

BRUCE KLAASSEN

As Bruce Klaassen was graduating with a degree in horticulture from the University of Guelph, he probably had no idea of the golf course challenges that lay in his future.

During the late 1970s at St. George's Golf and Country Club in Toronto, Bruce was involved in maintaining a traditional golf course that hosted two Canadian Women's Opens while he was there.

Moving to Regina in 1979 he became the turf specialist responsible for all five city courses. Converting the greens at Tor Hill from sand to grass significantly improved the course.

As Head Superintendent at the Lobstick Golf Club in Waskesiu from 1985 to 2002, Bruce managed tight budgets and a short playing season. He addressed major drainage

issues, constructed a practice putting green and driving range, devised a system of deer fencing encircling the greens, and replaced an antiquated watering system with a state-of-the-art irrigation system. He researched Stanley Thompson's vision for the Waskesiu course and worked with architects to rebuild many holes. His hard work and creativity made the course enjoyable to play and left a true legacy. Bruce was also involved in the initial layout of Elk Ridge Golf Course.

In 2002 Bruce became the Head Superintendent at Royal Regina Golf Club and embarked on significant upgrades to the course. The heavy clay soil and high levels of salinity required the installation of approximately 20 miles of weeping tile. He worked with architects on redesigning and creating new holes. He created a practice putting green, a sod nursery, a new maintenance building, and upgraded the irrigation system. In 2003 a terrible spring resulted in major damage to the course but Bruce had to get it ready for the Canadian Mid-Amateur Championship. Then, a storm following the first day of competition left the course unplayable. In 2011 the Royal Regina course had extensive flooding, whereupon Bruce created two additional holes so that golfers could still play eighteen holes while existing ones were unplayable. Over the years he has applied the best agronomic practices to enhance the course's playability and reputation. He's noted for stretching funds to the maximum.

Bruce has been a member of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association since 1978, working on committees and attending numerous conferences. He was a charter member of the Saskatchewan Turfgrass Association, serving a term as president. He was honored for his significant contribution to the profession with the STA Member of the Year award in 2019.

Bruce has always been an innovator willing to share his time and expertise. He led his staff to seek excellence and maintain premium playing conditions.

Bruce Klaassen retired in 2020 after an outstanding career as a Golf Superintendent. Congratulations on your induction into the Saskatchewan Golf Hall of Fame for distinguished service.

