

# Spring Brings Renewal to Arrowhead Golf Club

## June, 2011

This spring Arrowhead Golf Club, on Butterfield Road in Wheaton, did more than open for the season it is opening an exciting new phase of public golf in Chicagoland.

“Arrowhead has changed my perception of public golf,” says Mike Mumper, the current Superintendent of Arrowhead. “This project is going to turn a lot of heads.”

First opened in 1927, Arrowhead has been on the leading edge of public golf for close to a hundred years. Wheaton Park District manages the property and is committed to providing an excellent facility. A beautiful expansion of the course clubhouse celebrated its fifth anniversary this May. In 2008, the WPD also completed a survey of patrons on areas of improvement for the entire course.

Greg Martin, a local golf course architect who specializes in redesign, was hired two years ago to address concerns and improve overall playability of all 27 holes.

“The golf courses that intrigue me the most are ones that are about as simple as they get, but still provide magic and intrigue,” Martin said. “Renovation is certainly more challenging, and it’s just as satisfying. People get used to playing a certain golf course and they see it as theirs. The trick is to make sure you make it better, but not necessarily different.”

Renovation is well under way. The first phase focuses on the East course with special attention going into reshaping bunkers and improving drainage.

According to Mumper, “Our maintenance budget was being drained by bunkers that didn’t drain.”

In addition to the bunker reshaping, a new type of white, angular sand is being installed which will also help reduce washouts from heavy rains and decrease maintenance time. The total number of bunkers has increased but the overall square footage of bunkers has decreased.

Martin’s emphasis on designing for smart playability has expanded some fairways to make the course more fun for the average golfer. Improvements include added irrigation for green surrounds to adjust for areas that were not covered during the original rebuild. A new green has been developed for the 13<sup>th</sup> hole making it a par five and eliminating the slope which made the old green almost unplayable. A new tee was added on the 15<sup>th</sup> hole so it can be played as a par four and the overall course total remains at 36.

Construction work on the East Course has been completed and all 27 holes are now open for play.

Phase Two of the redesign will begin construction in the fall of 2011. The third and final phase will address changes to the West Course, beginning late fall of 2012. Spring of 2013 will see a completely renovated Arrowhead Golf Club.