8 and junior and seniors from \$5.

The new arrangement also meets the needs of those looking for a golf experience that is less time consuming. The three-hole option takes less than 30 minutes and the six-hole course less than an hour. Golfers now have an option to use the course before work or even during their lunch break. It is also great for families, who can come out in the evening for a few holes and spend quality time together.

To help encourage junior and beginner golfers, Benkusky also added a new set of tees that allows the course to be played at 2,900 yards. From these tees, the par fours play 130-180 yards, giving these golfers a better chance to reach greens in regulation and improve their score, making the game more fun. This, combined with less time-consuming options, means these golfers can learn the game without becoming frustrated or bored, encouraging them to return to the course and helping improve participation among the local community.



Arlington Lakes

Location:
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Golf course architect:
Michael Benkusky, ASGCA
www.mjbgolfdesign.com

Project summary: A short course owned by the local park district, Arlington Lakes was redesigned to help grow participation, particularly among families

Partners: Gewalt-Hamilton and Associates (engineering); A.S. Altum & Associates (irrigation design); Golf Creations (construction); Rain Bird (irrigation); Waupaca Sand, Jacklin Seed, Profile Products (materials)