



Member Profile

Matthew Wharton

Charlotte, N.C., USA

Matthew Wharton has been the golf course superintendent of Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, N.C. since 2005. Carolina is a 1929 Donald J. Ross original design, renovated and restored by Kris Spence in 2008.

He is a native of Castlewood, Va., a small town nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. It was here he was first introduced to golf by his late grandfather.

"I remember sitting on the back porch when I was about four," he says. "'PapPa' was cutting the shaft of one of his old clubs with a hack saw. He then pieced the club together for me, an old Hillerich & Bradsby 4-wood. I still have it on display, it's one of my most cherished possessions."

At age 19 Matthew was introduced to greenkeeping when he began working at Lake Bonaventure Country Club (LBCC), a private 9-hole course in his hometown. Following a brief hiatus to complete a Bachelor of Science in industrial and systems engineering at Virginia Tech (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), he returned home and resumed working at LBCC. There he met his future wife, Darless, and after marrying in November 1996 the couple moved to Blacksburg, Va. in January 1997 so that Matthew could begin work on his Master of Science in crop and soil environmental sciences at Virginia Tech.

After successfully defending his master's thesis, Matthew accepted the position of assistant golf course superintendent of Augustine Golf Club in Stafford, Va. Two years later, in the spring of 2002, he became the golf course superintendent of Swan Point Yacht & Country Club in Issue, Md.

Matthew has been a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America since 1997 and is an active participant in giving back to the profession. He was president of the North-South Turfgrass Association in 2013 and the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association in 2019. He achieved the Certified Golf Course Superintendent designation in May 2014 and earned the distinction of Master Greenkeeper through the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in 2016.

How often do you play hickories?

I was attracted to hickory golf after seeing a segment on Golf Channel with Tad Moore in early 2016. Immediately following the segment, I viewed his website and sent an email through the contact button. Mr. Moore was kind enough to phone me a couple days later and after about 45 minutes of conversation I agreed to purchase a complete set of his hickory clubs. Since their arrival I have unfortunately averaged about five rounds per year. I would love to more than double that going forward because I enjoy the challenge and experience so much.

What's in your play set?

*I play the OA Stars by Tad Moore:
Driver, spoon, cleek, driving iron, mid iron, jigger, deep faced mashie, mashie, spade mashie, mashie niblick, niblick, putter*

Favorite club?

I have a lot of trust in my spade mashie.



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What ball do you play?

The Quimet by McIntyre most often. I have some Tour Balata 90s a friend sent me that I play occasionally.

Favorite course for hickories?

Carolina Golf Club, of course. I've also enjoyed Mid Pines and Southern Pines.

Favorite hickory tournament?

I've yet to compete in any tournaments, perhaps this year (2020).

Any particular player or aspect of golf history you especially enjoy?

I'm a huge fan of two eras, I have much admiration for both Old and Young Tom Morris. I also respect and admire Bobby Jones. I believe Mr. Jones to be the greatest of all time.

Best thing about hickory golf?

The feeling of a well struck shot!

Ideas to promote hickory golf?

I haven't waded too deep into the hickory pond to know. I enjoy it and wish I had more time to play more frequently.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

I love to read all things golf, especially in the winter months. Most recently I read The Links, by Robert Hunter; Golf Is My Game, by Bobby Jones; The Scottish Invasion by Richard S. Tufts; and The Evolution of Golf Course Design, by Keith Cutten.