

Hillcrest Newsletter

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July 2018

From the President...

Mother nature continues to let us know who is in control. We have gone from snowdrifts in mid-April to 100 degrees in May to a foot of rain in June. Having said that, the course looks great! Luckily, the rain didn't come until the evening of the Member-Guest Tournament or we still might be playing it.

The Member-Guest was a big success. We had 106 teams this year which is about as many as we ever get for this event. Thanks to Waren, Scott, Kasey, Adessa and the rest of the staff for pulling off another memorable event. Congratulations to Justin and Jordan Dietrich for winning the tournament and to Blake Yonke and Bryce McVicker for winning the Friday night shootout.



Dan Megard, President

The number of rounds at Hillcrest is down 23% from last year. This is because of the late start this Spring and all of the rain in June. I'm sure we will close the gap on last years rounds as the playing season goes on with favorable weather in the coming months. Please get out and enjoy the course. The rain has made the course absolutely beautiful. Unfortunately, the rough is making a great recovery after thinning a bit after our bout of hot weather in late May and early June. Consider playing in the Pro-Am in August if you haven't before. There are plenty of spots available for both the women's and men's events.

There will be a new fountain on the #16 pond given in honor of John and Darlene Cimpl. This should be in place soon and will make that pond even nicer. Please consider Hillcrest in your estate planning as the Cimpl family has done.

Finally, there are new rules coming to golf in 2019. These were suggested by the USGA and the Royal and Ancient and then the public was able to give six months of feedback on these proposed changes. The ruling bodies were very receptive to these suggestions and we will have more player friendly rules next year. Some of my favorite changes are: dropping the ball from knee height instead of shoulder height (especially when you are 6'5"), no penalty for a double hit of the ball on one swing (the T.C. Chen rule), the ability to fix a spike mark in your putting line on the green and getting your distance on a ball hit out of bounds instead of having to go back to the spot of the previous shot. You can check all of the new rules out at USGA.org.

From the Clubhouse...



I don't spend a lot of time looking back and remembering certain golf course conditions even though in most cases conditions good and bad dictate future agronomic programs and adjustments.

During my first summer here I remember it raining one weekend morning and coming back in the afternoon to take a look around only to find purple collars from drought stress. These days only in the most extreme weather conditions would I find this scenario. It was obvious we needed to ramp up our collar aerification and start managing our thatch better. The same conditions existed in the approaches and after a number of years the approaches are firmer with an improved playing surface, plus more disease resistant, simply by managing our thatch more aggressively.

I remember a few years later I had a "great" idea to raise the height of the rough by only one half inch because our rough mowers were scalping all over the property. We fixed that problem but created penal rough and we had to lower the height of cut. Over time better rough mowers that follow the contour of the bumps limited the scalping.

Another example of a give and take scenario happened when we made the change to walk mowing greens in an effort to create smoother greens. Mission accomplished, but as I got more aggressive and pushed limits we found climates around a few greens unfit for an aggressive management style and turf started to decline. The answer was to create a better climate by cutting down trees (#7) and in only one growing season the entire green complex has much better playing conditions with limited inputs compared to what was required when it was in the deep shade.

Better management practices like overseeding and the introduction of a whole bunch of bluegrass sod on green surrounds eventually lead to the rough being too penal at our regular height of cut. The action was to expand fairways, expand approaches, and most recently lower the height of cut around greens so small misses are not big penalties. What happened, and it has happened in the fairways too as we have slowly lowered our fairway height, is worm castings. They were always there but mostly hidden in the taller grass. Maybe an entire regrassing to a new species would improve the situation, but undoubtedly it would create new obstacles, and those obstacles might be better than worm castings, but maybe not after membership factors in all the variables.

For now I don't have a solution for worm castings except to sacrifice the tighter lies, firmer surfaces, and increase the penalties for slightly off line approach shots.

Where and when does all this end? Never. We are going to make changes and those changes are going to create more changes. But looking back at some of the changes your course sheds more water faster, uses less water, and has better playing surfaces from year to year and there is no reason to believe the course won't continue the same trends. At the same time other turf declines under new actions and we apply tactics to stop the decline. I think all stubborn Superintendents do the same thing for better playing surfaces, better disease resistance, and less dependence on water.

From the Kitchen...

This July look forward to a Throwback Thursday! Don Kettering and I will be grilling burgers and steaks. We plan to have a 12oz and 16oz "Kettering Cut" Ribeye! Stay tuned for more details.

Pro-am is right around the corner and planning is underway.

I've recently have had great success with baking a Gluten-Free Honey Oat Bread. I was wondering if there's any interest in buying loaves of bread through Hillcrest. Pre-Orders would be required!!



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From the Golf Shop...



Scott Larson, Golf Pro
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Upcoming events for July:

July 4th – Firecracker 3 Net Best Ball out of 4 tournament. Get your team signed up for this 8:00 a.m. Shotgun Start event.

July 5th and 8th – Men's Club Championship. Must have 32 people signed up to hold the event in 2018

July 6th – Couples Golf and Pool Party. Must have 25 couples signed up to hold the pool party.

July 18th – Hosmer Outing – PM Shotgun Start

July 20th – Couples Night Golf

July 30th and 31st – Hillcrest Pro/Jr. and Pro/Lady

August 2nd – 5th – Hillcrest Pro/Am

All the events are listed under the calendar section at hillcrestyankton.com



PGA Jr. League golfers working on their sand shots.

Million Dollar Shootout

This year the \$1,000,000 Shoot Out event will be held on Thursday, August 2nd, at 7:30 p.m.! All amateur golfers who are playing in the Pro-Am will be entered into a drawing to be one of the 20 golfers selected to compete in the \$1,000,000 Shoot Out. The contestants will be drawn on Wednesday, August 2, before the Team Calcutta. On Thursday at 7:30 p.m., the 20 contestants will each have one shot on Hole 18 from 135 yards out. Any player who puts the ball in the hole on their shot will automatically win \$1,000,000!

We want everyone to come out to cheer on the golfers and hopefully watch a historical night as someone, or maybe more than one, walks away with \$1,000,000!

If you are interested in being a VIP \$1,000,000 Shoot Out Sponsor, please contact Scott in the Hillcrest Pro Shop. Good luck golfers!



The first matches of the PGA Jr. League at Hillcrest. Hillcrest, Fox Run and The Bluffs junior golfers.

Get signed up for the 45th Annual Hillcrest Pro/Am. Go to: <https://www.golfgenius.com/pages/4224341943129254275> for entry forms and information.

Congratulations to Justin and Jordan Dietrich on winning the 52nd Annual Member Guest Tournament.

All of the tee sheets, results, and player statistics will be listed on golfgenius.com. Go to the schedule of events page and click on the golf genius link and it will take you to the

July/August pro shop hours are Monday's noon-8:00 p.m., Tuesday-Sunday 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Pro shop will close early if the weather is inclement.