



1421 Research Park Drive • Lawrence, KS 66049-3859 • 800-472-7878 • [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org)

## Tournament Fact Sheet

PGA Tour  
The TOUR Championship  
presented by Coca-Cola  
Sept. 21 - 27, 2015

East Lake Golf Club  
Atlanta, Ga.

## Golf Course Management Information

### GCSAA Class A Golf Course Superintendent:



Ralph J. Kepple, CGCS  
(k EH - p uh l)

*The title "CGCS," after a superintendent's name, stands for Certified Golf Course Superintendent, which recognizes the achievement of high standards of professionalism through education and experience.*

### Availability to media:

Contact Ralph Kepple by phone 404-687-2449; cell phone 404-290-3321; or email

[rkepple@eastlakegolfclub.com](mailto:rkepple@eastlakegolfclub.com)

Twitter: [@rkepplegcs](https://twitter.com/rkepplegcs)

Blog: [eastlakeagronomy.blogspot.com](http://eastlakeagronomy.blogspot.com)

### Education:

B.S. Agronomy, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1984;

Age: 53

### Native hometown:

Mt. Vernon, Ohio

Years as a GCSAA member: 33

Years GCSAA certified: 15

### GCSAA affiliated chapter:

Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association

Years at this course: 23

Number of employees: 29

Number of tournament volunteers: 60-80

### Previous positions:

1990-1992, Assistant Superintendent, Settindown Creek Golf Club, Roswell, Ga.; 1984-1990, Assistant

Superintendent, Lancaster Country Club, Lancaster, Ohio

### Previous tournament preparation:

1998, 2000, 2002, 2004-2014 TOUR Championship, East Lake Golf Club, Atlanta, Ga.; 2001 U.S. Amateur, East Lake Golf Club, Atlanta, Ga.; 2002 Southern Amateur Championship, East Lake Golf Club, Atlanta, Ga.

### Previous tournaments hosted by facility:

1998, 2000, 2002, 2004-2014 TOUR Championship; 2001 U.S. Amateur; 2002 Southern Amateur Championship; 1963 Ryder Cup

### Get to know the superintendent:

In 2012, Ralph was the Georgia GCSA Superintendent of the year, and in 2007, he was a finalist for TurfNet Superintendent of the Year.

### How Ralph got involved in golf course management:

"I grew up across the road from a family-owned golf course and began doing jobs in exchange for play when I was 13. I decided in eighth grade that I wanted to pursue this career."

### Course/event scoring record:

2007 TOUR Championship - Zach Johnson shot 60

## Course statistics

Average tee size: 7,100 sq. ft.

Tournament Stimpmeter: 12+ ft.

Average green size: 6,200 sq. ft.

Soil conditions on the course: Red clay

Green construction soil mix:

USGA (sand 90%, peat 10%)

Rounds per year: 18,000

Acres of fairway: 24

Source of water: Pond, well

Acres of rough: 90

Drainage conditions: Good

Sand bunkers: 72

Water hazards: 3

## Championship ratings

Tee	Yardage	Par	Rating	Slope
Tour Championship	7292	70	75.5	141

## Course characteristics

	<b>Primary Grasses</b>	<b>Height of Cut</b>
<b>Tees</b>	Bermudagrass; zoysiagrass	0.375"
<b>Fairways</b>	Zoysiagrass	0.375"
<b>Greens</b>	Mini Verde Ultradwarf bermudagrass	0.100"
<b>Rough</b>	Bermudagrass; zoysiagrass	2"

---

## Environmental management/features

East Lake Golf Club has a fully automated and computerized irrigation system and the entire property drains to the irrigation source.

### Water conservation, management and/or controls:

East Lake has installed over 100,000 linear feet of drainage pipe, upgraded irrigation sprinkler heads and piping around green complexes, upgraded control systems and implemented moisture meters on greens, and to some degree tees and fairways, to help control water use. The club has also created best management practices for water usage that are followed during periods of drought.

---

## Unusual wildlife on the course

Coyote; Owls; Blue heron; Red-tail hawk

### Predominate species of trees on course:

White and red oak; Red and sugar maple; Loblolly pine; Dogwood; Red bud

---

### Interesting notes about the course:

With construction beginning in 1904, East Lake Golf Club is the oldest golf course in Atlanta. East Lake was the home course of Robert Tyre

"Bobby" Jones, who learned to play at East Lake and played his last round of golf there on Aug. 14, 1948.

### Comments overheard about the course:

"Everything is right out in front of you - no tricks, just straight-up golf."

The staff also frequently hear from golfers that the course looks easier than it plays.

---

### Course architect/date:

Tom Bendelow, 1904

### Original course builder/date:

Donald Ross, 1913

### Most recent redesign or renovation/date:

Rees Jones, 1994/2008

### Renovation builder/date:

Medalist Golf, 2008

---

## Other key course management personnel

Jason Tharp, GCSAA Member Assistant  
Superintendent

Charles Aubry, GCSAA Member Assistant  
Superintendent

Howard Horne, Equipment Manager

Chad Parker, Club Manager

Greta Hill, Horticulturist

Drew Dunn, PGA Professional

East Lake Foundation, Club Owner

Rick Burton, Chairman

---

## Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

GCSAA is a leading golf organization and has as its focus golf course management. Since 1926, GCSAA has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to nearly 18,000 members in more than 72 countries. GCSAA's

mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Find GCSAA on [Facebook](#), follow GCSAA on [Twitter](#), and visit GCSAA at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org). The Environmental Institute for Golf is the philanthropic organization of the GCSAA, and has as its mission to foster sustainability through research, awareness, education, programs and scholarships for the benefit of golf course management professionals, golf facilities and the game. Visit [www.eifg.org](http://www.eifg.org).

For additional information please visit [gcsaa.org/newsroom](http://gcsaa.org/newsroom) or contact the Communications Department at 800-472-7878.

Craig Smith  
Director of Communications and Media Relations  
Phone: 785-832-4431  
Cell: 785-691-9197  
Email: [csmith@gcsaa.org](mailto:csmith@gcsaa.org)

## **Media story ideas to consider**

- Water: Golf's biggest challenge
- The benefits of a golf course to the community and the environment
- What's new in turfgrass research
- Superintendents doing more with less
- Get to know an interesting superintendent
- Who's in charge? A visit with the CEO