

## **2011 AGCSA Excellence in Golf Course Management Award Presented in partnership with John Deere Colin Morrison, Flinders Golf Club, VIC**

Flinders Golf Club course superintendent Colin Morrison joined the likes of fellow Victorian colleagues Mark Jennings, Gary Bass, Mark Gahan and John Geary after he was named winner of the 2011 winner of the AGCSA's Excellence in Golf Course Management Award at the Adelaide conference.

Residing on the cliffs overlooking Bass Strait and Westernport Bay on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, Flinders Golf Club is the sort of place which keeps you on your toes from a turf management perspective and while not having the resources of some of the other bigger players on peninsula, it is hard to fault the conditioning and presentation of the course which Morrison manages with precision.

During his time as Flinders superintendent, Morrison has undertaken and overseen a range of course improvement works, and perhaps one of the more significant involved the recent redesign of the club's 11th hole. Morrison was faced with many challenges during the project which saw the hole reconfigured from a relatively straight par four along the course's left hand boundary to a sharp dogleg right that requires a layup tee shot to get the best angle into a well-bunkered elevated green.

The newly constructed green directs play away from the housing along the boundary and has increased pin placements which demand more accuracy in approach shots. The placement of bunkers and shaping of contours surrounding the green ensures traffic is not concentrated in anyone area.

The changes to the 11th at Flinders were a real 'club' effort with the new green, fairway and bunkering designed by club captain Neil Cavanagh, with significant input from Morrison in regard to construction, soil, drainage and irrigation. Morrison was well supported by assistant superintendent Robert Bell who helped direct the small team onsite.

Morrison project managed the new green from the initial design concept, construction and turfgrass selection, while daily maintaining the 18-hole course to a standard members demand. He scheduled construction and turf establishment to allow for the most efficient progress of works. Morrison's knowledge of the perched water table method importantly was utilised in constructing the new green – which was sown with Pennlinks, while the existing cool-season fairway was converted to Wintergreen couch.



The low-lying green site required raising the base with clay excavated from the dam and redirecting surface runoff away from the green site. To add to this, the site was covered with 80-year-old cypress trees with extensive root systems. Access was difficult as the new green site is located in the middle of the course nearing the edge of the dam.

Overcoming all of these challenges, the end result is one that the club is very proud of and the playability and presentation of the course has been significantly improved.



**JOHN DEERE**  
GOLF