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April 2019, Vol. 23 No. 2



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## OPENING SHOT

DAVE  
AND  
TIM

Pass the peach cobbler.

This time of year in these parts, you have to go to a greenhouse to take in an azalea. Or you can tune in the Masters Tournament and get equal parts flowery scenes and language. That works too, and it's nearly, in this high-definition age, as good as being there – though if you ever get a chance to go to Augusta National, do not hesitate to make the trip to marvel at the dogwoods, the pines, and the 1970s prices in the concession areas.

The Masters means the real beginning of the season across the land. That means it's time to work on the game, to tame that flying right elbow, to eliminate the worm-burner, to keep the head down once and for all.

For all that, we're here to help. Welcome to The Instruction Special, a passel of lessons selected by us to get your game in gear. You'll take in wise thoughts from Todd Sones, Chad Johansen, Chris Oehlerking and yoga

instructor Anne Connors.

Might we at this point suggest you see one of these fine people or someone else hanging the PGA or LPGA shingle at their course? Reading a lesson and trying to duplicate it is one thing, but there's nothing better than getting instant feedback and taking the first steps on the road



"Sorry, sir, but our airline doesn't allow you to hit golf balls on the plane. It's a safety issue."

to improvement in 30 or 60 minutes, and doing so for a series of lessons. Like Rome, a golf swing is not built in one day.

But wait, there's more. Neal Kotlarek reports on a new remote golf tee time service, Golf Moose, that offers deals at significant discount from the usual rate.

On another page, our editor, seeking mental instruction – there's a joke there somewhere – tackles Arnold Haultain's mysterious 1908 book, *The Mystery of Golf*, which takes the reader deep down the theoretical rabbit hole. Rod Serling could have adapted it for an episode of *The Twilight Zone*.

We also have the latest news from around the area, what to buy mom for Mother's Day, Stephen Hawk's wine recommendations, and, given the contretemps stemming from the revised Rules of Golf, have enlisted expert John Morrissett to generate some light from the heat.

Enjoy. There's no green jacket required.

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## The Hot Shoe from Puma

Puma has improved on its IGNITE spikeless line with its new NXT DISC shoe. The DISC Closure System provides a quick and precise fit with a simple twist. The Pro-Form TPU outsole and advanced traction pattern provides superior stability and comfort. The upper is a flat-knit waterproof mesh vamp with PWRFRAME reinforcement.  
\$119.99

## Titleist's Got a Brand New Bag

The new Players 4 stand bag is everything you'd expect from a Titleist bag. The high-grade aluminum legs and advanced hinged bottom provide stability and durability. Dual density foam straps (which are also convertible) give you ultimate comfort for walking 18 holes. Weighing in at only 4.3 pounds, this bag is lightweight without sacrificing storage.  
\$224.99



## Cart of the Future Today

Push cart technology hits a new level with the Bag Boy Nitron. This cart opens and closes automatically with a pair of nitrogen-powered pistons, eliminating the hassle of traditional carts. This groundbreaking technology paired with a compact size for storage makes this the ultimate trolley. Available in 8 colors.  
\$229.95

## Bridgestone is on Track

We admit the commercials with Tiger Woods and Bryson DeChambeau are hilarious, but the new e12 line from Bridgestone is no joke. The e12 Soft is built for swing speeds under 105 mph (available in white, green, red, and yellow) while the e12 Speed is for swing speeds over 105 mph (white only). Both models feature Active Acceleration Mantle, creating increased thrust and ball velocity.  
\$29.99 dozen



## Odyssey Goes for Tempo

Odyssey is going in a new direction with its 2019 Stroke Lab putter collection. Where most putters tackle alignment, these putters shoot for helping your tempo. The Stroke Lab features a multi-material shaft 40 grams lighter than a traditional putter shaft. The weight distribution produces consistency through the entire stroke.  
\$249.99

## Look Good in Stripes

The Ultimate365 polo from Adidas leads the pack in comfort and breathability. A regular fit shirt, the Ultimate365 is wider in the body and has a straight silhouette. Made of 88 percent recycled polyester and 12 percent elastane to save resources and decrease emissions. The moisture-wicking fabric is also UPF 50+ UV protected.  
\$65



## Pound It With a Ping

Ping continues a great legacy of drivers with the new G410. Available in Plus and SFT (Straight Flight) models, the G410 is all about advancing custom fit options while increasing forgiveness and ball speed. Moveable-weight technology allows for the desired ball flight while Trajectory Tuning 2.0 expands loft and lie options.  
\$499.99



## Srixon Aims High

Srixon has been producing some of the prettiest irons in recent years, and the new Z Forged are no exception. Definitely a set of irons for the purist and the more skilled player, these muscle-back blades have a classic shape and can be worked all around the course. The newly redesigned Tour V.T. Sole provides consistent ball striking and precision shots. Available from 4-iron through pitching wedge.  
\$999.99



# Golf Moose Gooses Bargain Rates

Here's a fair warning to all of the other tee time services across the Second City: the moose is loose! Called Golf Moose, the service provides golfers with high quality golf experiences at a premium value without convenience fees or membership dues, and with fewer restrictions than most every other service available.

In other words, bargains for players. And who doesn't like a bargain?

Golf Moose founder and co-owner Jeremy Walrack introduced the concept across California in 2014. He's since expanded to New Jersey and Nevada, and now the Chicago area.

"Our business model has been based on the same three principles even as we've expanded over the years: great golf, simplicity of the offerings, and ease of use," Walrack said.

A look at the Golf Moose website ([www.golfmoose.com](http://www.golfmoose.com)) affirms Walrack's words. Current offerings in California feature deals at acclaimed courses and resorts across the state, including Del Monte Golf Course and Laguna Seca Golf Ranch in Monterey; Carmel Valley Ranch in Carmel; and the Rees Jones-designed Poppy Ridge Golf Course in Livermore.

"Our successes in California made expansion into the Chicago market a natural progression," Walrack said. "Northern Illinois is filled with amazing golf courses that some players haven't experienced. Golf Moose will provide great deals to some of those courses that can not only give golfers a great experience but will optimally generate multiple repeat visits to those courses after that first-time visit."

The Golf Moose offerings for the Chicago area went live in February and include Heritage Bluffs in Channahon, Bridges of Poplar Creek in Hoffman Estates, Pheasant Run in St. Charles, Prairie Landing in West Chicago, and the Robert Trent Jones-designed Hilldale Golf Club also in Hoffman Estates. New courses will be added to the lineup in coming weeks and months, Walrack said.

Each deal is pre-paid and offers promotional pricing for seven days a week with few exceptions. Offers typically last

from one to four months, or until available inventory is sold out. Upon purchase, the player is e-mailed a voucher that is presented to the pro shop on the date of usage. It is recommended that tee times be booked in advance.

The discount is significant. A recent deal for Bridges of Poplar Creek offered a tee time for two players and a cart for \$59, less than half the usual \$138 price.

"Golf Moose offers golfers more flexibility than other tee times services like GolfNow and GroupGolfer," Walrack said. "The golf courses we work with strive to provide a premium experience so as

to achieve return visits. We'd like to think that Golf Moose is a great tool or client courses can use to cultivate new members and repeat guests."

And how did the unique name Golf Moose come about?

"We wanted an animal name for the service because we thought that would be catchy," Walrack said. "We wrote down 50 animals that could work and almost every one of them was already taken and would cost \$20,000 to get. Golf Moose was available and here we are!" Walrack said with a laugh.

The deals are no joke.



# CHAMPIONS PLAY EXOTICS

<b>TOM LEHMAN</b> Ranked #17 2-time winner with Exotics #3 CBX 119 FAIRWAY #2 CBX 119 HYBRID #2 CBX IRON-WOOD #3 CBX IRON-WOOD	<b>DUFFY WALDORF</b> Ranked #23 17 Top 25's with Exotics EXS DRIVER #3 CBX 119 FAIRWAY #2 CBX 119 HYBRID	<b>SCOTT MCCARRON</b> Ranked #2 2-time winner with Exotics #2 CBX 119 HYBRID #3 EXS HYBRID	<b>TIM PETROVIC</b> Ranked #9 5 Runner Up's with Exotics #3 CBX 119 FAIRWAY #5 CBX 119 FAIRWAY #3 CBX 119 HYBRID #2 CBX IRON-WOOD #3 CBX IRON-WOOD
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\*All clubs listed above are confirmed being in play on the professional tours by the Darrell Survey.

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### Two New Looks in Joliet

Golf in Joliet hasn't changed a great deal in recent years. On the northwest corner of the city, built in 1970 when the surrounding area was mostly cornfields, stands Wedgewood Golf Course, the newest of the Joliet Park District-owned courses. On the southeast corner, off the beaten path then and now, is the Joliet Country Club, a fixture among the city's elite since the Tom Bendelow-designed course opened in 1905. In between, more or less, there's Woodruff and Inwood, the other park district layouts.

Both Wedgewood and Joliet Country Club are undergoing major changes this spring, one physically and the other structurally.

Wedgewood, a Larry Packard design, is undergoing a facelift by Greg Martin born partially out of its middle-age wear and tear, and also because of necessity. In late

August, nine holes were closed for the big change, which includes flipping the nines and rerouting the holes on the east side of the course, which had a boundary on Division Street (Route 59), to make up for the sale of 7.6 acres on the corner of Division and Caton Farm Road, to Hawk Auto, which is moving its Subaru and Mazda dealerships there from locations on W. Jefferson St. on the southwest corner of the city.

The sale brought \$4.5 million to the park district's general fund, much of which will be used to fund the renovation, including a new double-row irrigation system. Plainfield's Wadsworth, a leader in construction, submitted the winning bid of about \$3 million for the work.

If everything goes right, the remodeled 18 – 6,675 yards from the tips rather than the original 6,836 – will be open in full on or near Memorial Day, with what park district officials call a more testing back nine, including five new holes and a par-5 finishing hole – the remodeled ninth hole – rather than the original driver-pitch straightaway par-4 18th, which will become the ninth. Esler retained the Packard-signature double-dogleg, which is now the 11th hole and at 585 yards remains the longest on the course. Notable among the changes is the 16th, now a drivable par 4 of 305 yards – for those who dare take on the bunker just short of the green.

The first big test for the course will be the Joliet Amateur, slated for June 1-2.

The cross-town Joliet Country Club was renovated in 2001, with architect David Esler making major changes to two holes, and the old clubhouse was replaced by a lavish new one at the same time, but the changes in the economy caused membership to dwindle rather than increase. The loan the club took out to finance the changes was taken over by ROC Inc. in 2014, leasing the club back to the membership in 2016, but even that couldn't stem the red

ink, and ROC, a real estate firm based in Lisle, took over management last October, announcing the club was going public.

It'll be run by KemperSports, known as Joliet Golf Club, with the course and most of the clubhouse open to the public beginning this year. Private memberships will still be available, including a membership to the still-private swimming pool.

The big questions are obvious: Will those who remained members of Joliet Country Club want to stay and share their course with the general public, or migrate to other nearby private courses, including Prestwick and Olympia Fields, to the east roughly along Interstate 80? Will the public, having been able to only peek over the fence for the last 114 years, be interested in playing the layout?

Ravisloe in Homewood, sold by its membership after a similar financial bath following a restoration, has proved popular, but it's a Donald Ross course. Whether a Bendelow will be as eagerly received will be interesting to see.

### The Show at Ravisloe

The surprise demise of the Tinley Park Golf Expo – which may return next winter under different ownership – cast a void in the early portion of the

## Down Memory Lane

### Mr. Smith Goes to Augusta

Horton Smith wasn't the favorite entering the inaugural Augusta National Invitation Tournament in March of 1934. The 25-year-old hadn't won an individual tournament in 16 months, and seemed long removed from his hot streak of 1928-29, when he won seven times in four months and swept the board in March, earning a Ryder Cup berth at the tender age of 21.

The sentimental favorite at this first playing of what most everyone but Bobby Jones called the Masters was, of course, Jones, coming out of retirement following his 1930 grand slam. He and pals had financed the building of this inland links-style course in the middle of the Great Depression, and now he'd host and play in a tournament that might attract new members.

Smith was by now a club pro, playing the winter circuit sporadically and attending to the Oak Park Country Club membership during the summer. But when his putter was hot, there could be nobody hotter. And the Joplin Ghost's putter was hot on the rolling Augusta greens.

While the bulk of the gallery – no more the 3,000 on Sunday, the best-attended round – watched Jones all four days, Smith shared the first-round lead with a 2-under 70, scored par 72 on Friday to lead by one, and posted another 70 on Saturday to pace the field entering the final 18 holes. Billy Burke was one behind, Craig Wood and Ed Dudley two back.

Wood's tee time was hours ahead of Smith, so far ahead Wood was in with a total of 3-under 285 and the clubhouse lead when Smith began the final round – on what since the second Masters has been the 10th tee. The nines were reversed the first time around.

He made a curling downhill par-saving putt on the ninth – today's 18th – to go out in 36, birdied the 10th to lead Wood by two strokes, bogeyed the solo lead away mid-round, but sank a 12-foot birdie putt on the 17th – today's eighth – to take the lead to the last. But an overcooked approach on the original boomerang-shaped green on today's ninth hole meant a devilish downhill and sidehill putt.

Smith left it short, and now had the same type of putt, a four-footer. He stewed for a moment.

"Then a positive thought came to me which told me that the only way to make the putt was to be sure to hit the ball firmly," Smith wrote later. He did. It fell into the middle of the cup for a 72 and 4-under 284. And once Burke missed three straight birdie putts by inches, Smith was the winner.

Smith didn't receive a green jacket until 1949, the year the club decided to award one to winner Sam Snead and all former winners. Six years ago, his nephews decided to auction it. Oak Park Country Club was interested, but not to the tune of the winning bid of \$682,229. That bidder might have been Augusta National itself.

But \$1,500 and a trophy was good

enough at the time. That, and the satisfaction of breaking a losing run.

"I feel that I am back on my game after three years of trying," Smith said.

He felt so good, he soon left the Oak Park post to play full-time. The club made him an honorary member, so when he won at Augusta again in 1936, the west suburban club was in the spotlight again. No other club pro has won the Masters, and it's safe to say none ever will. – Tim Cronin

Diagram of remodeled Wedgewood Golf Course, Joliet (courtesy Greg Martin)







golf show season, until Ravisloe Country Club came to the rescue.

A dozen-odd courses banded together with Ravisloe for an early February merchandise show akin to the old PGA South sale, only this time it was mostly public courses eager to get their names in front of potential paying customers while selling excess clubs and other products.

From the buzz in Ravisloe's big banquet room and the scarcity of spaces in the main parking lot, the idea was a success. People turned out, the cash registers rang up sales, and the golf season, hot stove version, got underway.

"The merchandise show was an amazing two days," Ravisloe head pro Andrew Godfrey said. "I received very positive feedback on all the merchandise we had as well as the prices. We had almost anything a golfer could ask for. We are hoping to run it for three days next time with how well it was received. We thank everyone who came out to support the show!"

The enthusiasm is important, because the numbers in the area last year dipped some 17 percent, on average,

compared to 2017. The poor spring, with too much rain, canceled play on too many days, and those numbers, despite a decent end of the season, were never made up.

Attendance was also strong at the Chicago Golf Show in Rosemont at the end of February. The Friday crowd was termed the best in the show's 36-year history, and walking the aisles on Saturday meant rubbing elbows with plenty of fellow golfers.

### Kid Stuff

There are all manner of junior tournaments these days, from the many offered by the Illinois Junior Golf Association to those staged by individual courses. In that category those in the western suburbs should look at Blackberry Oaks' offerings.

Some courses just have a junior rate, but Blackberry Oaks offers a full buffet of offerings, including youth camps and a youth league in the summer, a coaching program headed by professional Chad Johansen, and the CJGA Junior Golf Tour. As of early March, 71 players were already in the league with just 13 places left, so call (630) 553-7170 to see if there's room for you.

### LPGA-oriented Road Trips

For the first time in three years, there's no LPGA tournament in Chicago, but not too far away – either a day trip or an overnight stay – there are seven women's golf tournaments, five on the LPGA Tour and two on the Legends Tour that are worth taking in.

The regular circuit settles in the upper Midwest as spring turns to summer, first at Blythefield Country Club near Grand Rapids, Mich., for the Meijer LPGA Classic (June 13-16), then crosses Lake Michigan for the KPMG Women's PGA Championship at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., from June 20-23. Sung Hyun Park, who won in sudden-death at Kemper Lakes, is the defending champion. Two weeks later (July 4-7), the ladies are at Thornberry Creek at Oneida in that Wisconsin getaway near Green Bay.

Those three tournaments hue to the time-honored stroke play format, but the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational, set for July 17-20 at Midland (Mich.) Country Club, breaks ground on the circuit as a four-round team event, with 72 two-woman teams playing best ball golf, with plenty of off-course events, including the week-long "Eat Great" festival highlighting Great Lakes Bay cuisine, on tap.

Following that, it's back across the lake for the first Legends tournament, the Janesville Golf Classic at venerable Janesville Country Club on Aug. 2-5. The club dates to 1894 and the current site was bought and the first nine holes were opened the following year. Janesville was the first golf club in Wisconsin, second in the Midwest behind Chicago Golf Club, and counts itself as the sixth-oldest in the country.

The fun continues after Labor Day, with the LPGA making a return visit to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the Indy Women In Tech Championship at Brickyard Crossing from Sept. 26-29, with the routing adjusted so the final four holes are inside the famed oval.

Finally, Oct. 13-16 brings the third playing of women's golf's first senior major, the Senior LPGA Championship, on the Pete Dye Course at the French Lick Resort, about an

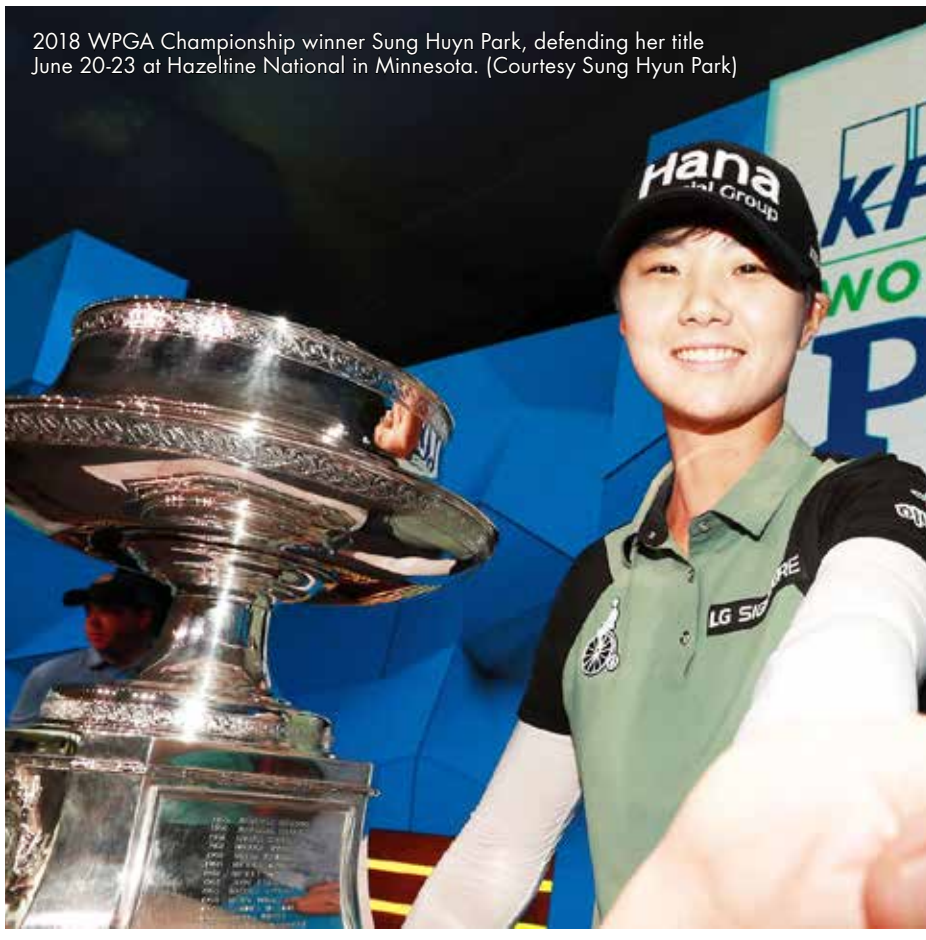
hour southwest of Indianapolis in the town Larry Bird made famous.

Those who want to play will want to make the quick trips more than a day trip and bring their clubs, for each area has plenty of options on highly-regarded public courses. And with a certain May holiday coming up, tickets to one or more of the tournament would make a great Mother's Day gift as well. (Hint, hint.)

### Chip Shots

Golf courses don't sell for what they used to. Minne Monesse, a delightful layout in Kankakee County offering fun golf and fine food, sold for \$475,000 in March. The Hurley family, owners since the 1980s, were asking \$1.2 million ... Lisa Quinn is leaving the executive director post with the First Tee of Greater Chicago effective May 31 after a seven-year run ... Medinah Country Club teaching pro Terry Russell has joined the PGA of America national board, representing District 6, of which Illinois is a part.

– Tim Cronin and Sheri Warren



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# THE CLUB FITTING AND INSTRUCTION SPECIAL

## Club Champion The Custom Club Age is Here

By Leonard Finkel

If you told the average golfer that one change would instantly have them hitting the ball farther, more accurately and even lower their scores, they would likely laugh at you. Incredible as it may sound, a comprehensive custom club fitting with personalized equipment is that one change.

A *Golf Magazine* study found that 90 percent of American golfers might be playing with improperly fit clubs, meaning nine out of ten golfers are missing out on extra yards and more accurate putts every time they tee off. We interviewed world-renowned instructors David Leadbetter and Hank Haney on the impact of club fitting and here's what we learned.

"It never ceases to amaze me that golfers buy clubs off the shelf and assume they're right for them," said Leadbetter. "Whether you're a great golfer or a casual one, getting a custom club fitting is one of the quickest ways to improve your game."

If you're looking at buying a set of irons off the rack, you'll get a standard, stock shaft that has a standard length and flex. This doesn't change if you're 5-foot-4 or pushing seven feet. In most instances, clubs that are not custom fit are hurting your game.

Club manufacturers do a great job of marketing their new products and touting all the benefits of their equipment – improvements to the clubface, custom weighting options, new materials – but what they don't tell golfers is that not every club and shaft suits every golfer. There's more to a golf club than just look and feel. Those other elements, along with aftermarket shafts, are what separate custom fitted equipment from clubs bought off the shelf.

Haney, a *Golf Digest* top 10 instructor, believes an optimized set of golf clubs is the key to more distance.

"Distance is so important, and everybody can achieve more distance with custom equipment," Haney said. "We see it with the touring pros. And that opportunity is there with premium fitters like Club Champion. The advancements we've had in equipment and in club fitting are just so incredible, that for somebody not to take advantage of it is a wasted opportunity."

Most golf retailers use fitting carts provided by club manufacturers. While they offer options, golfers are unable to mix and match across brands to determine their ideal combinations. A traditional retailer will fit you for Callaway, TaylorMade or other manufacturer's clubs using that company's fitting cart. But you'll only be fit for the shafts in that specific cart, so the options are limited.

Chicago-based Club Champion, along with other specialty fitters, set themselves apart with a unique coupling system that allows for the

### Facts Box

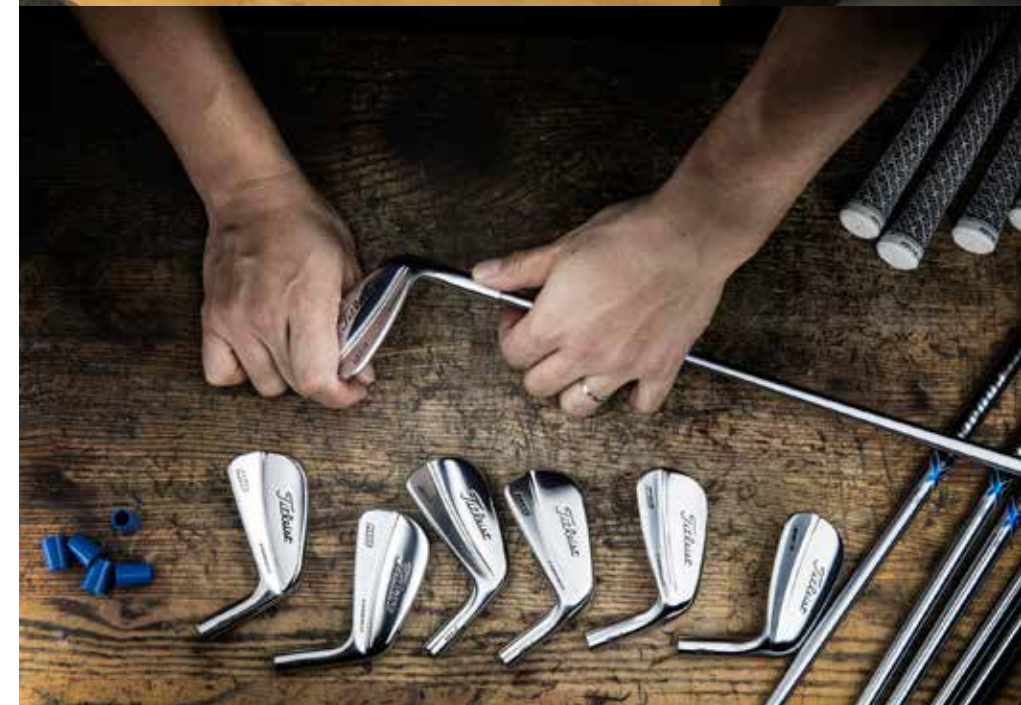
For more information about Club Champion, including scheduling a fitting, visit [clubchampion.com](http://clubchampion.com). There are four Chicago-area locations: Deerfield, Schaumburg, Willowbrook, and Chicago's North Loop. Call 888-335-3968 for more information.

**There isn't anyone who can't benefit from club fitting. With the advances in custom fitting technologies to optimize your equipment, everybody can achieve more distance. At Club Champion, you get a truly professional fitting. They can actually prove it works. For somebody not to take advantage of Club Champion's expertise, they're just wasting a tremendous opportunity.**

—Hank Haney, *Golf Digest* Top 10 Instructor

combination of any head with any shaft. Because of this, Club Champion can deliver a Tour-quality fitting that produces longer, more accurate shots with a nearly 100 percent satisfaction rate from its customers.

The company's approach is unbiased in that no specific vendor is promoted. In fact, Club Champion offers hundreds of shafts, many not available through most other fitters and retailers. The goal is to find the best combination of components to lower a golfer's scores. In addition to its unrivaled selection of combinations – more than 35,000 – Club Champion stands out because its clubs are built in-house to exacting, unrivaled







**Club Champion truly is one of the most innovative club fitters in the business. They provide a consumer experience that is undeniably helpful for all golfers to play better. We couldn't be more thrilled with our partnership with Club Champion.**

—David Abeles, TaylorMade Golf CEO

tolerances. Variables such as swingweight, length, lie, and flex definitely alter performance. At Club Champion they calibrate their loft, lie, and swingweight machines in every studio with those in their 15,000 square foot build shop, so you can be sure the club you hit in their fitting bay is the same club you purchase. This extra step is unique to Club Champion and makes a big impact on the performance of your new custom clubs.

The approach seems to be effective. A *Golf Digest* study found that eight out of nine Club Champion custom-fit golfers lowered their scores by as much as six strokes per round and added an average of 21 yards off the tee.

Who benefits most from custom fitting? There's a myth that only "good" golfers should invest their time and money in a fitting, but Haney disagrees, "There isn't anyone who can't benefit from club fitting. People just don't pay enough attention to their equipment. I guess they just think it's all the same, but it's not. If you get the right club for you, it can make a tremendous difference in your golf game."

Leadbetter is on the same page. While he thinks Tour players are an obvious match for club fitting, he understands that they have the ability to make adjustments to their game that the average golfer cannot. "I don't think there's any player that wouldn't benefit from club fitting. The

continued on page 34

## *Rankings of Erin Hills*



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# Stability and Grip Pressure

By Todd Sones

*In our previous installment of The Scoring Zone, Todd Sones' enlightening instruction book, he looked at the proper stance and the downswing. This time, he goes deeper into the swing, body stability, and proper grip pressure.*

## Stable Lower Body and Pivot On Top of the Lead Hip

This element goes hand in hand (so to speak) with the previous one concerning the downswing. Short game shots are upper-body-dominated shots, initiated from the top of the downswing by moving the clubhead first. Students often ask me what the lower body is supposed to do during the swing, and my answer is simple:

respond. You don't want to be actively shifting your lower body back or through. You want to stay stable, but let your legs respond to what your upper body is doing.

When you need to turn your chest back, your hips and thighs won't be frozen. They'll move slightly to accommodate the movement of your upper chest. And when you swing down through the ball, you want to feel like you're pivoting around a post stuck in the ground and coming up through the top of your lead hip.

It's easy to see when this goes wrong. If your tendency is to make an aggressive shift with your lower body toward the target, this will force your

upper body to fall back – and the club will bottom out too early. This is the other "L" death move, "lateral," I mentioned before.

To feel the correct movement, I like to ask students to picture turning and handing a heavy sandbag to somebody in front of them (below), or turning to dump a bucket of water on the ground in front of the ball. Both of those moves require the lower body to provide support and stability – not be super active and moving around.

## Grip Pressure Increases Through Impact

The last principle touches on something you've probably heard

talked about before: grip pressure. You've probably heard teachers or players talk about keeping a light grip pressure for feel, or keeping a constant grip pressure throughout the swing.

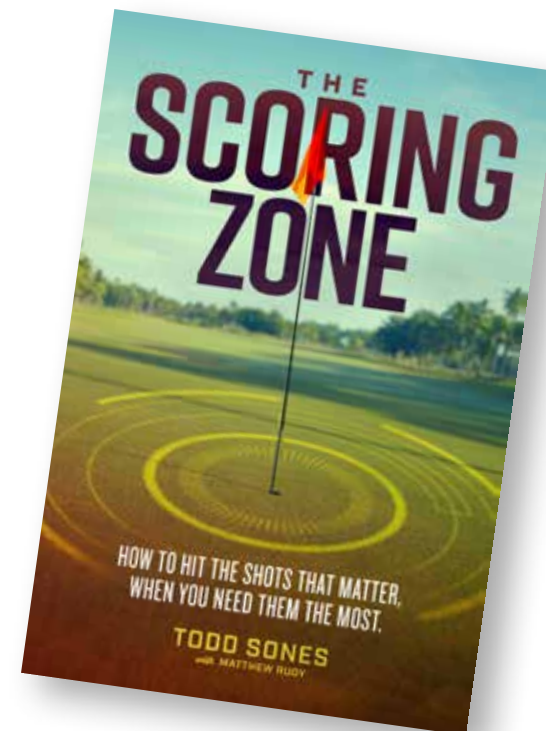
I prefer a different principle, because I think it helps promote the right movements from your arms and wrists through the downswing. It also helps make sure the clubhead is stable and square through impact. Take your normal grip and hold the club in a light-but-controlled tension level, but as you make your short-game swing down through impact, increase your grip pressure.

Most players tend to hold onto the club too tightly at address all the way up to transition, which usually forces them to let go as they strike the

ball, losing control of the clubhead. If you measured your grip tension on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the club almost falling out of your hands and 10 being the club getting crushed in a vice, I'd suggest using 3 tension at address through transition, increasing to 6 or 7 at impact.

This goes against what you might have heard or read about in short game instruction over the years. But after years of teaching and examining my own short game technique, I've come to understand how important this concept is.

A visit from one of my low single-digit handicap players a few years ago is a perfect example of what I'm describing. My student flew in from the East Coast because he had



been having a terrible time with what he described as a case of the chipping yips.

We started the lesson working on the exact fundamentals I've been describing in this column. Even after improving his setup position and

continued on page 34



Bag Toss 1



Bag Toss 2



Bag Toss 3



Loose Grip



Firm Grip





# Sink More Putts

By Chad Johansen

Three-putts. Everyone has had them. Everyone hates them. Missing short putts will drive most every golfer absolutely crazy. Now is the time to start thinking about how you can exact more reliable results with your putter from inside eight feet.

## Proper Fit

Before we discuss form and technique, it's important to have a putter that fits. It's interesting that most golfers will spend the time and money to get fitted for a driver and irons, but not a putter. The average length of a putter used on the PGA Tour is 34 inches long, a full inch shorter than the first putter Karsten Solheim created for Ping. While we all don't play like Tour pros, the point is that even the best-made putters don't suit everyone, and a brief meeting

with your local PGA professional will make sure your putter has the correct length, lie, loft, and grip for you.

The four main points of one's putting form and technique that can affect your success are face angle, impact point, attack angle, and tempo.

## Face Angle

It is very important to have a square face at impact in order to get the ball started on the desired line. Try this simple drill to ingrain square impact. Start with a straight-in, flat line from just four feet out and make several putting strokes without a backstroke. Just push the ball into the hole. This will help you feel the putter face squared up at impact, and you should see every ball rolling into the hole. If you miss to either side it means the putter face was not square.

## Impact

The point where the face impacts the ball is crucial to hit solid putts that start online. You have to hit the center of the putter face every time. The "Two Tee Gate" is by far the best drill to make sure you are hitting the center of the putter face. Tiger Woods made this drill famous because he does it every day. Add it to your routine today.

Avoid hitting the tees during your putting stroke, and you will strike the ball with the center of the putter face.

## Attack Angle

Attack angle is another key to consistent putting. Too often players make contact with the ball at the bottom of the putter face. This is an indication of too much upstroke at contact. For the best results, your putting stroke

should include a slight rise angle through impact in order for the ball to roll end over end.

Try this drill to improve your attack angle: Stack two poker chips, and make a putting stroke to see if you hit the top poker chip while the bottom chip remains still.

Did you whiff? Happens all the time. That just means you have a too severe rise angle. If both poker chips move it means you hit down on your putts. Make that top poker chip go forward while the bottom one is still and you will start hitting solid putts.

## Tempo

As it is with every golf swing, tempo is very important in putting. So many times I see golfers either accelerate too much or decelerate in their putting. Add this drill when you practice putting to improve your tempo.

Try putting four-footers with your eyes closed. This will require you to

focus more on feeling the weight of the putter head as it moves through your stroke. With your eyes closed you will feel the over-acceleration or deceleration.


## Great Drills

My favorite drills for putting use the Perfect Putting Line. You will get instant feedback on five different drills designed to improve your putting; it's why I invented the Perfect Putting Aid, and have over 100 players on the PGA Tour that rely on it. Visit [www.perfectputtingaid.com](http://www.perfectputtingaid.com) for complete details, and get the ball started online and you'll make putts instantly.

Lastly, it's always good to practice putting under pressure. To simulate this element place five tees around a hole and go around the tees twice so you take 10 putts. Start from three feet out and count how many you make from that distance. If you scored a 10 then move to

four feet. Repeat the drill moving out one foot at a time after scoring a perfect 10. Set a goal and practice with pressure. After a few sessions of this drill you won't think twice about sinking a four-footer during your round and more putts will start dropping.

## Practice, Practice, Practice

It's no coincidence that the lowest round of your life probably included your best day on the greens. You may not have hit every fairway, but I suspect you sank most of your putts. To experience more great rounds, create a practice routine incorporating drills that involve the four areas discussed above and you will start seeing improved results out on the course. Remember, repetition builds results. 

*Chad Johansen is the PGA head professional at Blackberry Oaks Golf Club, and developed the Perfect Putting Aid.*



Face Angle



Impact



Attack Angle



Tempo



Great Drills





# Good vs. Great

## What Separates the Elite from the Rest?

By Chris Oehlerking

Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives. Choice, not chance, determines your destiny.”  
— Anonymous

In competitive golf, what separates great players from merely good players? All of the professionals on the PGA Tour are highly skilled, but what separates the top one percent from the average Tour player? How have they been able to separate themselves from the field? Why are they so consistent in their performance, and what defines their competitive edge?

A certain level of functional skills, or “hard” skills, are required to be good at any competitive sport. In golf, these hard skills include the various golf strokes: full swing, putting,

and wedging. Good players must be able to make solid contact while also controlling the direction, trajectory, and distance of their shot. Ultimately, they must be able to predict where their ball is going to end up with reasonable accuracy.

What separates great players from merely good players is the “soft” skills that are required to compete at an elite level. Those soft skills include the ability to practice effectively and purposefully, a readiness and eagerness to compete, an understanding of tactics, and the mental fortitude necessary to recovery from adversity.

In 15 years of coaching, one thing I have observed is instructors prioritizing helping students develop a pretty swing. This is choosing style over function, and I will admit that I’ve been in this category myself at times. If a player can consistently

produce results, then there is really no need for them to make a technical change. But swinging the club and playing the game are two different things. A person can be a very good golfer with just the necessary hard skills. But elite, high-achieving competitive golfers must be very disciplined in regard to their preparation, strategy, physical conditioning, mental toughness, and tactical skills.

When a student in our academy is interested in reaching the next level, we examine these areas of their game to help determine where they can gain a competitive edge.

### Effective Practice

Great players are more intelligent about what, when, and how they practice. When determining what to practice, they are able to accurately identify the areas of their game that need

improvement. This is done through statistical analysis and reflecting upon rounds that were recently played.

Great players also know how to practice. They have a plan and are specific in their intention. Practice sessions should be divided into specific tasks, and each task should be given full attention. Lastly, great players know how to measure their progress. They can objectively measure their current level of progress in any given situation and adapt their practice plans accordingly.

Most driving ranges are littered with the “scrap and swing” golfer who is mindlessly bashing ball after ball. This is most often a waste of time that won’t accelerate learning. However, an effective practitioner employs intentional strategies that allow the player to measure his/her progress.

### Readiness to Compete

When watching professional golf on TV, viewers rarely see the enormous amount of preparation that players

make behind the scenes. This preparation includes practice rounds, note-taking, dialing in their yardage book, deciding upon a strategy for each hole, stocking of the bag with snacks and fluids, gathering appropriate weather gear, selecting equipment for that given course, and management of their time in the pre-round warm-up. It’s a lot more than just showing up and playing.

### Mental Skills

The most consistent elite athletes have maturity, wisdom, and the ability to manage their mind in ways that elevate their performances. Top performers are able to get themselves “in the zone,” which is that place where time slows down, alertness is heightened, and they are operating in the present moment. As they move around the course, each shot is a new opportunity.

The best mental practice I’ve been exposed to revolves around the practice of mindfulness. Dr. Arthur Hoffman, a professor at Rush University, trains our

college prep athletes. Their mindfulness practice includes learning how to focus on the present moment while also paying more attention to their experiences. This enables them to more easily let go of disappointments, frustrations, and anger, and helps them learn to not be affected by the self-criticism or self-doubts that inevitably arise. Certainly, these mental skills are necessary to perform at the highest level.

When things are going wrong on the course, and you realize you don’t have your best stuff, great players are able to stop the bleeding and salvage a respectable score. They must have previously considered this scenario and have a plan in place, preferably one written down in their yardage book. This is because losing control on the golf course can cause players to panic, which then leads to losing their presence of mind and ability to access the necessary wisdom in that moment. A player may begin to make poor decisions.

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Effective Practice



Readiness to Compete



Mental



Tactile







# Yoga for Golfers

By Anne Connors

The 2019 golf season is quickly approaching. How can you, the golfer, prepare your mind and body to have your best season? Could it be a new golf instructor? The most current hybrid? The latest trendy golf gadget promising a lower score?

Why not make it your own body!

Fitness was traditionally never a concern for golfers, but in the last 10 years, players like Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and Jordan Spieth, just to name a few, have proven that, simply said, a fitter body equals a better round of golf.

Yoga can be a big part of your fitness regimen.

When golfers have mobility limitations in their shoulders, mid-back or hips, they compensate with their low backs and knees, which not only hampers play, but often leads to pain and injury. Yoga focuses on balance, alignment and symmetry. It creates space in the body, allowing for greater rotation and increased power.

Incorporating just a few simple yoga poses as a pre-golf warm-up can optimize your physical and mental performance. Here are three – use the photos for proper positioning, and stop if you feel any pain – to get you started:

## Better Breathing

An improved breathing technique allows the golfer to “quiet the mind.”

You’ll have more solid balance in your stance, plus greater mobility in the swing itself.

That will, with repetition of the exercise, gain you more stamina and strength, which should result in a more powerful swing – and longer drives – and the ability to last the entire round.

It also adds up to better overall fitness, equaling a reduction in injuries and quicker recovery if you are injured.

## The Half-kneeling Torso Twist

This yoga exercise increases torso and shoulder turn over a stable lower body, creating more mobility during the takeaway and finish.



Begin by kneeling with the right knee down and left foot forward. Hold a golf club overhead and lift through the rib cage, holding in your abdominal muscles. Take a breath, then exhale and rotate toward your left leg.

Relax your shoulders and maintain the lift in your arms and

spine. Turn to the front and repeat five to eight times.

Switch sides and repeat.

## The Extended Table

This yoga exercise builds core strength so golfers can maintain an athletic posture, creating a more consistent swing.

Begin on all fours and draw your navel toward your spine, providing additional support for your back. Lift your right leg up, the hip pointing toward the floor, with your left arm forward, extending through the fingertips. Exhale while pulling in, and inhale while stretching out.

Repeat five to 10 times, then switch sides and repeat.



Anne Connors is a Titleist Performance Institute-certified personal trainer and certified Katherine Roberts’ Yoga for Golfers YFG Instructor.

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We can't forget Mom on her day, so here's a peek at some of the better things, golf-related and otherwise, she would never treat herself to – but you should.



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One of the top selling products in the Glove It line is this popular lightweight cart bag. It features 14 full-length dividers, easy access pockets, and an easy-lift handle system along with a putter well, umbrella sleeve, rain hood, padded adjustable carry strap, and seven versatile pockets. And it weighs only five pounds.

\$219.95 [www.gloveit.com](http://www.gloveit.com)

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The TaylorMade M5 driver head optimizes coefficient of restitution across the entire face and delivers maximum ball speed and distance. The heel and toe ports in the face create a boundary-pushing fast and hot driver head. Twist Face technology provides more loft in the high-toe and less loft in the low-heel to produce more consistent spin, accuracy, and distance. Lightweight, forgiving and long!

\$499 [www.taylormadegolf.com](http://www.taylormadegolf.com)



#### Sure Footing

Many wear the New Balance brand for walking and running, and now you can get this durable high quality brand for golf. With three styles to choose from and a selection of color combos, you will find the perfect look and fit providing comfort and performance for your next round of golf and beyond. Models include the Minus Golf 1005, the 574 SL and the NB Minus SL, a lightweight, athletic-style spikeless shoe designed to provide the perfect fit, comfort, and maximum performance. This style features a breathable mesh upper with ultralight support. This lightweight spikeless shoe has the REVlite midsole for maximum comfort while walking the course and Ortholite insole for cool, dry comfort. The Minus SL weighs only 6.6 ounces.

\$69.95 [www.newbalance.com](http://www.newbalance.com)

#### Tree Tea Before the First Tee

Feeling tense before your round? Try Joshua Tree's Unplugged Tea – a 100 percent Organic brew that helps you unplug and focus on your game. This potent tea relaxes your body while stimulating your mind and inducing a deep sense of clarity. From the first tee to the final putt – unplug and tea it up.

[www.jtreelife.com](http://www.jtreelife.com)



#### Too Cool for School

You see Elixir-UV Protection Arm Cooling Sleeves on many of LPGA Tour players – why? Because they provide UV protection and are made with a moisture-radiating material that offers a cooling effect even in the hottest weather. Comfortable sun protection in a slip-on sleeve available in many styles and colors.

\$9.99

[www.theelixirusa.com](http://www.theelixirusa.com)



#### The Jacket to Have

Galvin Green impressed at the PGA Merchandise Show with its line of outerwear featuring the INTERFACE-1 shell layer, which provides exceptional versatility as a high-performance link between the middle and outer layers. If you're selecting one golf jacket, then the many dimensions built into the INTERFACE-1 make it the obvious choice. Pictured is the Lily Lightweight full-zip jacket.

\$275

[www.galvingreen.com](http://www.galvingreen.com)



#### Perfect for Water Holes

Everyday elegance meets rugged durability in Hook+Gaff's Sportfisher 3 wristwatch. Designed with adventurous women in mind, this watch delivers a time-tested, performance-proven functionality that can keep up with any excursion. With a smaller face and band than the other Hook+Gaff watches, the Sportfisher 3 looks sleek and feminine for daily wear but has all of the same features to fit the needs of outdoor pursuits. It's watertight to 660 feet. Comfort is at the forefront of the Sportfisher 3, and the signature left-side crown placement helps minimize wrist irritation. Plus, it features Swiss Super-Luminova illumination technology, which lights the watch hands and hour markers.

\$400 [www.hookandgaff.com](http://www.hookandgaff.com)



#### Back in the Hoodie

The Footjoy Double Layer Full-Zip Hoodie, is a versatile piece of women's golf attire, offering contemporary styling and easy care fabric. Machine washable, full-zip with side pockets and made with a breathable moisture-wicking fabric and an anti-microbial finish.

\$135 [www.footjoy.com](http://www.footjoy.com)



#### Give Mom a Big Hand

They've been growing grapes in Lodi since the 1850s, and back then a legendary outlaw with the moniker of Three Finger Jack roamed the area looking for riches. Inspired by this daring character, Delicato Family Wines has released their inaugural 2016 Three Finger Jack East Side Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon. Lodi mimics a classic mild Mediterranean climate, with soils full of cobble stones and low on nutrients that yield fruit with intense flavor, including cherry, cassis, and blackberry, with some oak and a bit of pepper. These are all supported by plenty of structure and balanced tannins.

\$22 [delicatifamilyvineyards.com](http://delicatifamilyvineyards.com)



## Mother's Day Gift Guide



## PROFILES

NEAL KOTLAREK

# Another Outlet for Competitive Amateurs

Ten years ago, America was a vastly different place. The country was slowly fighting its way out of an economic crisis. One of the country's top movies was *The Princess and the Frog*. And Natalie Suleman became known as Octomom after giving birth to two foursomes. To area golfers, 2009 was also made prom-

inent by the debut of a unique amateur tour that promoted competition among players of similar handicaps.

This April 27, the Chicago Golfweek Amateur Tour kicks off its 10th anniversary in style with its first event of the 2019 season. Played at Romeoville's spectacular Mistwood Golf Club, the

tournament is the first of 16 events scheduled. In weeks following, the tour moves to a vast array of outstanding area venues including Prairie Landing, Whistling Straits in Wisconsin, Harborside International, Weaver Ridge in Peoria and The Highlands of Elgin.

continued on page 35



Brandon Tudor and Joe Corsei, 2018 Wilson Champs



Cully Johnston, Chicago Cup



Buddies, Eagle Ridge, High Point



Jon Czerwien, Stonewall Orchard



Curt Bressner, Midwest Open 2018

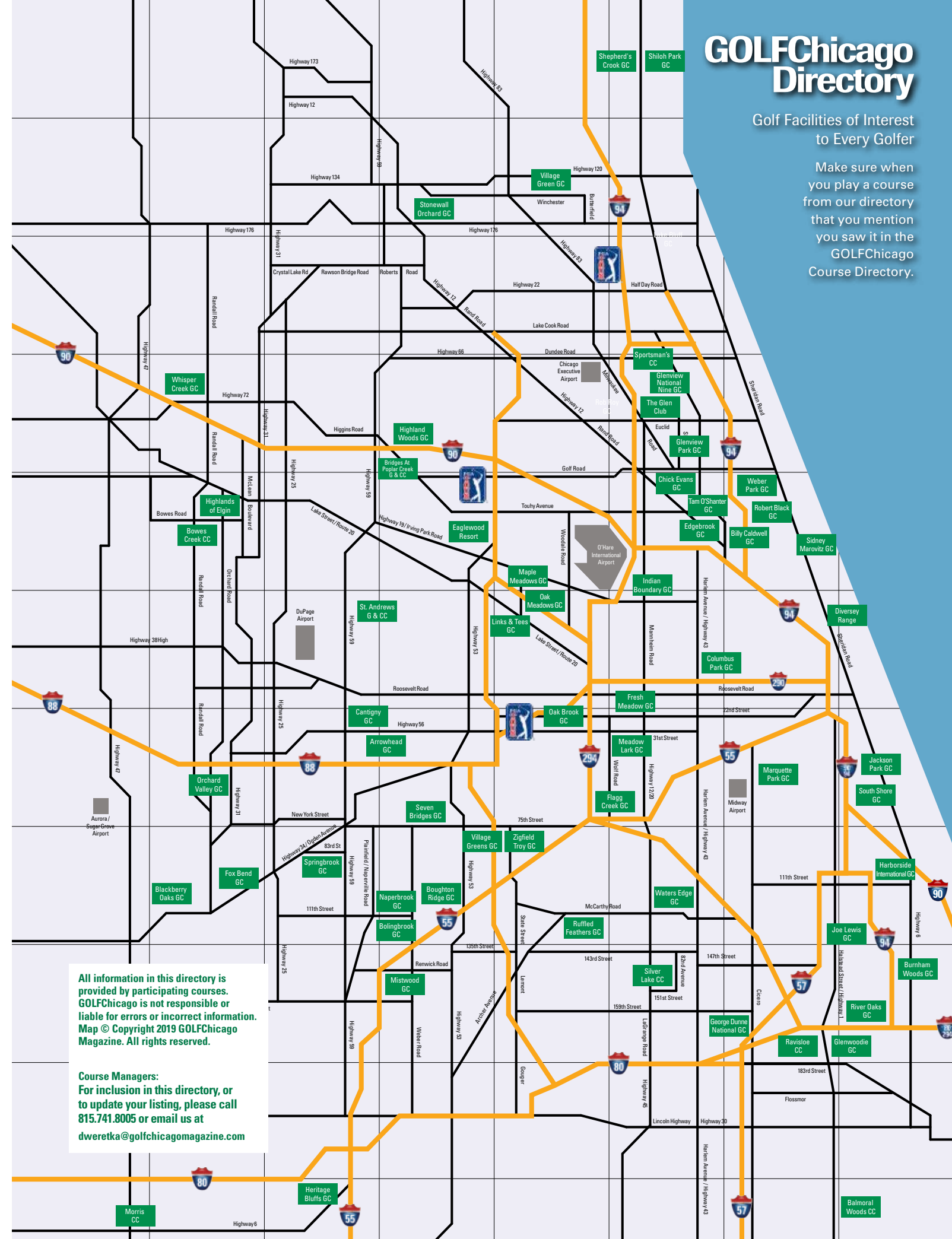


Mike Tice, Highlands of Elgin

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### Arrowhead

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Wheaton, IL 60189  
[arrowheadgolfclub.org](http://arrowheadgolfclub.org)  
Arrowhead Golf Club is recognized for its beautifully maintained course and inviting atmosphere.

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### Balmoral Woods Golf Club

708-672-7448  
26732 S. Balmoral Woods Dr.  
Crete, IL 60417  
[www.balmoralwoods.com](http://www.balmoralwoods.com)

A fun public golf course on IL-394 in Crete 40 minutes south of Chicago. The 18-hole course with a driving range is spread out over undulating terrain and features a number of holes with mature oak trees. Also the annual home to the Will County Amateur in the Spring. A "must play" course on the south side and a great venue for your next event or function. Book tee times online or check out other information about the property at [www.balmoralwoods.com](http://www.balmoralwoods.com).



### Blackberry Oaks Golf Course

630-553-7170  
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Bristol, IL 60512  
[www.blackberryoaks.com](http://www.blackberryoaks.com)

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Home of the Blackberry Amateur, the premier Midwest amateur golf event.  
[www.blackberryamateur.com](http://www.blackberryamateur.com)



### Bowes Creek Country Club

847-214-5880  
1250 Bowes Creek Blvd.  
Elgin, Illinois 60124  
[bowescreekcc.com](http://bowescreekcc.com)

Ranked as *Golfweek's* Best Courses You Can Play, Bowes Creek Country Club gives you every option to play your ideal round of golf. Along with annual memberships, we offer a "member-for-a-day" pass, allowing you the privilege to play unlimited golf with cart as well as full use of the practice facility. If playing a quick round of nine or eighteen holes suits your game better, we offer that as well. Bowes Creek allows the public golfer to experience the private club, without an annual membership.



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### The Preserve at Oak Meadows

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After two years of extensive renovation, the 288-acre The Preserve at Oak Meadows is NOW OPEN as a new world-class 18-hole course and practice facility.

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The Preserve's location features easy access from O'Hare, I-290, I-355, I-294, and Route 83.

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- Indian Boundary: 18 Holes
- Joe Louis: 18 Holes
- Meadowlark: 9 Holes
- River Oaks: 18 Holes



### Fox Bend Golf Course

630-554-3939  
3516 Route 34  
Oswego, IL 60543  
[www.foxbendgolfcourse.com](http://www.foxbendgolfcourse.com)

Fox Bend is Oswego's own welcoming and challenging public course. This 18-hole, par-72 course boasts plush fairways, mature trees, and challenging greens. With 34 well-positioned bunkers and water coming into play on 11 holes, the course tests skills of all levels. USFGA FootGolf is also available on select days. Enjoy a drink or dinner on the deck overlooking the scenic course at Pearce's restaurant, or book the Pavilion for your next outing or special event. Take advantage of tee time specials and book online.



### Cantigny Golf

630-668-8463  
27w270 Mack Rd.  
Wheaton, IL 60189  
[cantignygolf.com](http://cantignygolf.com)

Designed by Roger Packard, Cantigny is both challenging and breathtakingly scenic.

Cantigny Golf's Red Oak Club loyalty program rewards customers with free golf and other benefits.

The Young Executive Program offers reduced green fees for golfers 39 and under.

Cantigny's 27 holes are ideal for outings ranging from 16 to 220 golfers. The course employs a full-time golf-event coordinator to ensure an exceptional experience for planners and guests.

In 2019, for the fifth time, Cantigny will host the Illinois State Amateur Championship (July 16-18).



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Coyote Run, which opened in 2005, sits on the former site of Cherry Hills. It has been completely redesigned by Greg Martin. A hidden gem in the southern suburbs, Coyote Run's course conditions rival that of the best country clubs in the area. Only 20 minutes from Chicago, Coyote Run is conveniently accessed from I-80, I-294 and I-57. Great senior rates are available Monday through Friday. Visit [www.coyoterungolf.com](http://www.coyoterungolf.com) for the best rates available.



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18 W. 201 W. 63rd St.  
Westmont, IL 60559  
[DuPageGolf.com](http://DuPageGolf.com)

Green Meadows is a fun nine-hole gem that offers quality conditions in a traditional parkland setting.

Featuring three par 4s and six par 3s, the Green Meadows layout is the perfect blend of challenge, enjoyment, and value for all skill levels!

Senior discounts are available every day, and DuPage Golf Discount Card holders save on every round.

Look for Green Meadows behind the Westmont water tower on 63rd St.

Find our best specials and promotions only on [www.DuPageGolf.com](http://www.DuPageGolf.com).



### The Glen Club

847-724-7272  
2901 W. Lake Ave.  
Glenview, IL 60026  
[theglenclub.com](http://theglenclub.com)

Chicago's finest semi-private golf experience.

The Glen Club is a stunning Tom Fazio designed championship course located on the former site of the historic Glenview Naval Air Station. In the heart of a 195-acre refuge, The Glen Club features rolling terrain, dramatic elevation changes, tranquil lakes, and striking vistas.

Enjoy the grand 48,000 square-foot clubhouse, superb dining, 21 overnight guest rooms, a grand ballroom, and the finest in corporate amenities and membership.



### Glenview Park Golf Club

847-724-0250  
Shermer Rd.  
Glenview, IL 60025  
[golfglenview.com](http://golfglenview.com)

Experience pure golfing enjoyment at the Glenview Park Golf Club. After a complete renovation in 2014-2015, the course has re-opened to rave reviews. Bent grass from tee to green, rolling fairways, and meticulous landscapes await you on this 18-hole, 6,133 yard par-70 course. The Glenview Park Golf Club offers the amenities of a private club, but is open to the public and close to home.

*Golf Inc* magazine voted the Glenview Park Golf Club the Best Renovation of the Year in 2016. Come out to see what everyone is talking about. Host of the USGA - 2017 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball Qualifier.



### Glenview Prairie Club

847-657-1637  
2800 W. Lake Ave.  
Glenview, IL 60026  
[golfglenview.com](http://golfglenview.com)

- Meticulous conditions like no other 9-hole course
- Affordable Rates.
- 4 sets of tees to meet all skill levels
- 90 minute pace of play for a quick 9
- Challenging, fun, and enjoyable for all.

After your round stop in for a cold beverage in our beautiful clubhouse setting overlooking the 9th green. Craft Beers, Fine Wines sport and soft drinks available.

Make Glenview Prairie Club your home club for a premier 9-hole experience!



### Glenwoodie Golf Club

708-758-1212  
19301 S State St.  
Glenwood, IL 60425  
[glenwoodiegolf.com/](http://glenwoodiegolf.com/)

Glenwoodie, just 25 minutes from Chicago, has been a favorite championship course for serious and recreational golfers in Chicago and Northwest Indiana for over 90 years. Consistently ranked in the top 35 public courses, the 18-hole, par-72, 6902-yard course features bent-grass fairways and large rolling greens surrounded by groves of majestic oaks.

- 14,000 sq. ft. Clubhouse and Community Center with Fully Stocked Golf Shop
- Full Service Bar and Grille, and Outdoor Patio
- Electric Cart Fleet
- Lighted Practice Range/PGA Professional Staff





**Golf Center Des Plaines**  
847-803-GOLF  
353 N River Rd.  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
[GolfCenterDesPlaines.com](http://GolfCenterDesPlaines.com)

9 Holes: Par 27  
Yardage: 80 - 210  
Chicagoland's only fully-lighted 9-hole course is open late year-round, and until midnight May–Fall. The 80-bay lighted and heated Driving Range is one of the Top 50 Ranges in the country: automatic ball tee-up, 300-yard outdoor landing area, plus 11 grass tees. The 1-1/2 acre Short Game Area features three sand bunkers and multiple putting greens; you can practice chip shots from up to 60 yards out. Unlimited Memberships are available for the Course and Short Game, and the Driving Range. Restaurant, Sports Bar, Pro Shop, and GolfTec Lessons.



**Mistwood Golf Club**  
815-254-3333  
1700 W. Renwick Rd.  
Romeoville, IL 60446  
[mistwoodgc.com](http://mistwoodgc.com)  
Mistwood Golf Club, with its recent multi-million dollar renovations and new state of the art golf-learning center, has become one of the premier golf experiences in the Chicagoland area  
Mistwood, host of the Illinois Women's Open, features new Scottish-style stacked sod-wall bunkers, which are not something seen in traditional American golf. Other amenities include a full-service pro shop, golf instruction, and wonderful dining.  
• *Golf Magazine's* "2013 Best U.S. Renovation You Can Play"  
• Golf Range Association of America "2013 Top 50 Golf Ranges."



**Harborside International G.C.**  
312-782-7837  
11001 S. Doty Ave. East  
Chicago, IL 60628  
[harborsidegolf.com](http://harborsidegolf.com)  
Located just south of the loop in the City of Chicago, Harborside features two championship-style links courses designed by renowned architect Dick Nugent.  
Harborside is home to Chicago's largest practice facility, a prairie-style clubhouse, and The Pier at Harborside restaurant.  
Harborside's Port and Starboard courses rank annually among the Midwest's list of best courses you can play.



**Naperbrook Golf Course**  
630-378-4215  
22204 W. 111th St. / Hassert Blvd.  
Plainfield, IL 60585  
[golfnaperville.org](http://golfnaperville.org)  
Located in Plainfield, scenic Naperbrook Golf Course is a "links style" course that features rolling hills and wide fairways. Challenges in the way of ponds, a double green, and hidden bunkers await golfers of all levels. Additional amenities include a ten-acre driving range, separate lesson tee, and practice putting greens. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the picturesque patio; Naperbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and much more.



**Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club**  
815-467-7888  
24355 W. Bluff Rd.  
Channahon, IL 60410  
[heritagebluffs.com](http://heritagebluffs.com)  
18 Holes: Par 72  
Yardage: 5,035- 7,171  
Located near the intersection of Interstates 80 and 55 just south of Joliet, Heritage Bluffs is the pride of the Channahon Park District. The tranquil surroundings make a day playing golf fun and relaxing.  
Along with our award-winning course we also feature a large all-grass practice range along with a large putting green and a separate chipping green and bunker. After your round you can relax in our Grille Room or out on the patio, enjoying a full menu of delicious food and beverage choices.



**Orchard Valley Golf Course**  
630-907-0500  
2411 W. Illinois Ave.  
Aurora, IL 60506  
[orchardvalleygolf.com](http://orchardvalleygolf.com)  
6th Best Public Course in Illinois by *GOLF* magazine.  
One of Chicagoland's best public courses, Golf Digest ranks Orchard Valley 4½ Stars! A true championship layout featuring wetlands, lakes, roughs, water hazards, marshes, and more.  
PLUS...a program for everyone!  
• SAVE on every round with the OV Rewards PLUS program.  
• UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PPP card.  
• Annual Memberships and MORE!



**The Highlands of Elgin**  
847-931-5950  
875 Sports Way  
Elgin, IL 60123  
[highlandsofelgin.com](http://highlandsofelgin.com)  
The Highlands of Elgin has become a premier destination for thousands of golfers throughout the region. Nine new holes reclaim an old stone quarry, and take maximum advantage of the unique and dramatic landforms that were left behind, including a twelve-acre quarry lake. Four holes hug the top of the bluff thirty to forty feet above the water, providing golfers with incredible views and numerous shot options on each hole. The prairie-style clubhouse features an expanded golf shop, locker rooms, event rooms, and a full-scale food and beverage operation.



**PGA TOUR Superstore**  
1017 Butterfield Rd.  
Downers Grove, 60515  
1319 E. Golf Rd.  
Schaumburg, 60173  
295 Center Dr. Vernon Hills, 60061  
PGA TOUR Superstore carries the largest selection of golf clubs, clothing, footwear, and accessories for your game. With the most advanced technology for club fitting, we also offer the Fitting Van Experience which is a TOUR caliber assessment. With three Chicagoland locations, come see why nothing compares to PGA TOUR Superstore.



**Ravisloe Country Club**  
708-798-5600  
18231 Park Ave,  
Homewood, IL 60430  
[ravisloe.com](http://ravisloe.com)  
Ravisloe Country Club has been one of the most acclaimed golf courses in Chicagoland since its inception. Bearing the signature of world-renowned course designer Donald Ross, it has played host to many great golfers and features rolling mounds, deep bunkers and challenging greens. Located just 25 minutes from Chicago, 10 miles from the Indiana state line and across the street from the Homewood Metra Station, Ravisloe is your one stop destination. Wine-Dine-Stay-Play with Ravisloe, La Voûte Bistro and La Banque Hotel.



**Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center**  
847-965-2344  
6700 West Howard Street  
Niles, IL 60714  
[golftam.com](http://golftam.com)  
One of the most important courses in popularizing the game of golf in America is located right here in Niles, Illinois. In 1953, Tam O'Shanter Country Club hosted the first-ever nationally televised golf tournament.  
Today, a public 9-hole par-33 course remains, maintained with the goal of providing playing conditions reminiscent of those Hogan, Palmer, and Nicklaus enjoyed years ago. Swing out for a scenic round and walk in the footsteps of legends at Tam O'Shanter!  
Year-round instruction available!



**St. Andrews Golf & Country Club**  
630-231-3100  
2241 Route 59  
West Chicago, IL 60185  
[standrewsgc.com](http://standrewsgc.com)  
36 Holes:  
Course #1: par 71, 5116 - 6920 yards  
Course #2: par 72, 5341 - 6818 yards  
Since 1926, golfers have sought out St. Andrews for its two championship courses. With its vast rolling terrain and mature trees, St. Andrews offers a high-quality golf experience for players, golf outings, leagues, and permanent tee-times. Guests will also enjoy the award-winning 32-acre Practice Center with premium range balls and 10 heated, sheltered hitting bays. Other amenities: golf carts with GPS, J.J.'s Bar & Grill, exquisite lakeside ceremony site, and live entertainment.



**Water's Edge Golf Course**  
708-671-1032  
7205 West 115th St.  
Worth, IL 60482  
[watersedgegolf.com](http://watersedgegolf.com)  
Rated Best Places To Play by *Golf Digest*.  
Water's Edge is Chicago's south side destination course. This championship 18-hole golf course offers bent grass greens and fairways, and a complete day/night practice and range facility, along with The Edge Bar & Grill for great meals and daily specials.

PLUS...a program for everyone!  
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• UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the Edge Practice Club



**Springbrook Golf Course**  
630-848-5060  
2220 W. 83rd St.  
Naperville, IL 60564  
[golfnaperville.org](http://golfnaperville.org)  
Springbrook Golf Course commands some of the finest views of Naperville's open space and trails. The facility features a challenging, parkland-style championship course, a recently renovated practice facility with a one-acre turf practice tee, a large practice putting green, and two short-game practice greens with bunkers. Golfers of all skill levels return time and again to play. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the expansive patio with great views of the course. Springbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and more.



**Weber Park Golf Course**  
847-674-1500, ext. 3600  
[skokieparks.org](http://skokieparks.org)  
9 Holes: Par 27  
Yardage: 1,095  
Located just twenty minutes north of Chicago on I-94, all ages will enjoy Skokie's Weber Park Golf Course. This 9-hole, par-3 golf course features bent grass greens, beautiful landscaping, and is ideal for learning to play golf, working on your short game, or gathering a few friends for a fun round of FootGolf.

PLUS...a program for everyone!  
• SAVE on every round with the Whisper Rewards PLUS program  
• UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PDP card  
• Annual Memberships and MORE!



**Stonewall Orchard**  
847-740-4890  
25675 West Highway 60  
Grayslake, IL 60030  
[stonewallorchard.com](http://stonewallorchard.com)  
Cutting through hundred-year old oak and pine trees, Stonewall Orchard Golf Club has quickly become one of Chicago's most prolific public golf courses.  
Since opening in 1999, the Arthur Hills-designed gem located in northwest suburban Grayslake has served as Final Stage Qualifying site for the U.S. Open, and currently sits in rotation with Olympia Fields and Medinah Country Club as host site for the Illinois PGA Section Championship held every Fall.



**Whisper Creek Golf Course**  
847-515-7680  
12840 Del Webb Blvd.  
Huntley, IL 60142  
[whispercreekgolf.com](http://whispercreekgolf.com)  
Luxury Golf at a Whisper of a Price!  
Whisper Creek Golf Club is a fair test for a gamut of golfers. From beginners to scratch golfers, anyone who appreciates a day on the course will come away feeling rewarded by a round at Whisper Creek.

PLUS...a program for everyone!  
• SAVE on every round with the Whisper Rewards PLUS program  
• UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PDP card  
• Annual Memberships and MORE!



## Club Champion

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average player would probably benefit far more than even the Tour player would. Because to get fitted and have a club that suits their length, lie, shaft, flex, material, and grip size ... those factors make a huge difference for the average golfer to be able to reach their potential."

Another big difference between Tour players and casual golfers is having the time and resources to devote to improving their game. Leadbetter adds, "Players don't have a lot of time to work on their golf swing these days, so to actually fit a club to their particular swing can get really great results. Obviously, Club Champion fitters are the best at it, and with their stores around the country, people have access to all this information."

According to Haney, instruction starts with the most fundamental element of your golf game – equipment. If he's fighting his students' equipment, he can't get a true read of the problems. "If somebody's slicing it or hooking or pulling or pushing it, I want to make sure there's not something in their equipment contributing to that," Haney said. "If you don't get the equipment right first, then you're going to have to over-correct in order to get a ball flight change and you don't want to do that."

Golfers who have experienced the gains and improvements after a fitting rave about the benefits. Gary Lichenstien, who was fit with a TaylorMade driver and Callaway irons, says, "My distance off the tees has increased by 20 yards consistently, on occasion even more. My average score has dropped about four to five strokes on average. I feel over time, I can still pick up a few more strokes."

When Club Champion says you'll add 20 yards off the tee, they mean it. Whether a golfer is looking to buy new clubs or just upgrade his or her current set, Club Champion guarantees that an investment in premium club fitting will improve his or her game. Fittings range from \$80 for wedges to \$350 for an entire bag. Their Perfect Fit Guarantee includes free loft and lie adjustments and a lifetime warranty against manufacturer defects.

## Stability and Grip Pressure

continued from page 19

sequencing, he still seemed to yip at impact. I decided to take some closeup video of his hands through impact to see what was going on. When I did, you could see that the handle of the club was literally coming out of his hands at impact. He clearly didn't have control over the clubface as he was contacting the ball.

I asked what he was working on in terms of tension in his hands. He said he was trying to use constant, light grip pressure, as if he was holding a live bird—Sam Snead's classic tip. It's something I had certainly told students earlier in my career.

But the reality of clubface control is more toward a tight grip than a loose, uncontrolled one. I asked my student to firm up his grip pressure through impact, so that he was squeezing at a 7 when the clubhead got to the ball. In a matter of one ball, the yips were gone.

He just needed to feel that control.

The amount you need to increase pressure depends on the kind of shot you have in front of you (page 19). For all shots, you'd start with about a 3 on that 1 to 10 scale. On a putt, you might only increase to a 4. For a driver, you'd increase to an 8. For short game shots, you'd want to increase more for shots that provide more resistance because of the lie. That means a 6 or 7 for a shot from deep grass or from the sand.

Go to a short game practice area and experiment for yourself to find the variables that work the best for you. But the overarching point is that you want to forget about the idea of a consistent, soft grip pressure.

Although it might sound like an oversimplification, I can promise you it isn't. Every miss you experience in the scoring zone comes because of a breakdown in one of these fundamentals. When you have command of them, you're well on your way to building the confidence all great short game players have.

*Todd Sones, author of The Scoring Zone, owns and operates Todd Sones' Impact Golf School at White Deer Run in Vernon Hills.  
847-549-8678  
www.toddsones.com*

## Good vs. Great

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Yet, if you planned prior to this moment, writing down statements and externalizing these thoughts in your yardage book, then you will be better prepared for such moments. Your yardage book should also include positive affirmations, or better yet, reminders that help you get back on track physically and mentally. These reminders can include your favorite go-to weapons, a "plan B" strategy, or even an alternate swing shape or thought. It can be helpful to simply remind yourself of specific cause and effects. For example, when you hook the ball, what is typically the cause of such a ball flight? If you have planned and practiced this scenario beforehand, then at least you will have some comfort in knowing that alternative solutions exist.

### Tactical Skills

Many golfers know this concept as "golf course management," but I prefer the phrase "tactical skills" because it's an accurate description of a carefully planned and calculated strategy that resonates more clearly to people. I once heard Hank Haney say that when Tiger Woods was dominating, nobody realized how smart and disciplined he was in devising his strategy for a course.

When creating your plan, you must understand how the course is playing that day and how to effectively use your strengths to minimize the likelihood of you having to hit uncomfortable and low-probability shots. Each shot is its own moment. You have to determine what choices you have, assess risk versus reward, check in with how confident you are with those choices, and then make a decision that weighs probability and circumstance. Once decided, elite players are fully committed to that decision and are OK with the result no matter the outcome.

If you are wishing to upgrade your game to that next level, give these "soft skills" some attention. You will be glad you did.

*Chris Oehlerking is the managing partner and senior coach at The Golf Practice, which has three north suburban locations.*

## Profiles

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Founder Rob Maguire gives credit for the tour's success to the enthusiasm of league members.

"It's been an amazing story that I'm proud to be part of," he said. "We started the tour with the single concept of offering a fun competition that players of all different skill sets could enjoy and work toward owning trophies and gift cards. Today, the league is thriving as we continue to locate the area's best golf courses to host the events; we have five flights so that everyone from a scratch player to a 19-plus handicapper can participate, and with larger participation we've kept the green fees low for all."

Along with individual stroke play tournaments, the tour schedules best-ball competitions and even a team match play Ryder Cup-style event to be played this year at Whistling Straits – site of the 2020 Ryder Cup matches.

"While the concept of the tour originally focused on friendly competition, it became apparent right away that the tour is as much about making friends as it is about competition among friends," McGuire said.

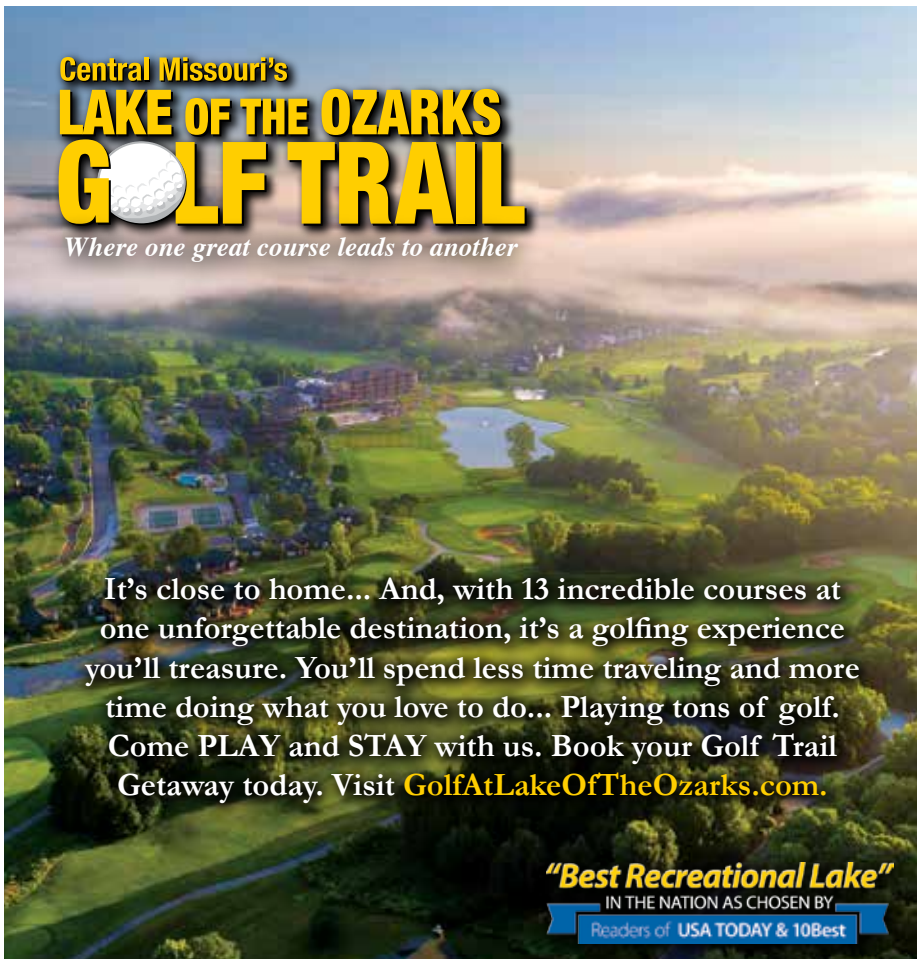
The top 15 players in each local flight, assuming play in at least 50 percent of the season's events, are awarded the opportunity to compete in the National Tour Championship played last year in Hilton Head, S.C. That event pairs Chicago tour members against competitors of other Golfweek Amateur Tours from across the country.

Besides keeping track of scoring averages and points earned for playing in events, the tour keeps players interested year around with newsletters and monthly raffles. "Our players like being engaged with each other even during the offseason," McGuire said.

The popularity of the Chicago tour, in fact, has spawned the Chicago Senior Amateur Tour, open to players 50 and above. This season's venues include Bowes Creek in Elgin, The Preserve at Oak Meadows, and Cantigny in Wheaton.

Membership fees to join the league start at a modest \$100 and include a goodie bag, a national golf magazine subscription and a USGA handicap.


More information on the Chicago Golfweek Amateur Tour is available at [www.amateurgolftour.net](http://www.amateurgolftour.net).



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# Delving into Golf's Deeper Side

It's a small book by modern standards, just 152 pages in the original edition, with pages scarcely larger than a paper-back, but Arnold Haultain's *The Mystery of Golf* has for over a century wowed and baffled readers simultaneously.

It's instructional in a way, and thus fitting to review in our instruction-focu-

sioned issue, but you won't find basic swing tips here. This is instruction in how to look at golf and place it properly in your universe.

Haultain wrote this extended essay in 1908 and published a 440-copy edition. The clamor for more copies prompted him to expand the book, but in 1986

The Classics of Golf, under the direction of Herbert Warren Wind, reissued the 152-page original, bolstered by a Wind foreword and a John Updike afterword.

Wrote Wind, "It may well be, as some of its admirers have claimed, the equivalent among books to what Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler* is to books on fishing."

While elegantly composed, Haultain is at times a difficult read. He forces the reader to think, to contemplate, occasionally to run to the dictionary. This is not a summer beach throwaway.

Consider his positioning the game as unique among sports, "(I)t is unique because it is so difficult," Haultain wrote. "Curiously enough, its chief difficulty arises from its chief simplicity. In golf you hit a stationary ball. At first blush that sounds the acme of ease. It is not; though it takes even a zealot some days to plumb the depths of that paradox."

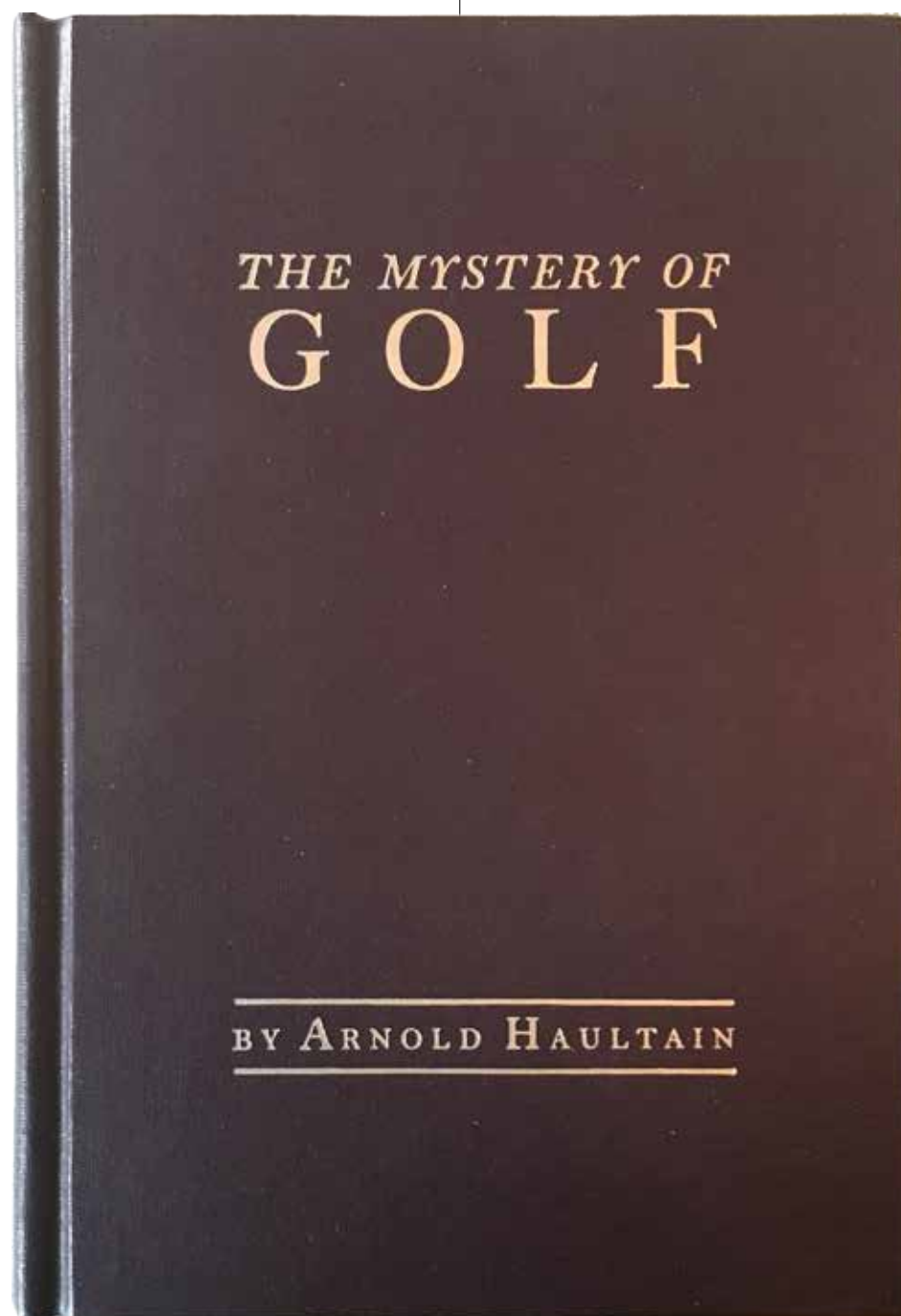
The following several pages take those five sentences and dive down a rabbit hole of considerations, comparing the game to cricket, tennis, polo, and the like. Essentially, Haultain was the first to write that golf is difficult because you have to think to play it, not merely react to your opponent's play.

"The simplicity of the thing to be done strips the soul of all cloak of excuse for not doing it," Haultain wrote.

Understand that, and Haultain becomes your caddie to the game's soul, having made the trip himself decades before Michael Murphy's 1972 novel, *Golf in the Kingdom*. Or Ty Webb, for that matter.

This is a great book to curl up with when you're fighting your swing and it seems to be fighting back. It's a reminder that it's all in your head. Be the ball, Danny.

*The Mystery of Golf*  
By Arnold Haultain  
152 pages  
Classics of Golf (1908; 1986 reprint)  
\$40  
classicsofgolf.com



Dry Creek Vineyard was the first winery established in the Dry Creek Valley after Prohibition. It was founded in 1972 by David Stare, who came with an early vision to plant Sauvignon Blanc. Before his arrival, the valley was little more than a few family farms and prune orchards, but Stare was determined to start a winery inspired by those in the Loire Valley, which led to a viticultural reawakening in northern Sonoma County.

Stare soon began taking winemaking classes at UC Davis. On the weekends, he looked for vineyard land and finally discovered an old prune orchard and began planting vines. Although Sauvignon Blanc beckoned to him, several vineyard specialists advised him against planting it. "They told me Sauvignon Blanc would never grow in the Dry Creek Valley, but I knew I had to stick to what I knew was right. I was going to plant this varietal come hell or high water." It turned out to be one of his best decisions. Over the last 40 years, the winery has also developed an international reputation for its Fumé Blanc, Dry Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Zinfandel, and Bordeaux varietals.

During his long career, Stare has logged many firsts. For instance, he initiated the Dry Creek Valley appellation in 1983 and was the first to label a wine with it. He was the first to release a wine using the descriptor 'Meritage' (1985 vintage) on the label to classify his Bordeaux-style blend.

Dry Creek is committed to a healthy and diverse ecosystem for all plants, insects, and animal life, which in turn creates a better place for grapes, with the goal of producing high-quality wines. The winery has 185 acres of vineyards within Dry Creek Valley and Russian River Valley that are 100% Certified Sustainable. While employing many sustainable practices in the vineyard, top priorities include: growing cover crops to rebuild depleted soil; composting to reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers and improve the quality of the soil; beekeeping to enhance the eco-system of the vineyard; encouraging birds of prey to adopt the vineyards to control rodent populations; and improving the local fish and creek habitat for a healthy ecosystem.

# Come Sail Away

2016 Chardonnay \$32

This estate wine was partially whole-cluster pressed, and 90 percent was barrel fermented in French oak, one-quarter new. About half of the wine underwent malolactic. It starts with aromas of baked apple and apricot, cut by minerals and citrus oil. The palate features poached pear, meyer lemon and pineapple, with good balance between fruit, barrel oak, and acid.

2016 Cabernet Sauvignon \$30

This smooth and easy-sipping red is mostly Cabernet Sauvignon, with small amounts of Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec. There are hints of bell pepper and sweet fruit on the nose. The palate showcases black currant, blackberry, and cranberry. The full body is fruit forward, with juicy chewy tannins and a peppery finish. The mouth feel is even and full with no harshness.



smhawk@ayainc.com

## Weber Park Golf Course

9350 Weber Park Place, Skokie

Beautiful 9-hole, Par-3 Course  
Bent Grass Greens  
Putting & Chipping Practice Area  
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PGA Instruction  
Cafe and Club Rental

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3459 Oakton Street, Skokie

Driving Range  
Adventure Golf  
PGA Instruction  
Batting Cages  
Party Room



SkokieParks.org

(847) 674-1500







## Why Knee-high?

The 2019 Rules of Golf contain the most far-reaching set of changes since 1984. To make sure we get the most out of our abbreviated Midwest golf season, let's make the effort to learn the new Rules.

Along with the new provision to putt with an unattended flagstick in the hole, the most visible change among the 2019 Rules is the new method for dropping a ball. This procedure has seen several changes over the years – from dropping over the shoulder to dropping at shoulder height and now to dropping at knee height. In each case, there have been reasons for the change. The pre-1984 method of dropping over the shoulder emphasized the element of luck, but it had the shortcoming of making it difficult for a player to know whether the dropped ball struck his foot, in which case he was required to re-drop under the old Rules, as well as where the dropped ball landed. That was an important point in situations where a player was required to place the ball where it landed on the second drop.

The drop from shoulder height, used from 1984 through 2018, solved both issues, but the fact remained that a ball dropped from such a height could roll a considerable distance, resulting in many situations where a player would need to drop a ball twice and occasionally to place the ball after two drops, all of which added time to the round. There was also the philosophical concern that in some cases a player could play a dropped ball from what seemed like an inappropriate distance from the reference point.

For instance, a player taking relief from a lateral water hazard drops the ball at the edge of the two club-lengths relief area and the ball then rolls two club-lengths away from the hazard. That allowed the player to play the ball almost four club-lengths to the side of where his ball entered the hazard, which seemed excessive to many.

The new requirement to drop a ball from knee height successfully addresses the above issues while saving time, simplifying the relief process and having the player play the ball from closer to the reference point in question, so there are both practical and philosophical benefits from this change. How does the new Rule accomplish all of this?

First, to make sure that luck (good and bad) remains a part of the dropping process, the player will still drop the ball in many relief situations.

Second, a ball dropped from a significantly lower height than the previous shoulder height will, in many cases, not roll as far after striking the ground. This important point results in fewer instances when a player is required to re-drop a ball, saving both time and confusion.

Third, the fact that a ball dropped from knee height will usually not roll a significant distance, coupled with the new requirement to drop in a "relief area," makes it much easier to determine when a re-drop is required. Under the old Rules, there were nine situations when a dropped ball was required to be re-dropped, such as rolling into a hazard or more than two club-lengths. Under the new Rules, there is only one: when it rolls outside the relief area.

The relief area for dropping a ball consists of a reference point – the nearest point of complete relief from an immovable obstruction or the point where the ball last crossed the edge of a hazard, (which has been renamed a penalty area) – plus one or two club-lengths, depending on the Rule being used.

Again depending on the specific Rule being used, there will be some limitations on the locations of the relief area, including whether it may be in any area of the course or it must be in a particular area of the course; that it is not nearer the hole than the reference point.

Some players have complained that dropping a ball from knee height is physically awkward. Some have found that they just need to experiment with a few different methods of dropping a ball before settling on one. Two common practices are to drop from the side, by simply lowering the arm to knee height, and by bending from the waist and dropping in front, thereby allowing a nice view of the relief area.

One player went so far as to measure how high off the ground his knee cap is (20 to 24 inches, he learned). This knowledge helps him focus on the height from which the ball must be dropped rather than on the method. The bottom line: Find out what works for you; this is one part of golf that can be practiced before the courses even open!

*John Morrisett is the director of competitions at Erin Hills in Erin, Wis., and an expert on the Rules of Golf.*

The most visible  
change among the  
2019 Rules is the  
new method for  
dropping a ball.

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