



Mississauga Golf & Country Club

1725 Mississauga Rd,
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www.mississaugugolf.com

Jerry during his racecar career.

ABOUT THE COURSE

Established in 1909, Mississauga Golf and Country Club is one of Canada's top and most historic golf courses. Like many of its era, MGCC has gone through generational renovations and restorations. The original 9-hole route was expanded to 18 in 1909 by George Cumming of Toronto Golf Club. Names such as Ross, Thompson and Carrick have since left their own mark.

Type of Club: Private

Other amenities: Pickleball, tennis, curling, golf sims & a full sized gym

Number of holes: 18

Average number of rounds per year: 28,000

Number of staff year round and seasonal:
9 year round and 36 seasonal

Jerry Knight

Equipment Manager,
Mississauga Golf &
Country Club.



*Jerry Knight, Head Equipment Manager,
Mississauga G&CC.*

*Written by Mark Wiebe, Assistant Superintendent,
Oakdale G&CC.*

Thunder seemed to shake the building as we talked. Deciding to meet not far from Mississauga G&CC at a local sports bar, we continued our conversation through the odd late-February thunderstorm.

Jerry Knight, Head Equipment Technician at MGCC, was always willing to talk and make time. We'd originally met in 2018 at Piper's Heath GC. At the time, Jerry was into his ninth year as the Equipment Technician,

and it was my first as the club's Assistant Superintendent. Jerry and I hit it off from our first meeting at Piper's Heath and have stayed in touch.

With an occasional glance over at a flash of lightning, time flew by as we went through my interview questions. Each answer led to more questions, conclusions, and theories, many of which came back to the same things: the value of networking, communication, good routines, staying consistent, breaking the mold, making time for hobbies and other interests, balance... We agreed on much and, sharing ideas or

IN THE HOT SEAT

Q: Favourite Food?

A: Burgers

Q: Favourite Movie?

A: Days of Thunder

Q: Favourite Band?

A: AC DC

Q: Favourite Sporting Event?

A: F1

Q: Favourite Tool?

A: Reel & bedknife grinders

Q: Favourite Season?

A: Fall

Q: Favourite Piece of Equipment?

A: Greens Walk mowers

suggestions, fed our similar values of positive change, life balance, and having a lot of fun along the way.

Jerry, now into his fifth year as the Head Equipment Technician at MGCC, has in a short time greatly expanded his network and knowledge. He started a WhatsApp group with fellow equipment technicians, opening another avenue for communication and collaboration. He's also taken every other opportunity to expand his knowledge and network by attending numerous trade shows, conferences, seminars, and even appearing as a guest speaker on Reel Turf Techs podcast. More recently, Jerry teamed up with Iain Johnstone, Head Equipment Technician at

Donalda G&CC, teaching at the University of Guelph. Acting as visiting instructors, they were able to pass down their knowledge and industry expertise to students in the Diploma in Turf Management program.

Before getting into the golf course industry, Jerry spent 20 years in the race car industry. His long-time love for racing naturally transferred into the mechanical side of things. After advancing to a race-team mechanic and teaching others how to race, he came to a fork in the road. Traveling from event to event left little time at home. Wanting to settle down and have a family, he decided to start a new career.

While on his search, Jerry saw a sign outside of Piper's Heath advertising their job fair. Not one to pass up an opportunity, he arrived thinking he could use his high school fast food experience on their F&B department. After a short look at his resume, he was directed to greens maintenance.

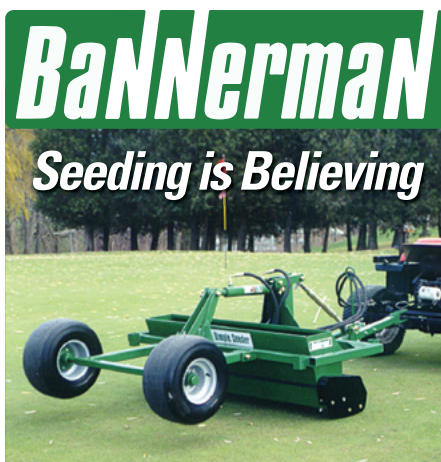
"It was a bit of a shock at first, all the different pieces of machinery and intricacies of the job," he recalled, "but that's what made it more interesting. My experience at Piper's Heath gave me a great turf-mechanics foundation."

Jerry's now taken on a mentorship role with MGCC's Assistant Equipment Technician, Marko Bistori. Into year three of working together, they've been able to get Marko on a quick progression as the Club's facility attendant. This expansive role included everything from cleaning and getting to know all the machines, to cutting fairways and greens. Before long, Marko advanced to Assistant Equipment Technician.



Jerry at the shop.

"I'm grateful to have landed this opportunity at Mississauga. Golf was an interesting transition from the automotive world. It was a different kind of pressure...in a good way.



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“Don't let the shell reform,” said Jerry when speaking about the human tendency to retreat into comfort zones. “And don't idle.”



Jerry acting as a visiting instructor to help teach Diploma in Turf Management students at the University of Guelph.



Jerry and Iain Johnstone, Head Equipment Technician at Donalda Golf and Country Club, help teach Diploma in Turf Management students at the University of Guelph.

Jerry's been a great mentor and has had a lot of patience with me since I started. I've made a lot of mistakes along the way, but these same mistakes helped me grow and ultimately build a lot of trust between Jerry and me. I'm hoping to further hone my skills and one day be an equipment manager myself."

"It's important to let them be a part of everything. Being open and approachable is essential to build trust and respect." Jerry's answer to how he builds a positive and productive relationship with Marko was the same for the rest of the Mississauga G&CC team. "Everyone's an assistant to some extent. Getting feedback and firsthand information from the ones operating the equipment can be so important in diagnosing and preventing problems."

When he's off work, Jerry spends time with family at their summer trailer, rebuilds cars and motorcycles, and goes on adventure trips. His friendly nature and willingness to share information has spread networks into his restoration hobbies and other interests as well.

"Don't let the shell reform," said Jerry when speaking about the human tendency to retreat into comfort zones. "And don't idle."

Like all my past meetings with Jerry, I walked away with a boost of energy and inspiration.

Byproducts of his good-nature, openness, and a cool handed way of conversing, it was a feeling I expect has been shared by many who've had the pleasure of knowing Jerry.

Though a short glimpse into his story, it was easy to see examples of adaptability and consistency. Remaining positive and creating networks to stay in the know was something

he'd done wherever he went. All the while, he's maintained his own source of energy and self-discipline to keep getting better.

With the odd February storm moving away in the horizon, the sun came out as we walked out of the local sports bar to our cars. "Don't stay idle," I thought to myself as I drove home towards the passing storm. ■

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