

Laurentian Retreat

Cedarbrook Golf and Country Club
a summer haven

By Doug Meyer

Designed and built in 1958 by Howard Watson, the private, 18-hole Cedarbrook Golf and Country Club where I have worked as superintendent for 23 years is nestled in the foothills of the Laurentian Mountains, approximately 40 kilometers north of Montreal, near the village of Ste. Sophie. A challenging par 71, the 6724-yard course is spread over 220 acres of rolling terrain with the Jordan River running through it.

The river meanders past holes 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18. Additional bodies of water in the form of man-made lakes and ponds are to be found on holes 8, 16 and 17, while holes 13 and 14 feature outcroppings of the Laurentian Shield.

Hole number 8 became our signature hole in 1994 when I was given the privilege of redesigning it with a small lake, new tee area and bunkers. The fountain which aerates the lake is a focal point of the course.

We open May 1st and close November 1st. There are no organized winter activities, since the majority of our members head south for golf, or take to the ski slopes.

Winter challenges

The turf at Cedarbrook is predominantly *Poa Annua bentgrass*. Located in Growing Zone 4, each spring we must deal with the ravages of winter, especially on the fairways. We pioneered the use of multiple layers of covers and straw to protect the greens, a procedure

Hole #17 at Cedarbrook.



Cedarbrook Clubhouse.



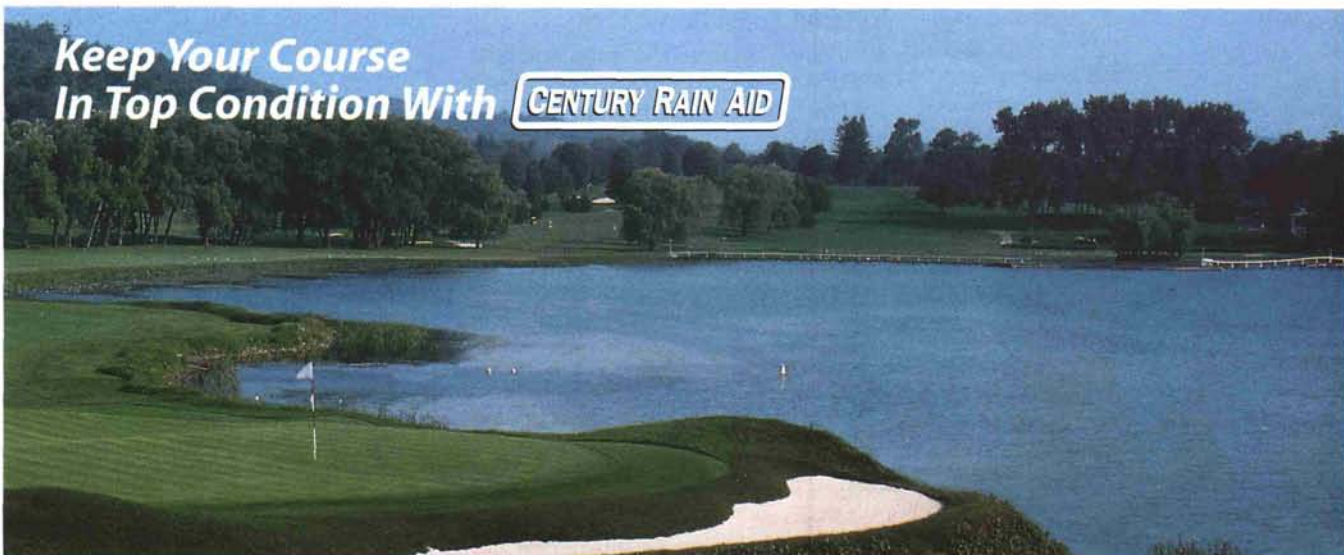
Hole #8, the signature hole at Cedarbrook.

that we have found to be extremely effective. Tees are being resodded to newer dwarf Kentucky Bluegrass varieties to better withstand the severity of the Quebec winters.

Audubon Program

Cedarbrook is a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses. This past summer we adopted a local school and had grade six students build bluebird boxes from kits provided by the club. Subsequently, the children spent a day at the course installing the nesting boxes, identifying bird species and learning about our bird habitat improvement program. The school program was very rewarding.

We have created naturalized areas on the course to provide for ground-nesting birds and other wildlife. We were delighted to have three pairs of endangered eastern bluebirds successfully fledging four babies each in the boxes that the children made. This is the first time these birds have been seen nesting in our area. In addition, several pairs of tree swallows took advantage of the nesting boxes as well. We hope to continue this program with the school next year. ■



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