



MICAH WOODS, PhD

Asian Turfgrass Center
PACE Turf
University of Tennessee

Biography

PhD, Cornell University
(Horticulture) 2006

BSc, Oregon State University
(Horticulture) 1998

Micah Woods established the Asian Turfgrass Center (ATC) in 2006 to develop and provide turfgrass information for the golf and sports turf industry. Through the ATC, he provides turfgrass advisory and soil testing services to golf clubs, sports facilities and select clients around the world. Since 2009, he has been an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Tennessee. Since 2022, he has been Director of the PACE Turf information service.

Micah manages to keep his eyes on the ground, studying the turfgrass species wherever he is in the world. He remains well grounded in the practical aspects of the golf game

and his writing has been praised for its accessible style.

Author of over two hundred articles in publications such as *GOLF Magazine* and *Soil Science*, as well as books with intriguing titles like *One Bucket at a Time* and *芝草科学とグリーンキーピング: マイカ的时间*

The BOOK, Micah enjoys spending time creating animated charts and graphs of the data he has collected while discovering unexpected statistics.

Career - From the early years

I started working on the grounds crew at Waverley Country Club in Portland, Oregon when I was 17 years old. I had played a lot of golf and worked sometimes as a caddy prior to that (but I realised I had no future as a competitive golfer) and stumbled across the work behind the scenes preparing a course for play. I enjoyed that work from the start and decided to make it a career.

I worked at golf courses around the USA, was a Golf Course Superintendent in China and Japan, and got my PhD degree at Cornell University. That background of work with a range of grasses and courses, combined with the university studies, allowed me to get a bit of work when I started the Asian Turfgrass Center in 2006.

I played golf and wanted to be a pro, but I wasn't good enough. I enjoyed working with plants, growing particular herbs or vegetables in the garden, but never thought to take care of golf course grass. When I ended up working on the Waverley Country Club grounds crew, it all clicked for me, that this was a fun job that I had a lot of interest in.

The highlights have been the opportunity to make friends all around the world through the work I do, and to be able to provide information that people can make good use of in their day to day work. I've also enjoyed some fun tournament support work at events around the world. And, I get great satisfaction out of learning new things, which I occasionally do through some of my research. When that breakthrough happens, it's a highlight.

The future of golf course management

I find it impossible to predict the future, however, I'll go out on a limb this time. I expect five to ten years from now, it's going to be pretty similar to how it is now. Maybe a few new machines.

Work-life balance

I enjoy my work to such a degree that I don't really try to separate between work commitments and quality personal time. I enjoy reading, hiking, a bit of (slow) trail running and snow skiing. I try to fit some of those activities into my life. I like beaches. A Thai beach, maybe a run to the other side of the island, and some reading? That's something I try to do a couple times a year.

