

Golf Course Superintendent Zach Savell

Greetings,

As many of you know, my name is Zach Savell and I am the Golf Course Superintendent here at Shining Rock Golf Club. I came halfway through the 2014 season and have really enjoyed my time here so far. My goal is to continually improve course conditions and overall aesthetic appeal of the clubhouse/grounds in an effort to make Shining Rock remain one of the premier golfing facilities in New England.

Spring has finally arrived and we can't be more excited to get going this year, all with a renewed sense of enthusiasm and purpose. As many of you know, we are now under new management for the season of 2019, and we look forward to creating an atmosphere of progression and improvement. Coinciding with that, we are excited to implement some new ideas, procedures, personnel and equipment to the Grounds Department. In addition to a new Equipment Manager, we have hired a new horticulturalist who will look to bring fresh ideas and to infuse some color around the clubhouse/patio area. During the offseason, we purchased three used pieces of equipment: a Toro fairway mower, a Toro rough mower and a Toro walk-behind aerator. We hope these additions will allow us to proceed with our plans to improve Shining Rock from a Maintenance perspective over the next few seasons.

Lou and I have spoken at length about the golfing conditions at Shining Rock, and one thing we both agree on is the necessity of aggressive aeration, verticutting and topdressing. As many of you are aware, there are some tee complexes, fairways and greens that underperform agronomically. With the addition of some money to the Maintenance budget, new machines and staff members we can safely say that things will get better. My plan for this year is to aerate the greens twice, with larger than normal tines. Previously, we had aired on the side of caution in terms of aeration because we wanted to make sure that play was not interrupted and revenue streams were consistent. However, this way of operating has caused some of the playing surfaces to perform less than ideally. By aerating the greens with 5/8" tines as opposed to 3/8" tines, we will be able to remove a larger percentage every year, which will improve drainage, wear tolerance and drought tolerance. I also plan on verticutting the greens and tees 2-4 times this year to combat some of the thatch issues we currently face. Along this same vein, the fairways will be aerated this spring with the worst areas being heavily topdressed and overseeded.

There are a couple other things that are in the works for this season including:

- 1.Sod work on bunker faces and tee boxes
- 2.Drainage work on green and tee complexes
- 3.Bunker drainage work and adding sand
- 4.Tree work on holes that present agronomic challenges as well as playability issues

In summation, we hope to have the best year at Shining Rock that we have had since inception. We have been working feverishly over the winter to get 2019 off to a good start and we hope you will enjoy it. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me and I will try to get in touch with you as soon as possible.

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