

# GOLFChicago

Chicago's Premier Multimedia Golf Source & Authority

Summer 2020, Vol. 24 No. 2

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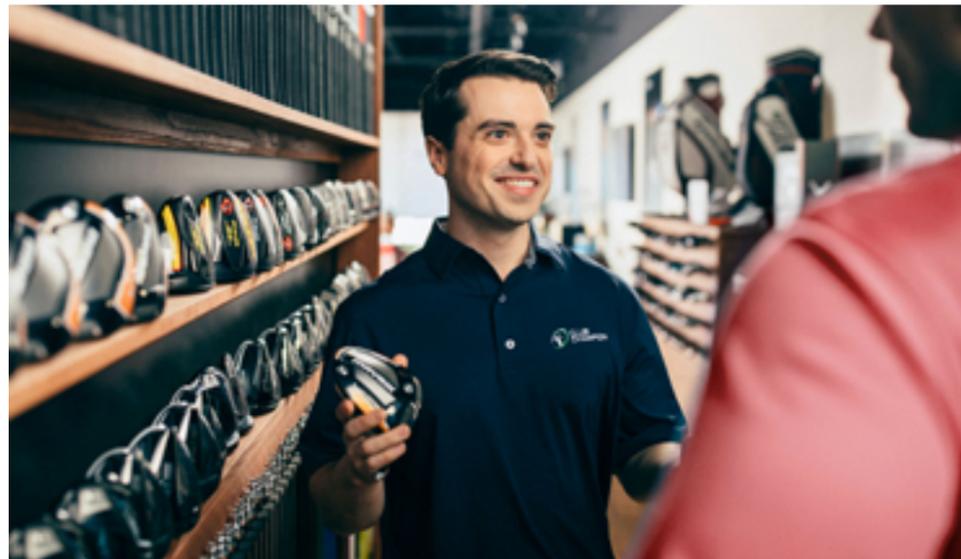
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OPENING SHOT

DAVE AND TIM

Once More, with (Distant) Feeling

As we were saying, here we go again!

Only centenarians had lived through a pandemic before. The rest of us had little clue what we were in for in spending day after day in quiet neighborhoods looking at quieter streets and dreaming of such mundane delights as getting a haircut or shopping without a mask.

Or playing golf. Remember golf?

It's back. Foursomes included, though it's still nix on high fives after a birdie or pulling flagsticks. GOLFChicago is also back, with a passel of



"I'm your best friend, so I'll be honest-- do yourself a favor and take up ping-pong."

features that we had at the ready in the spring, but with nobody at courses, no easy way to distribute.

We start with an interview with Neil Funk, whose 29 years as the Bulls' play-by-play man, first on radio and more recently television, included five of the six championship years, and the endless rebuilding

era that goes on even as Neil retires, and gets to spend more time than ever on the links. You'll find Neil is very much one of us.

Want to get away? Who doesn't after these months of isolation. One of the great spots to go is Streamsong, the multi-course facility in central Florida built on the remains of an old phosphate mine. We have a review of both the golf and the cuisine available there.

Need new clubs? The cover story on Club Champion, whose fitting centers have multiplied like rabbits in recent years, takes you through the process.

Instruction by Matthew Nations and yoga tips by Anne Badamo-Connors will take the squeak out.

There are also a few thoughts on how most of us get the great majority of our tournament golf – television, and how CBS bogeyed the start of the season.

Finally, our Neal Kotlarek takes you on an introspective journey of golf in a pandemic – one you might well have made yourself.

Welcome back.

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# THE GOOD STUFF

Compiled by Todd Mrowice



## Play Golf like an NHL All-Star

Hockey stick technology makes its way to golf with the GELSTX shaft powered by Fujikura. This weighted shaft is the only swing trainer that works with your existing driver. At 2.5 times heavier than a standard shaft, simply pop your driver head on, swing away, and then pop it back onto your shaft. All main manufacturer adapters available. Encourages consistent tempo and produces increased club head/ball speed. \$149.99 and up [gelstx.com](http://gelstx.com)

## Wilson's D7 Line Expands

Chicago's own, Wilson, comes out strong in 2020 with the D7 Forged irons. Complementing the immensely popular D7 irons, the forged version is for the slightly better player. Tour-level distance and feel paired with Power Hole and Power Chamber technologies make these sticks long and forgiving. Ideal for those that want a thinner top line without going to blades. Standard shafts are KBS Taper Lite (steel) and True Temper Catalyst 80 (graphite). \$899.99 (4-PW steel) [wilson.com](http://wilson.com)



## A Walker's Bag Unlike Any Other

Sun Mountain has a knack for producing some of the best golf bags on the market. The 2.5+ 14-Way carry bag is not only spacious, it has features on top of features. Weighing just under four pounds, this bag gets its namesake from the 14 full-length individual club dividers. The X-Strap System is ideal for walkers, as is the beverage pouch and full-length apparel pocket. Available in six colors! \$239.99 [sunmountain.com](http://sunmountain.com)



## Comfy Walking from Skechers

Like golfing on the clouds, Skechers just knows how to make golf shoes comfy and light. The new GO GOLF Elite V.4 has a waterproof leather upper with all new Grip Flex spikeless technology, so you never sacrifice traction. The low drop design keeps your foot stable and low to the ground, and the Goga Mat cushioned insole keeps your dogs from barking all the way to the 19th hole and beyond. Available in gray/lime, black/white, and white/navy. \$105 [skechers.com](http://skechers.com)



## Mizuno

Mizuno has always been known for producing unreal feeling irons. More recently, drivers and fairway metals. Now, Mizuno drops on the equipment world some amazing putters. The M Craft Type I is a square back/mid slant for exaggerated putting arcs. Forged from premium 1025 mild carbon steel and then CNC milled to perfection. Also available in Type II (classic plumber's neck design) and Type III (mid-mallet) models. All available in blue ion, black ion, and white satin finishes. \$300 [mizunousa.com](http://mizunousa.com)



## A Rangefinder for Everyone

Precision Pro is known for rangefinders that are as good as the competition, but much more wallet friendly. The NX9 Slope is new for 2020 and has adaptive slope technology in addition to pulse technology and a 400-yard range. Water-resistant, shock-proof design, at a shock-proof price. \$269.99 [precisionprogolf.com](http://precisionprogolf.com)

## Another way to get an Edge

TourEdge touts the Exotics EXS 220 fairway club, lighter than its previous iteration, as the best for the price on the market. "Talk about a 'wow' factor!" said TourEdge founder David Glod. "Just a couple swings with the EXS 220 will prove why we are an industry leader in fairway metals." The weight change allows for easier launch off the fairway, combined with lower spin. It's available in five lofts, from 13.5 degrees to 21 degrees, the head size decreasing as the loft increases. All the usual shaft flexes are available. \$249.99 [www.touregde.com](http://www.touregde.com)



# THE GOOD STUFF

Todd Mrowice



## Be like Rickie

For the younger lads that resemble Rickie Fowler, or the older gents that just want to be Rickie Fowler, at least you can dress like him! PUMA has a new line of CLOUDSPUN clothing that feels better than anything you currently own. This Taylor Golf Polo is designed for fashion-conscience players, featuring a

colorblock pattern. The ultra-soft feel keeps you comfy and dry well beyond your round. Available in six colorways. \$70 [cobrapumagolf.com](http://cobrapumagolf.com)

## A Push Cart That's Not Pushy

Say "goodbye" to heavy push carts that never seem to cooperate when opening and closing. The Nitron from Bag Boy is the fastest opening push cart out there. With Nitro-Piston Technology, this cart opens in one easy step. When folded down its compact design fits into any trunk for easy transport. Top-Lok Technology keeps your bag securely fastened on the course, while utilizing the convenient scorecard console, extra-large accessory bag, and handle mounted brake.

\$259.95 [bagboy.com](http://bagboy.com)



## Chew This Over

Just when you think you've seen it all in decorative head covers – the Tiger head, the Pink Panther, every sport team logo in captivity – along comes Daphne's Headcovers of Phoenix with a driver cover that resembles a taco, complete with guacamole oozing from the sides. It's no small-size taco, either. This novelty fits a 460cc driver, keeping it safe from scratches, but not from dogs with no sense of smell. And there's room for your name if you so desire.

\$33.99 (\$7.99 extra for embroidery) [daphnesheadcovers.com](http://daphnesheadcovers.com)



## Clean your Grooves Properly

We've all experienced a ball washer that is out of H<sub>2</sub>O. Very frustrating. So stop spitting on your towel and grab yourself a Grooveit. The wet club cleaner was a hit at the PGA Merchandise Show and deserves a place in your bag. Patented pump action sprays water or your choice of cleaning solution onto the face. Detachable magnets keep the brush securely fastened, and an ergonomic-designed pistol grip is strong and durable.

\$19.99 [grooveitbrush.com](http://grooveitbrush.com)



## A Wallet for the Techie Age

The hunt for the perfect wallet ends here. The Ridge is not only sleek, it's practical and protective. This wallet holds up to 12 cards and blocks RFID (wireless theft) to boot. A money clip option is available to those that like a more traditional look, while a cash strap is also available and is slightly slimmer. Available in aluminum, titanium, and carbon fiber with a variety of finishes in each model.

\$75 - \$125 [ridgewallet.com](http://ridgewallet.com)



## Your New Top Gun

MAVRIK drivers from Callaway are making their mark. The new Cyclone Aero headshape produces faster ball speeds across a larger face that offers FS2S titanium. This lighter face accounts for a tighter dispersion and max forgiveness on off-center hits. Its game-changing Jailbreak internal technology and a new lighter carbon crown will land your drives in places that leave you shaking your head. We can attest to that, and have even left mouths agape.

\$499.99 [callawaygolf.com](http://callawaygolf.com)

## A Proper Cold Shoulder

Get back out there this summer with confidence. No need to fear harmful sun rays with SParms Shoulder Wrap Sleeves.

They offer UPF 50+ sun protection and are made of Italian Micro Meryl fibers and Spandex. Comfortable, cool, and stylish. No more pinching on your arms or sagging at the wrist. So comfortable you'll forget you're wearing them.

\$34.99 - \$39.99

[sparmsamerica.com](http://sparmsamerica.com)





## Ready? Golf!

Recently I took some time to think about why we all feel “golf is too slow,” and then pondered, is it too hard? Does it require too many practice swings? Do you feel like there are too many holes?

All right, so the point is that there are a lot of reasons golf can take so long, and although we can help with most, we can't help with all of them.

However, that hasn't stopped our friends at the USGA from trying.

The USGA implemented new rules (options) last year regarding the removal of the flagstick from the cup in an effort to help improve playability and ease pacing concerns. Now, COVID-19 has taken away the option and mandated all flag sticks must remain in the cup.

COVID-19 has also created even more guidelines to improve pacing – er, safety:

**Social Distancing.** You may have heard of it.

In a sport that was designed to allow players to escape into a serene landscape and forget about their daily grind, it has evolved dramatically into a mixed bag of hover boards, Bluetooth speakers, and beverage cart service. Individually, there's nothing wrong with these things. They are welcome additions to the culture and effective at attracting new generations of

players. However, they do contribute to the over-socializing aspect of golf that can sometimes distract players from their ultimate intent while on the golf course: to golf.

As we venture into the months ahead, we need to evolve the social distancing guideline into thinking about how we can distance ourselves from social distraction.

**Slow play.** A result of players not being ready to hit their shot when they need to.

Slow play does not guarantee high scores but high scores almost always come from slow play. We're all familiar with what Ready Golf means and one of the most common pace-related questions busy clubs get are in regards to pace of play. So why couldn't Ready Golf be a rule that could be enforced on courses?

There will always be circumstances that call for the player that's farthest away to go next, which is often the right thing to do, but not always. There is a time and place for everything (and there is plenty of time to socialize while playing golf) but when players don't always follow reasonable pace of play standards in our game, they often lead to an afternoon of that iconic hands-on-hip pose for the 4, 8, 20, 50, 100- plus players behind them. This is without

question the easiest way to solve some of golf's biggest issues: Just be ready to hit when you get to your next shot.

Compare it to any other sport. Imagine standing on a field during a game and talking on your phone while the game is playing around you. Playing golf is so much more than just a golf swing. It's quite literally every moment before and after the golf swing too. Every time you take more than a minute to stop and answer a text, you disrupt the momentum of your own play.

Golf isn't a game you master. It's a game you have to continuously work at. Your time on a golf course is a series of routines that, if executed properly, produce frequent applications of extreme focus in order to execute a brief one or two second motion. Those routines have very little to do with the actual swing. Spend more time focusing on the moments leading up to and after the swing, and your enjoyment and success on the course will be limitless.

So, let's be Ready! And Golf! Because when you love the game, you should spend more time playing it!

A helpful golf instruction from your PGA Professional, without a swing tip. ⚪

*Matthew Nations is a PGA Head Professional at Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton.*



### 2019 NATIONAL GOLF COURSE OF THE YEAR

The Heather

### BEST GOLF RESORTS IN AMERICA

BOYNE Golf

— Forbes.com —

### 100 GREATEST PUBLIC COURSES

The Heather #92, Links/Quarry #80

— Golf Digest —

### EDITOR'S CHOICE BEST GOLF RESORTS IN AMERICA

Bay Harbor Golf Club & Inn at Bay Harbor

— Golf Digest —

### TOP 100 RESORTS

Buddies Trip  
BOYNE Golf  
Luxury

Bay Harbor Golf Club & Inn at Bay Harbor

— GOLF Magazine & GOLF.com —

# The New 19th Hole: Post-round Stretching!

Most golfers know the importance of a dynamic warm-up. A pre-round stretch increases core temperature, warms up the joints, and increases flexibility.

Between muscles and bones there are critical connections that make our golf swings possible, and they need all the care we can give them.

The golf swing is a very athletic movement that starts from a static position and creates an explosive move in under two seconds!

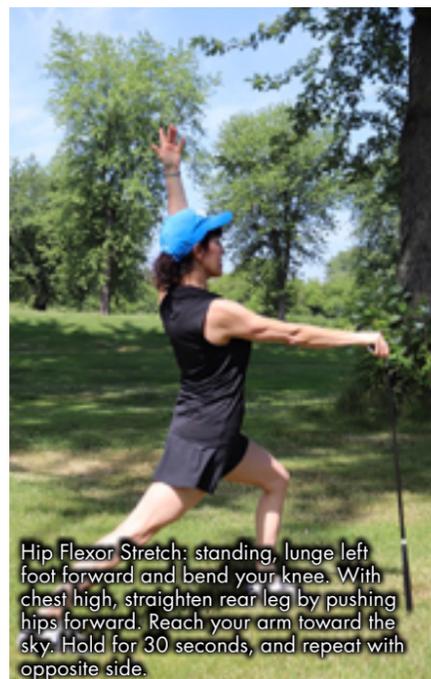
Throughout a regular round, golfers make extensive use of their muscles and joints. To prevent muscle soreness and help you recover for your next round of golf, you must stretch your body after you play. A post-round stretch is a time for your mind and body to relax and return to a calm resting state.

The most common complaint of a golfer at the end of their game is often low-back stiffness. Several muscle groups can contribute and be the culprit, including glutes, hip flexors, hamstrings, and quadriceps.

The best time to stretch after a round of golf is immediately after you get off the course. Your muscles are still warm from

the round, so they will be more supple and agreeable to a stretching routine.

The following stretches will help ensure joint functionality and mobility, meaning you will feel better and look forward to your next round of golf.



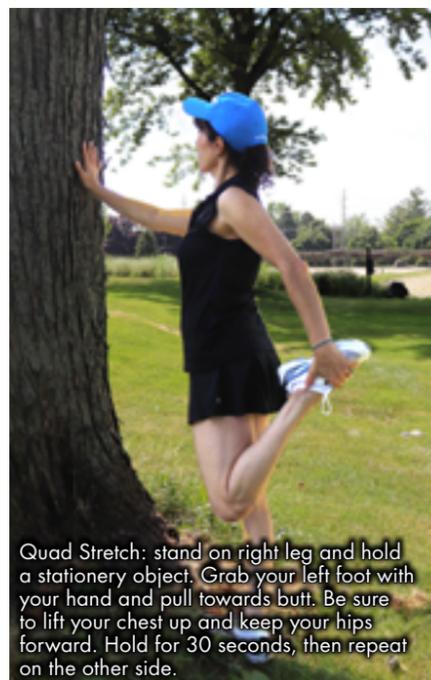
**Hip Flexor Stretch:** standing, lunge left foot forward and bend your knee. With chest high, straighten rear leg by pushing hips forward. Reach your arm toward the sky. Hold for 30 seconds, and repeat with opposite side.



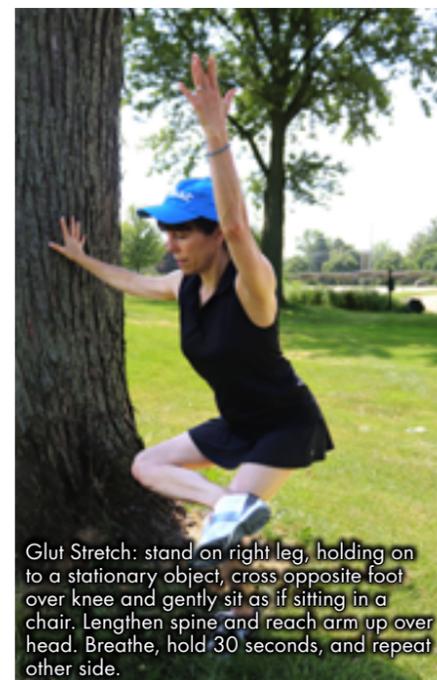
For a deeper stretch, try this floor version: kneel down into a lunge position with your hips and knees bent at 90 degrees. Contract your glutes so your pelvis is tilted beneath you slightly. Push your hips forward, but do not lean backwards into your spine. You should feel a stretch in the front of the hip and down the quad. Hold 60 seconds, and repeat other side.



**Standing Back Stretch:** stand with feet apart, a little wider than golf posture at address. Place both hands just above your knees. Turn just your torso to the right and look at your right foot as you press your knees back and press your left shoulder forward. Hold 20 seconds and repeat on the other side. Do several reps.



**Quad Stretch:** stand on right leg and hold a stationary object. Grab your left foot with your hand and pull towards butt. Be sure to lift your chest up and keep your hips forward. Hold for 30 seconds, then repeat on the other side.



**Glut Stretch:** stand on right leg, holding on to a stationary object, cross opposite foot over knee and gently sit as if sitting in a chair. Lengthen spine and reach arm up over head. Breathe, hold 30 seconds, and repeat other side.

When performing them, make sure you hold your core muscles in and do not forget to breathe. Hold all stretches for 30 seconds. You can repeat two or three times. Be kind to your body and make sure you stretch before you cool down! 🌟



## Best of Luck.

Solving our complex greens is a true challenge, but our top-tier caddies are here to make sure you can. No U.S. Open Championship course is easy, and that is what makes playing one so much fun. After challenging yourself, keep the fun going on our illuminated 63,000 square foot Drumlin putting course. Discover why Golf Magazine ranked us a 2020 Top 25 Buddies' Trip, and why Golf Digest ranked us as the 9th Greatest Public Course in the country. Start your journey at [ErinHills.com](http://ErinHills.com) or book your round with a reservationist at 855-206-0323.



ERIN HILLS

# Sweet Home Chicago

## Masters of a Golf Domain

It's one thing to be a PGA Professional. There are about 36,000 scattered about the country.

To be a PGA Master Professional? That's rare air, and recently Vince Juarez of Deerpath Golf Course and T.J. Sullivan of Golftec's Oak Brook office made the grade, joining just over 400 others who have earned the distinction since 1969.

Juarez earned his masters in general management, while Sullivan scored his in teaching and coaching.

Fittingly, Juarez is the general manager at Deerpath, and thus puts his knowledge into practice every day, one reason why the Lake Forest municipal course enjoys a vaunted reputation. He also shares his knowledge with his fellow pros.

"I would like to continue to mentor and inspire other PGA members who wish to further their career through advanced PGA certifications," Juarez said.

Sullivan is one of the area's go-to guys for learning the game, honored as such within Illinois by *Golf Digest* in 2018-19, and by Golftec for six years.

"To be in the same group as the other Master Professionals is a huge honor, as I've learned a tremendous amount about golf, the golf swing, and myself through the process," Sullivan said.

## Back to Play – and Business

Time was – all the way back to last December – that you could write the following year's schedule in ink and not give most of it a second thought. Masters in April? Check. U.S. Open in June? Check. British Open in July? Check?

The PGA jumped into May last year, but otherwise, golf's calendar was as immutable as the four seasons.

Not this year. One pandemic scattered tournaments about the calendar like a bowling ball crashing into pins. The British Open was bounced out entirely, and locally, the CDGA Championship and Illinois Amateur befell the same fate. It also became apparent to John Deere Classic tournament director Clair Peterson there was no way TPC Deere Run could host the Deere, if only because there was no way the smallish clubhouse could take care of the players. He pulled the plug on 2020 and the attendant 50th anniversary celebrations, pushing everything back to 2021. It'll still be 50 years after the first playing, so cake will be in order.

Locally, the BMW Championship at Olympia Fields was moved back a week, to Aug. 27-30, sliding in the week after the Indianapolis 500 and the week before the Kentucky Derby. (We told you this was crazy.)

We'll have a PGA in August, a U.S. Open in September and the Masters in mid-November, just in time for the colors to change at Augusta National – assuming that sort of thing is allowed within the haughty confines. And the U.S. Women's Open will land on our television screens like an early Christmas present, finishing on Dec. 13.

If someone wins all three, that would be the Triple Crown, there being no Grand Slam possible this year. Fie on anyone who dares to complain.

As for being allowed to play in Illinois, we were until March 21, were again from March 24 to 26, and then not until May 1, first walking and no more than a twosome, and finally foursomes with individual carts on May 29, followed by outdoor dining and two to a cart on June 28. It's a start.

Maybe someday we'll be trusted to use the on-course restroom.

## A Century of Golf in Highland Park

It was 1919 that Highland Park bought 120 acres of farmland on the edge of town for a municipal golf course. By 1922, player-architect Stewart Gardner's first nine holes of what today is known as Sunset Valley Golf Club were ready to open.

Naturally, the centennial of the course, which expanded to 18 holes in the 1920s, is being celebrated this year.

There's much to celebrate, whatever the year, thanks to the \$7 million rebuild conducted by Rick Jacobson in 2017-18. The reopened course was properly hailed as a layout that was both fun and challenging, and environmentally sensitive as well. The operation was in the black in 2019, confirming the decision of the town's park district to shutter Highland Park Golf Course and keep Sunset Valley, at the prodding of Illinois Golf Hall of Famer Joel Hirsch, rather than close Sunset Valley and keep Highland Park open.



Don't let the "golf club" portion of the name fool you. Sunset Valley is open to all, and welcoming. There's a loyalty program with benefits for regular players, and the park district is thinking a generation ahead, planning, once the pandemic is over, a Youth Golf Development and Short Game Center. Hirsch, one of Illinois' greatest amateurs, is behind that as well, saying the center will provide "an opportunity to learn and love the game and enjoy the lifelong benefits only golf can provide right here at our hometown golf course."

For more information, see [www.sunsetvalleygolfclub.org](http://www.sunsetvalleygolfclub.org).

## College Seasons Go Unfulfilled

It's been a bizarre season for everyone, but perhaps most bizarre for college players. The spring season stopped almost before it started.

Take Chicago State, for instance. The often-overlooked Division I school in the city took fourth place at Alabama State's tournament, and was set to play tournaments at Prairie View and Butler in March, and never got there. First-year men's coach Mark Haines – the Lincoln Oaks owner who coached Governors State for four years – had to tell his players the season was over. So did women's coach Angela Rayhill.

Marty Schiene had to do the same at DePaul. Schiene's squad, who took second in the Big East last year, never got a chance to improve on that finish.

Likewise, perennial Big Ten champion Illinois will have to wait a year to grab a sixth straight conference title and 11th in 12 years. Mike Small's team scattered when classes went online and seasons for every team, from golf to baseball, were canceled. Their streak is intact, but on hold until 2021 – we hope.

# GOLF'S HIDDEN GEM RIGHT OFF OF INTERSTATE 55

The Bluffs is unlike any other course in the area. Designed by noted architect Dick Nugent, The Bluffs provides a challenging and enjoyable space for golfers to reconnect with nature and their golf game!

- 18 hole
- Par 72
- 5 Tee Yardages
- Certified Audubon Sanctuary
- 3 lakes, wetlands, and mature trees



(815) 467-7888

[HeritageBluffs.com](http://HeritageBluffs.com)

## Two Irreplaceables Leave Us

Jim McWethy and Peter Longo had different orbits in the world of golf, but they shared something that made them stand out: a passion for the game.

For McWethy, first class was the only way to go.

That's why, when he took sole control of Mistwood Golf Club in 2003, the first thing on his mind was replacing the clubhouse, a crazy-quilt structure that looked like it was condemned while under construction.

It would have to go.

But for McWethy, improving the golf experience came first. He brought back course designer Ray Hearn for a major renovation, built a top-rank teaching building to house his staff, and only then knocked down the old clubhouse and built a sumptuous new one.



The cost, start to finish? At least \$16 million.

The benefit? Mistwood became a destination for playing golf, for learning how to play better, and for dining.

Jim McWethy put Mistwood on the map.

His death on June 22 at 76 is not only crushing for his family, it creates a void in Chicago's golf landscape. McWethy was one of the few to see the future of the game, and then shell out real money to create that future.

A friend to many in the game, golf was only a sideline for him. He expanded a family business, then sold it and expanded into things as diverse as software and a blueberry farm. A car buff, he had a collection of classics that few knew about. A golf buff, he belonged to Chicago Golf Club, but spent more time at Mistwood, where his attention to detail was evident.

He leaves wife Susan, grown children Todd and Gretchen, and more friends than can be counted.

The story of Peter Longo, who died on May 28, goes around the world.

The teacher and trick-shot artist taught many and gave countless others a laugh along with a lesson during a show.

The PGA Life member taught at White Pines in Bensenville, but that was just the start. He created a teaching program for disabled veterans, then added a teaching video as well. He was a long-time staple of Sergio Garcia's clinics in Spain.

He was also a television staple, appearing for over 20 years on WGN-TV's sportscasts with golf nut Dan Roan, giving advice while using an unending array of equipment that couldn't be found on any store's shelf. He added mirth to a game too often too serious. The story of Peter Longo, who died May 28 at 75, goes around the world.



# Schaumburg Puts on a New Face

Schaumburg Golf Club is nearing completion of a project that broke ground in 2017 and has kept the attention of Chicago-area golfers ever since. The course enhancement plan, when all is said and done, will encompass all 27 holes in addition to the practice facilities and Academy teaching center. At \$7 million, it is also the first time real structural change has been made to the course since the Schaumburg Park District purchased it 30 years ago.

After completion of the Players and Baer nine-hole courses the past two seasons, 2020 is the year for the Tournament course. Slated to be ready at the end of July or early August, the Tournament course was the most requested side to be played, said Jonathan Parsons, Schaumburg's general manager of golf operations. "Consistency between all 27 holes was something we really wanted to accomplish when we started this project, and from my eyes I think we've accomplished that and I think people will notice it," Parsons said. "We tried to be really smart in our plan of attack and now the course will challenge better players, but still be fair for higher handicaps. Plus, now when we have qualifier tournaments we can really make it a test."

If you've been out to play the revamped Players or Baer courses, you'll know the significant changes that were made by renovation architect Todd Quitno to approach areas around the greens, as well as the bright white bunkers. Those are "Billy Bunkers," which means they actually have a geo-textile liner at the bottom which keeps the bunkers from flooding, and allows them to play consistently. This will also continue to the Tournament course.

With any golf course work being done these days, length is *the* hot topic. With equipment and golf balls producing unbelievable numbers, many courses find adding length is the answer to combating the lack of challenge. "Length was, of course, part of the conversation, but we chose to get much more creative with our bunker play, especially on tee shots," said Parsons. "The different angles players are going to see going into greens, plus the areas and hazards around greens will be

where the true challenges are." Parsons is confident that all of the enhancements will significantly improve the William Langford and Theodore Moreau-designed course.

Prior to the project, Schaumburg Golf Club was already one of the highest rated public courses in the area. The improvements that were made should keep this

course on everyone's "must play" list for many years ahead.

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# The GOLFCChicago Interview

**I**n a time of crisis, you never know where a small source of inspiration or happiness will come from. For Neil Funk, who found himself, like most Illinoisans back in late March, sheltering at home – it was holding his trusted MLA putter that brought a smile to his face, pondering whether his 44-year career as an NBA broadcaster was over.

April 11 was supposed to be when the Bulls announcer of 29 years was to be honored after announcing his retirement at the start of the season. Whether it was “Jordan at the buzzer,” “Paxson for three,” or his signature “kaboom,” Neil Funk was there to witness every moment since the fall of 1991.

Instead, he would spend the evening at home with his wife of 50 years, Renee, hunkered down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



“Once I saw the virus had reached the U.S., I thought we were probably going to end up playing a handful of games without fans,” Funk recalled. “But once Rudy Gobert (of the Utah Jazz) tested positive we knew that there was no way we could continue and that the season would be in jeopardy.”

And in the blink of an eye came an end to a storied career of announcing games in the NBA that began back in 1976.

“I was hopeful the season would continue because it’s my last year, but once it was suspended you had the feeling that this crisis was going to be much worse than anybody first thought here in the U.S. and that’s exactly what happened,” he said.

A native of Indianapolis, Funk’s dad got him started

with golf around the age of 10. A basketball, baseball, and football player in high school, it was at age 13 when Neil really got into golf.

The game would take a backseat to basketball, though, during his playing days at Syracuse University – a season’s worth – in the late 1960s. “It was a completely different culture back then. We had a lot on our minds at the time but having fun was always No. 1,” he laughed.

After landing a job at WITY, a small radio station in downstate Danville that broadcast roughly 250 sporting events a year, Funk honed his craft by handling play-by-play duties for University of Illinois basketball and football, along with local minor league baseball and high school games.



Photo: Bill Smith / Chicago Bulls

His first big break came in 1976 when he landed a job in Philadelphia working for a 76ers team that was led by Julius Erving, and advanced to that year's NBA Finals where they would lose to the Portland Trailblazers.

Following a brief stint with the Kansas City Kings which included a visit to the Eastern Conference Finals, Funk found himself back in Philadelphia in 1982 and was along for the ride as the 76ers beat the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA Finals. While in Philly, Funk worked alongside Chuck Daly, Doug Collins, and Steve Mix.

Funk found himself working for the Bulls in 1991 after longtime friend Jim Durham announced that he was leaving his position as broadcaster for the team.

And the rest is history, with Funk calling the last five of the six NBA titles in the Bulls' big run.

During the short offseason, Neil and Renee reside in South Carolina, where Neil has been a member of historic Palmetto Golf Club since 1993. The course is a favorite of corporate chieftains and USGA, PGA,

and R&A officials traveling down during Masters week.

Designed by the great Alister MacKenzie, Palmetto is one of the oldest clubs in America. Founded in 1892, it's located about 20 miles northeast of Augusta in Aiken, and opens one week a year to non-members.

"It's pure golf, no tennis, no pool," Funk explained. "It's the kind of course you can play 200 days in a row and never get tired of. Like Augusta National, it's fairly wide open with a lot of rough. Palmetto's secret to longevity is the unbelievable green complexes. You can play a hole 100 times and depending where you are on your approach, it can look different every time you play."

A current 9-handicap, Funk, 73, seems relegated to the fact that he'll probably never see his handicap reach the lowest it's ever been [4]. "As I've gotten older, I've learned [my handicap] is not going down anymore. When I hit 70 that was pretty much it. Two years ago, I started playing from the senior tees because I realized if I want to keep having fun I would need to move up to the right

tees. And it's been a Godsend."

"Golf is supposed to be fun, but it's not a lot of fun when you are playing a medium length par 4 and hitting driver – fairway wood trying to get home. That's the biggest difference. I finally got the message that if you want to have fun you've got to move up and play the right tees, no matter who you are."

What's in his bag these days? Well, that's always a loaded question. "I'm a diehard club junkie," he laughed. "I change wedges like people brush their teeth. Wedges, putters, drivers, I always try to get the latest and greatest. I mean, I'll find stuff on Japanese websites that they don't even sell here in the U.S."

And while his bag is a revolving door of weapons, his go-to putter is the Swiss-made MLA. "I'm holding it right now which makes me feel good," he said. "I've had it for about seven years, and while I usually go through five or six putters during any given season, I always seem to go back to the MLA."

Having center stage to arguably the greatest NBA player in history, Funk has played golf in front and in back of, but surprisingly never with, Michael

Jordan. He also knows that it was only extenuating circumstances that brought Jordan back to the court for three more championships.

"You're always going to wonder if they haven't had the MLB lockout, would Michael have stayed with baseball?" he said. "He had a good chance after that particular year of the lockout, but we'll never know. As competitive as he was, you think Michael would have found a way to succeed with the White Sox."

And as far as that signature line that has made Funk's voice a familiar one to Chicago Bulls fans young and old, he revealed: "It came from a guy in a bar in Syracuse who would parody play by play calls. He would pretend there were 10 seconds left in a game and it would always end with "kaboom." Years later I was doing a game for the University of Illinois and Nick Weatherspoon hit a shot and it just came out."

A scholar of the game of basketball, you get the feeling that although his broadcasting career has come to an abrupt end, Neil Funk will have no problem adjusting to life after the NBA, especially when he's back in South Carolina. Let's just hope that his first birdie post retirement is followed by a hearty "Kaboom!"

### Neil Funk Stat Sheet

#### What's In The Bag

Driver: Titleist TS1  
Fairway wood: Tour Edge Exotics EX9  
Hybrid: Ping 25-degree  
Irons: Miura Genesis Irons (6-pw)  
Wedges: Vokey (58), Cobra King MIM (54), Cleveland CBX (50)  
Putter: MLA

#### Dream Foursome

Arnold Palmer, Michael Jordan, Ben Hogan

#### Favorite Chicago Courses

River Forest C.C., Shoreacres, Chicago Golf Club

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# Streamsong Sings a Siren's Song

By Neal Kotlarek

Blue No. 7 / Photo: Streamsong Resort/Nile Young

Stand atop the elevated first tee of the Blue Course at central Florida's Streamsong Resort and stare out at the horizon. Look to your left, then over to your right. Next, gaze straight down the middle. Sand dunes stretch across the landscape in between emerald green fairways, rugged sand fields, and patches of wild grass. You can't help but wonder aloud, in unison with the rest of your foursome, "Where the heck is the ocean?"

While geologists trace the origins of Streamsong's sands to the last ice age, the fascinating topography of this vast resort near Bowling Green is in fact the result of a huge phosphate fertilizer mining operation executed throughout much of the last century. The extraction process requires the separation of the phosphate from soil and sand. Once the extraction was completed, over 15 million cubic yards of sand was returned to the land and then dispersed.

The project was completed sometime in the 1960s, and the land was essentially returned to nature. And as one decade led to another and yet another, dunes and all sorts of fascinating landscapes formed over a wide swath of the 16,000-acre property owned by The Mosaic Company. Richard Mack, executive vice-president of the enterprise, pitched a unique repurposing of the dormant estate to the corporate board. His vision was a golf resort that served up similar bucket-list experiences to those offered at renowned destinations like Whistling Straits, Pebble Beach, and Bandon Dunes. Considering its rural location about an hour's drive southeast of Tampa, the concept seemed as unlikely as it was intriguing.

Once the wheels for the project were put in motion, a wide array of golf architects were invited to visit the property. The logical choices for the first two courses were the duo of Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw, and Tom Doak. They boasted impressive resumes for transforming sand terrains into world-class golf courses. Coore/Crenshaw's portfolio includes Sand Hills Golf Club in Mullen, Neb., in 1995 and Oregon's Bandon Trails in 2005. Doak's projects are highlighted by Oregon's

Pacific Dunes in 2001, Lost Dunes Golf Club in Bridgman, Mich., in 1999, and Cape Kidnappers Golf Resort in 2004. Once awarded the contracts, the two design firms were given free rein to pick and choose the landscapes they would develop. Among the options were uplands-prairie areas, forested regions, and sand dunes. Not surprisingly, both chose the dunes lands. Coore/Crenshaw's course would become known as the Red and Doak's course would be the Blue.

While both the Red and the Blue courses were built over sand and have Bermuda grass fairways and greens, each has a distinctive look and feel. Streamsong Director of Golf Scott Wilson stated that this contrast is one of the resort's great strengths.

"The courses are built on land with unique characteristics. I think that's what makes Streamsong such a special place," Wilson said. Putting surfaces on the Red course are flatter, longer and gentler. Its bunkers, though large and dramatic, are not nearly as vast as those on the sister course. The bunkers on the Red course are also pulled back away from the greens, which allows for easier access to the flagsticks. As all of Streamsong's courses are walking-preferred (carts are available for late morning and afternoon rounds), and caddies are highly recommended. Most have lots of experience navigating the tricky greens and offer insights and stories about the property's intriguing history.

The first hole on the Red course provides players an excellent indication of the many challenges they will confront during their entire stay at the resort. Rolling hills, sweeping sand dunes, a vast waste area, and crossing fairway bunkers all reside in front of the tee. As if on cue, our foursome's walk to the first fairway was interrupted by an alligator lumbering toward a pond on the left side of the hole. My colleagues tried to convince me it was an animatronic reptile who sings "Don't Worry, Be Happy" when you pressed his snout. But I wasn't buying that story. Not at all.

The highlight of the front nine is the amazing 147-yard No. 8. The green measures over 62 yards deep but is less than 10 yards wide when playing from one of the tees that offer a left to right angle to the flagstick. So miss short or long and you're pretty much assured that you're putting for birdie. Miss right or left and you'll probably be hitting out of a deep bunker. After completing the hole, tee off on the short No. 9 and then head to The Shack just to the right of the tee. An authentic barbecue pit serves up slow-smoked pulled pork sandwiches and other delicacies. Food, as it turns out, is an important theme of the entire Streamsong experience with a unique and tasty cuisine offered at halfway houses on each course.

The 16th on the Red course is often cited as the layout's signature hole due to both its rugged good looks and its Biarritz-style green which features a natural swale. Hit short on this 184-yarder and find yourself in the towering bunker that stares down the golfer from the tee. Hit left of the green and a depression will funnel your ball away from the flagstick.

Even though its first tee is on the same grounds as its sister layout, the Doak-designed Blue course is markedly differ-

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The Taco Stand



The Tin Can



Red No. 6 / Photo: Larry Lambrecht



Black No. 5 / Photo: Larry Lambrecht



Black No. 5 / Photo: Larry Lambrecht



Blue No. 12 / Photo: Larry Lambrecht



# Not Your Father's Club Fitting

By Cassandra Bausch

If you were to define a “golf club fitting,” your definition would likely vary from that of your playing partner, your father or even the local pro you use for lessons. You may have been fitted at your club a decade ago for your current set, while your playing partner might swear by their futuristic swing analysis session and new sticks purchased every three years. In an industry with simultaneously so many innovations and so many traditions, it can be hard to know when modernization is truly the best option for your game.

Take golf equipment, for example. Each year, manufacturers release a new model touting faster ball speeds, longer carries, and more accurate shots. From a marketing perspective, this makes complete sense – brands want the consumer to believe their best golf can only be played with that model ... even if they have the most recent predecessor in their bag. But from a practical standpoint, is there evidence to support the claim that new equals better?

“In short, the answer is yes,” said Nick Sherburne, master fitter and founder of Club Champion, the nation’s No. 1 custom club fitter. “We’re in a unique position since we see every model from every brand. Independent club tests back the claims and so do our informal findings.”



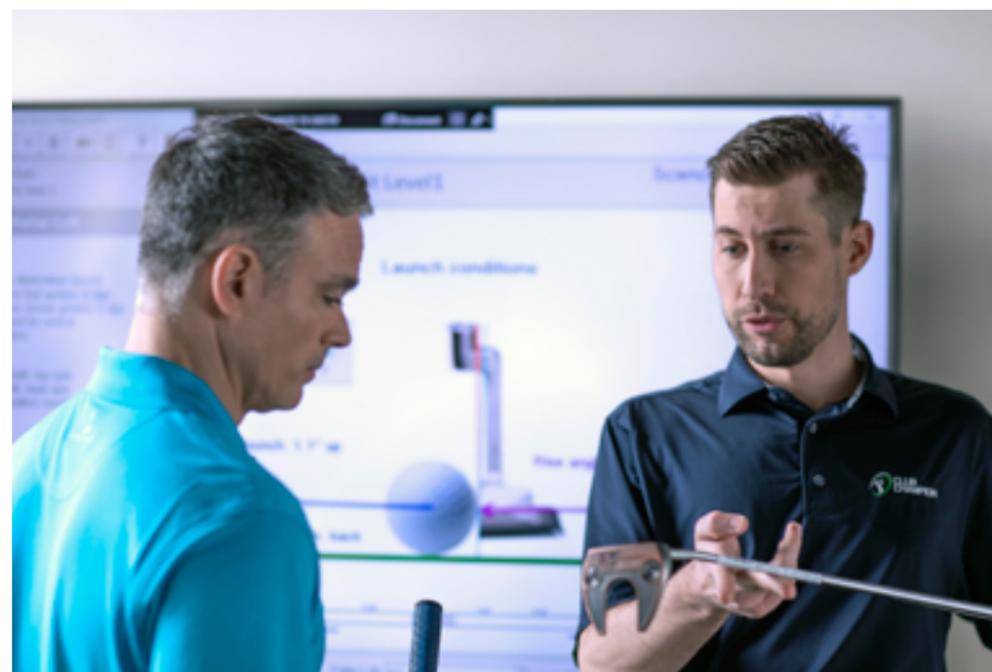
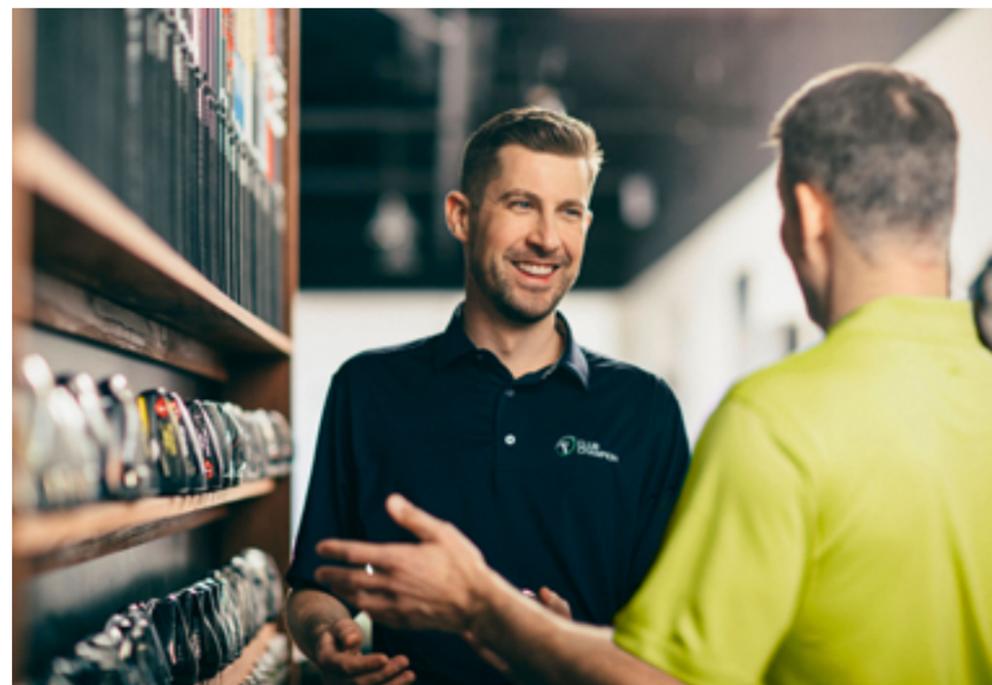
So how does that apply to club fitting? The principle is the same: If your father’s version of a fitting found equipment that yielded better results, does that mean the Star Trek-level technology is just hype? Or does an innovative, modern version of Dad’s fitting really give you a competitive advantage?

Sherburne’s brand is in the data-driven camp. Club Champion uses technology every step of the way, from TrackMan swing analysis during the club fitting, Science and Motion PuttLab to optimize the putter, to PUREing machines that orient each shaft optimally into each clubhead during the build process. The mentality is show-not-tell: Let the golfer see the improvement in real-time because the data doesn’t lie.

“Think about it like this – you wouldn’t invest in a nice suit without trying it on and having it tailored,” says Sherburne. “You want to know how it fits, is the material comfortable, is it high-quality. Then you want an expert to take all the measurements and make the suit look and feel perfect for you. Your investment in your golf game is no different.”

The standard fitting practice of years past equates to trying on the suit jacket, but gets nowhere near a tailored experience. Previously, a club fitter might apply tape to your clubhead and have you hit off a lie angle board. They’d eyeball your swing and suggest a change in the stiffness of your shaft, or maybe a different grip. They may have had a swing-speed meter, but that was the extent of technology’s role. This abbreviated approach is how you end up with short sleeves on a suit and shorter drives on the course.

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# HARBOR SHORES IS MORE THAN A GOLF COURSE

By Neal Kotlarek



In ways small and large, southwest Michigan's Harbor Shores Resort is a miracle. Just as the gospel story celebrates how Lazarus was raised from the dead, the community of Benton Harbor worked with a local appliance manufacturer along with state and federal regulators to resurrect a desperate parcel of land to create a golf course, a real estate property and, most critically, a hopeful future.

Some 60 years ago, Benton Harbor was a thriving industrial city of 20,000 replete with a fighter plane components manufacturer, a steel mill, a car battery recycling plant, and an automotive brakes producer. Starting in the late 1960s, those businesses started to lose ground and jobs to international competition. Flash forward to the mid-1980s and the town had quickly transformed into a virtual ghost town. Along with virtually every factory closing, so too did the downtown shops and businesses, which had few people left to buy their goods and services. Tumbleweed could be found rolling across the city's streets after residents fled the run-down city, by then plagued by violent crime and the drug trade.

Throughout all of this tumult, local appliance manufacturer Whirlpool Corporation steadfastly held its position to maintain its national headquarters in the city. Indeed, even as Benton Harbor's struggles made national headlines, the company, whose brand names would eventually include Maytag and KitchenAid, outlined plans to revitalize its home city. In May, 2008, an elaborate financing deal anchored by Whirlpool along with a consortium of nonprofit development companies was closed. The deal involved state and federal funds to clean up a 530-acre site abutting Lake Michigan which would afterwards be transformed into a golf course

resort community complete with planned housing, a luxury hotel, and a marina. Its name would be Harbor Shores. And the aggressive construction plan called for the course to be opened in 2010 and readied for tournament play two years later. In total, over \$900 million was spent to transform the property and its surroundings into a stunning and versatile resort.

Today, a mere 20 years after the funding was approved, the property bears literally no resemblance to its former self. The massive clean-up effort included the demolition of three million square feet of dilapidated buildings. Portions of the Paw Paw River that border holes on the back nine were cleaned up, with 140,000 tons of waste material removed from its banks and bottom. Contaminated soil that topped the property was taken off the land and replaced.

The centerpiece of the property is a Jack Nicklaus Signature 18-hole championship course that the Golden Bear previously declared was one of his proudest achievements as an architect. There are plaques on each tee commemorating Nicklaus' 18 pro major titles.

A mere four years after funding was approved, the course hosted the 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 KitchenAid Senior PGA Championships. While the course had been scheduled to host this year's championship again, the event was cancelled due to the pandemic, but is scheduled to return in 2022 and in 2024.

The Harbor Shores golf course serves up a fascinating palette of environments. Holes 1 through 6 traverse over inland terrain. Then they give way to dunes terrain which feature breathtaking views of Lake Michigan. Holes 10 to 13 climb through woodlands, while the dramatic finishing holes encounter the Paw Paw River, Ox Creek and wetlands.

Harbor Shores general manager Joshua Doxtator called the job "an opportunity of a lifetime" after he took his position in February, 2019. "Harbor Shores is not just a golf course or a resort or a marina," he said in an on-course interview. "It is the foundation of a community which went through a very difficult time and is emerging as a place people want to visit and live in and even open a business at."

During the interview, Doxtator walked over to various spots around the course and referenced their prior history. "There was



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## CBS Lands in a Bunker

Televising golf is hard, and everyone knows why. Briefly, there's more than one ball in play at once, the ball is small, the play is conducted over hundreds of acres, and most of the time, those who play are walking or standing, not playing.

Frank Chirkinian, whose directing style for CBS won raves for years, called the game inherently dull, as far as television went. He livened it up by cutting from player to player, using close-ups of players reacting to their shot, placed microphones on tees, and adapted the over-under par scoring system to live TV. He also told announcers to shut up. As a result, Chirkinian, as much as Bobby Jones or Clifford Roberts, made the Masters the Masters.

Chirkinian, who died in 2011, would wince if he watched CBS' golf production these days. It is, to use a technical term, a slog.

The current production team, headed by Lance Barrow – with Sellers Shy at his right hand and taking over at the end of the season – has all the gadgetry Chirkinian had, and then some, starting with high definition. Shot-tracing and super-slow-motion swing analysis is instantly on tap.

This was going to be a transition year, with Peter Kostis, Gary McCord and Bill

Macatee bounced from the commentating crew and Davis Love III, Frank Nobilo and Trevor Immelman coming in, even as Barrow yielded to Shy.

Thanks to the coronavirus, it's become a truncation year, but even before the world of sports stopped spinning, CBS was in a grand funk. Blimp shots of Pebble Beach aside, the broadcasts have lacked something crucial: quality.

All the 100-1 zoom lenses and Trackman toys in the world can't hide a bad show. A bad show is what CBS has too often provided this year. The nadir was reached during the final round at Riviera, that cathedral in a valley near Hollywood, where Bogie once leaned on trees watching bogeys.

Inexplicably, Barrow, Shy & Co. managed to default on their duty when the leaders made the turn. Harold Varner III topped his tee shot on the 10th hole. Viewers were told about it by Ian Baker-Finch, never mind the many replay units available. The key shot and the video was under house arrest for 90 minutes. Or maybe they had to take it to Fotomat for development.

The jackals on unsocial media howled, but this time, they were right. Varner's miscue should have been replayed promptly. It would have been perfect for Kostis to

analyze what happened, but, oops, he was let go, and Love, a fine fellow, isn't about to say anything interesting. Alas, Nick Faldo, the lead analyst, was also AWOL on the subject.

That was the tip of Capt. Barrow's iceberg. Botched scoreboards and high-lights from other tours – things that can be checked in advance – were glaring errors.

While Chirkinian also famously said, "We're not doing journalism here," he knew how to follow a story, whether it was a Jack Nicklaus charge or a player's collapse. On Saturday, he'd cut from player to player, giving the viewer a feel for the course and the field. Stars received more time, especially if they were leading. On Sunday, the cameras would focus in on the contenders. If someone made a few bogeys and fell off the leader board, Chirkinian put him in the witness protection program. He'd not be seen again unless he was in the final group, and then only on the 18th hole.

These days, the leader disappears. This isn't how Barrow wanted to go out. The good news is, the PGA and Masters were shoved back several months, so CBS ends up with the last two men's majors of the season. By late summer and early fall, perhaps CBS' black eye will have healed.

### Streamsong

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ent in character. Most critically, wide-open fairways allow for players to rear back off the tee and take advantage of the firm and fast fairways. Greens across the course are severely undulating as one would expect from a Doak-designed course. In April, the grasses on both this course and the Coore/Crenshaw track were being transferred to a revolutionary new ultradwarf Bermuda grass, which is purported to offer super fine texture and smoothness on greens. Known as "Mach 1," the strain is renowned for being both heat and drought tolerant – a true asset given central Florida's steamy summer conditions.

It makes a lot of sense that on such an unlikely place for a golf resort, the Blue course's signature seventh hole is atypical of any other hole at Streamsong. A photogenic pond rests between the tee and the huge, undulating green of this intimidating par 3. Bushes, wild grass, and massive bunkers frame the putting surface. The opportunity to make a par here is basically a do-or-die proposition: Land on the green and you have a chance for par or better. Miss the green and your handicap rating might just spiral. In his *Little Red Book of Golf Course Architecture*, published in 2016, Doak referenced how he and his younger associates discussed, more than once, the idea of putting in a zip line to get across the pond following this very tee shot. The dream was scratched, however, for multiple reasons: "1) Mosaic is a very risk-averse company, and 2) There are alligators in that pond, which might be a problem if anyone fell off the zip line."

Before heading to the 10th tee, make a quick stop at the halfway house taco shack to enjoy barbecued fish or meat tacos. Made, of course, only with fresh ingredients the Streamsong way.

My favorite hole on the back nine is No. 13, a short par 4 teeming with dunes, sand bunkers, mounds, a pond, and wild grass. The only goal off the tee is to avoid two ominous bunkers protecting both sides of the landing area. From there, just a wedge or 9-iron will put you in position for a birdie.

After both the Red and Blue courses were made with wide acclaim, Gil Hanse was brought onto the scene to design the Black course, which opened in 2018. Situated on land far removed from the other two courses, the Black has its own clubhouse and practice facilities. Arrive early for your round to enjoy The Gauntlet,

a two-acre 18-hole putting course located just outside the clubhouse.

With gigantic wide fairways framed by snaking sand bunkers and breathtaking vistas, the Black dares golfers to hit the ball up the fast and firm fairways as far as possible, and then challenges them to locate flagsticks placed in precarious spots on massive, rolling greens. Land your approach too short or too long on any particular hole and be prepared to calculate a putt with at least two or three breaks involved. Your caddie will come in handy on virtually every shot.

My favorite aspect of the Black course is the wide variety of green sites across both nines. Many are built atop mounds. A few are tightly guarded by sand. A few others are wide open. My favorite is the intriguing ninth. Before teeing off, head pro Wilson highly recommends that the player look at the magnetic board next to the tee which indicates the day's hole position. Rear up and hit your drive as far up the fairway as possible here to set up an approach to one of the most memorable greens you'll ever play. Just over a mound protecting the front of the green, the flagstick rests in a punch bowl.

"The windmill sitting behind the green should be used as a guide to approximate the direction of your shot," said Wilson. The windmill was found on the property as the course was built, and today serves as the centerpoint of the green. Once the ball disappears over the mound into the spacious punch-bowl green, the race is on to find out just how close or far you are from a birdie. While blind approach shots aren't everyone's cup of tea, this hole and its massive green complex will most assuredly become a topic of conversation at the bar following your round. "After you hole out, spend a moment appreciating this rolling green from behind the hole," Wilson recommends.

Enjoy a cold beverage and a lobster roll at the Black's halfway house, affectionately known as the Tin Can. Then head out for a final nine filled with memorable holes. No matter how well you do over the first 17, your entire round's fate could very well be sealed on No. 18, a par 5 that after a decent drive leaves the player with an interesting conundrum: play at safe far left of the raised green to set up a delicate approach, or bring out the 3-wood or 5-wood to loft a daring second shot over wetlands and a huge bunker to give yourself a shot at an eagle. I chose the latter approach during both of my rounds,

and somehow fooled myself twice that I had achieved the goal. In fact, both shots landed well short of the green to set up heroic wedges out of the aforementioned bunker. "Take an extra club here to make it over the bunkers," Wilson stated. I just wish I had asked him before I began my round.

Every aspect of Streamsong Resort was designed to provide the player with a "bucket list" experience. The dining area of the clubhouse on the Black course offers an almost 360-degree view of the clubhouse and the Gauntlet putting course. The clubhouse for the Red and Blue courses was designed by Alberto Alfonso and features an outdoor terrace overlooking a lake and the golf course.

As referenced by the cuisine at the halfway houses, food is a centerpiece attraction at the resort. In an interview, Executive Chef Michael Ford said that even in the resort's developmental stages, the board agreed that guests should expect premier eating experiences to go along with golf experiences. "Our goal is to match the great golf with fantastic food," the chef said. He pointed out that the barbeque offered is slow-cooked for 10 hours. The executive chefs performed seven taste-testings to agree on the bacon prepared at the breakfast station. "No burger across the property is alike," Ford said. Each dining area has a slightly different spin on this clubhouse staple. "Who wants the same burger day after day?" the chef asked with a laugh. Along with great steaks at the Bone Valley Tavern and amazing Italian food at Sottoterra (the finest braised pork shank anywhere), the chef's team avails its services to large groups seeking unique custom dining.

A 216-room lodge offers elegant guest rooms and suites with views of surrounding lakes and wildlife habitat. The main clubhouse also features 12 guest rooms, a hospitality room, and conference and meeting spaces.

By the time you complete your unforgettable experiences along the sand dunes and sand bunkers of Streamsong Resort, you'll forget the Atlantic Ocean is about 89 miles away.

### If You Go

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54 holes: Red, Blue and Black



Nick Faldo and Jim Nantz, together but apart. (CBS)

**Club Champion**

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Just as there are club tests to support manufacturer claims about new equipment, there are studies confirming that data-driven fittings at Club Champion do outperform the alternatives. A *Golf Digest* study found that eight out of nine custom-fit golfers lowered their scores by as much as six strokes per round and added an average of 21 yards off the tee. That same study found over 13 yards extra distance with fitted irons. And that

doesn't even address the improvement in control and overall accuracy found with a fitted set.

Technology is key in those findings. TrackMan swing analysis, the gold standard of launch monitors, can be found in every Club Champion fitting bay. It is the same system the PGA Tour uses to show a player's ball flight on TV and to track statistics. Club Champion uses it to take precise club and ball measurements in a controlled environment. One radar system tracks everything the club does before, during, and after impact

— measuring parameters like club path, face angle and even swing direction. The second radar system tracks the ball flight from launch to landing. Ball measurements include launch angle, spin rate, and draw/fade ball curvature. Trackman's Dual Radar Technology is a significant milestone in the evolution of custom fitting.

The flat stick gets its own system, called Science and Motion PuttLab. This ultrasound-based system analyzes 28 important parameters of a putting stroke and then displays the results in graphic reports. Within seconds, SAM delivers individualized feedback and reports on even the smallest details like putter path, face aim, rotation, tempo, impact spot, face angle, and more. The ultrasound sensory analysis makes SAM much more precise than other systems on the market. The software provides automatic data analysis, allowing master fitters to determine the best recommendations for putter head shape, grip, length, loft, lie, balance and weight, which all have direct impact on alignment, consistency, touch, and success.

The geekiness doesn't stop with the swing and stroke analysis. The clubs are then custom-built to exacting, unrivaled tolerances, thanks in part to perfectly calibrated digital loft, lie, and swing weight machines. This build process ensures that the club you hit in the fitting bay is the same club you purchase.

Customers and equipment companies alike are on board for Club Champion's commitment to going the extra mile. Chuck Thiry, Vice President of Strategic Partnerships at Cleveland Golf says, "In our experience, Club Champion represents the finest in the art of club fitting and building. We are confident that Club Champion will fit, service and support the most discerning golfers at the highest possible levels."

Sherburne agrees: "What we do is both an art and a science. Every level of golfer can see massive improvement with a club fitting when they're willing to embrace a modern fitting process — even if it looks a little different than it did back in the day."

In short, this is not your father's club fitting, and thank goodness for that.

For more information about Club Champion, please call (888) 340-7820 or visit clubchampiongolf.com.

**GOLFChicago Directory**

Golf Facilities of Interest to Every Golfer

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**27 HOLES OF CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF**



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Lessons and Outings

Driving Range and Chipping Green

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Ask about our generous rain check policy.

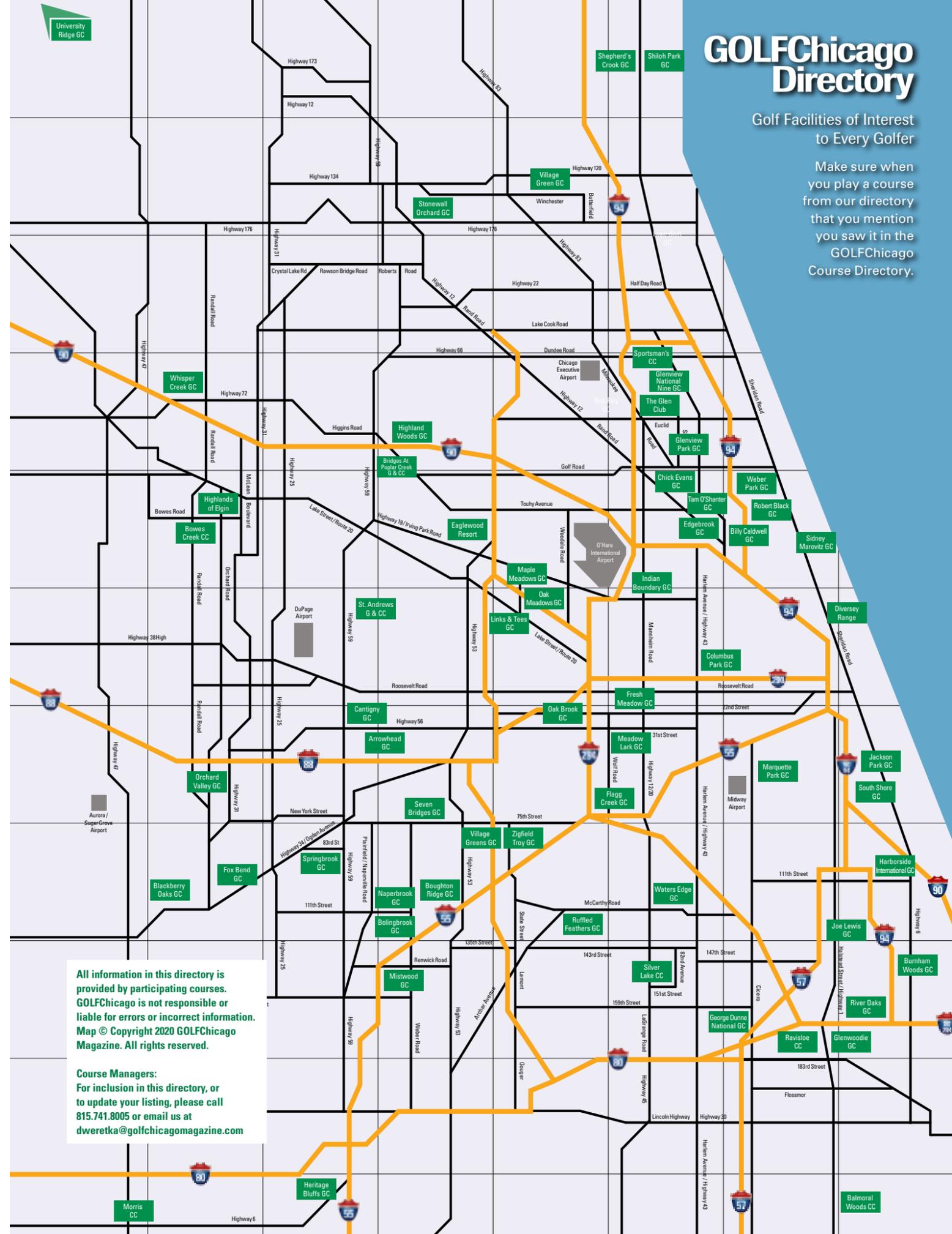


Restaurant & Bar Open for Lunch and Dinner with Outdoor Patio

Open to the Public

26W151 Butterfield Road | Wheaton, IL | 630.653.5800

[arrowheadgolfclub.org](http://arrowheadgolfclub.org)



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Course Managers: For inclusion in this directory, or to update your listing, please call 815.741.8005 or email us at [dweretka@golfchicagogamagazine.com](mailto:dweretka@golfchicagogamagazine.com)



### Arrowhead

630-653-5800  
26W151 Butterfield Rd.  
Wheaton, IL 60189  
[arrowheadgolfclub.org](http://arrowheadgolfclub.org)

Arrowhead Golf Club is recognized for its beautifully maintained course and inviting atmosphere.

Arrowhead is a public course which offers impeccable golfing conditions at affordable rates on three separate par 72 18-hole layouts surrounded by forest preserve. The West, East and South Courses feature new bunker renovations and enhancements. The practice area includes a lighted driving range, putting green and chipping green. Group and individual golf lessons are available.



### 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  
2245 Kennedy Rd.  
Bristol, IL 60512  
[www.blackberryoaks.com](http://www.blackberryoaks.com)

Located just forty minutes west of Chicago, Blackberry Oaks Golf Course was built to blend and enhance the natural assets of the property, such as Blackberry Creek, the wetlands, the prairie lands and mature oak groves. Blackberry Oaks is a true "Link with Nature." Blackberry Oaks Golf Course features 18 holes of golf, a practice range, an exceptional junior golf academy and a fantastic restaurant. Please visit [www.blackberryoaks.com](http://www.blackberryoaks.com) to learn more and to reserve a tee time.

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.



### Maple Meadows Golf Club

630-616-8424  
272 Addison Rd.  
Wood Dale, IL 60191  
[DuPageGolf.com](http://DuPageGolf.com)

Maple Meadow's Championship "West 18" features a modern prairie design, and is honored to be a qualifying site for the Illinois Open and the host course for the DuPage Junior Classic.

Choose from four sets of tees and enjoy immaculate bent grass fairways and greens.

Maple Meadows' convenient location features easy access from O'Hare, I-290, I-355, I-294 and Route 83.

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



### The Preserve at Oak Meadows

630-595-0071  
900 N. Wood Dale Rd.  
Addison, IL 60101  
[DuPageGolf.com](http://DuPageGolf.com)

After extensive renovations, the 288-acre The Preserve at Oak Meadows is a new world-class 18-hole course, practice facility and environmental haven—designed by golf architect Greg Martin.

- *Golf Digest* Green Star Award Winner
  - *Golf Inc.* Renovation of the Year
  - *Golf Digest* Best Courses You Can Play
  - ASGCA Design Excellence Award
- The Preserve's location features easy access from O'Hare, I-290, I-355, I-294 and Route 83.  
For news and tee times visit [DuPageGolf.com](http://DuPageGolf.com)



### Forest Preserve Golf Courses | Cook County

800-460-0010  
[forestpreservegolf.com](http://forestpreservegolf.com)

Affordable GOLF. Friendly SERVICE. Fantastic EXPERIENCE.

Forest Preserve Golf offers something for every golfer. PLUS ... save EVERY DAY with the FPG Golf and Rewards Card!

- Billy Caldwell: 9 Holes
- Burnham Woods: 18 Holes
- Chick Evans: 18 Holes
- Edgebrook: 18 Holes
- George Dunne National: 18 Holes
- Harry Semrow: Driving Range & Mini Golf
- Highland Woods: 18 Holes
- 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.

Cantigny Golf Academy offers clubfitting, all-weather practice, golf fitness and more.



### Chicago Park District Golf

312-245-0909  
[cpdgolf.com](http://cpdgolf.com)

Great Golf in the Heart of the City.

With six courses, three driving ranges and two miniature golf courses, there's golf enjoyment for the whole family.

PLUS...save EVERY DAY, secure early tee time access and more with the CPD Players Advantage Card!

- Robert A. Black: 9 Holes
  - Sydney R. Marovitz: 9 Holes
  - Jackson Park: 18 Holes
  - Columbus Park: 9 Holes
  - Marquette Park: 9 Holes
  - South Shore: 9 Holes
  - Diversey Range
- The only double-deck range in Chicago.



### Coyote Run Golf Course

708-957-8700  
800 Kedzie Ave.  
Flossmoor, IL 60422  
[www.coyoterungolf.com](http://www.coyoterungolf.com)

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.



### Green Meadows Golf Club

630-810-5330  
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 Fall-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.



### 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.



### The 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.



### 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.



### 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.



### 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.



### 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 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.



### 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.



### 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."



### 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.



### 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!



### 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.



### 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!



### University Ridge Golf Course

608-845-7700  
9002 County Road PD  
Madison, WI 53593  
[universityridge.com](http://universityridge.com)

University Ridge is home to the University of Wisconsin Men's & Women's Golf Teams. Since 2016, University Ridge has been the host site of the PGA Tour Champions, American Family Insurance Championship, which is hosted by Ryder Cup Captain Steve Stricker. A public golf course, designed by Robert Trent Jones II, University Ridge is yours to play with all green fees under \$100. Play where the Badgers and the Pros play, University Ridge!!!



### 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!

- SAVE on every round with the Edge PLUS Pass
- UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the Edge Practice Club



### 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.



## Harbor Shores

continued from page 27

debris everywhere across this development when the project started," he said. "Today, people are lining up to live somewhere along the golf course fairways or close to the marina. I'm just very proud to be part of this story. In 2008, this land had an equalized value of \$0. Today, only a little over a decade later, the same property has a taxable value of over \$25 million."

The seventh hole, the par-4 signature hole on the Jack Nicklaus Signature Course

is also the most beautiful hole and the most difficult. Starting from a tee perched among wetlands, the dogleg right stretches toward large bunkers on the right side of the landing area, ready to catch any tee shot aimed for a shorter approach to the green. The tiny putting surface, 436 yards distant from the back tee, is located on the top of a sand dune towering 25 feet above the fairway. Hit short and watch your approach go tumbling back down the fairway. Hit long and you may find yourself playing Beach Blanket Bingo on the shores of Lake Michigan. Somehow,

even a double bogey on this hole seems like an acceptable result.

The 493-yard No. 10 may be the most memorable hole on the course only because of a single moment caught on tape during the grand opening in 2010. Playing in a foursome with Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson and Johnny Miller, designer Nicklaus proudly extolled the intricacies of the hole's 10,500 square-foot green. To show off the green's massive undulations, twists and turns, Nicklaus practice putted from the front side of the green toward the hole on the other side after Miller complained that the putt was an impossible stroke. "Show me how to do it," the former U.S. Open champion challenged the Golden Bear.

The thousands of spectators who surrounded the green for a glimpse of the superstar foursome were stunned as the putt somehow found the back of the cup from about 100 feet. "From the day it happened until right now," PGA Professional Ross Smith told *PGA Magazine*, "it's by far the greatest thing I've ever witnessed in golf."

Enjoy a cold libation in the spacious and elegant clubhouse after the round. Another option is a visit to The Livery Brew Pub located just off the golf course grounds on the front nine. (Your cart ride to the next hole takes you right by, so feel free to stop in.) Along with tasty micro-brews, a beer garden, and live music, the converted stable also serves up gourmet appetizers, pizza, and pub food.

While Chicagoans can play Harbor Shores as a single-day road trip, accommodations are available at a 92-room luxury hotel that towers above the St. Joseph River. The Inn also features 14 suites, two top-floor condominiums and a rooftop meeting space.

"While Harbor Shores might be considered the end of the next chapter of Benton Harbor by some," said Doxtator, "we think of it as only the start of a new book of the city. Take a stroll around the marina village and the riverwalk. Or take a ride into town and visit the various shops and restaurants that [have] opened up there in recent years. With continued growth and development, Benton Harbor is on track to become one of Michigan's greatest renovation projects."

Just as Saint Lazarus rose to life after four days of being put to rest, the miracle of Benton Harbor shows promise of extending many decades into the future. Much to the delight of city managers, area businesses, and, of course, golfers.

## ON THE CORKSCREWS

STEPHEN HAWK

**T**ony Lombardi was born into a family of small business owners, and grew up in Sonoma County. His first job in the wine business came in 1998 when he joined the hospitality team at Clos Du Bois Winery, located in Geyserville, California.

From 2001 to 2013, Lombardi held senior leadership positions in marketing, public relations, and sales for such companies as Allied Domecq Wines, Beam Wine Estates, J Vineyards & Winery, Ascentia Wine Estates, and Kosta Browne Winery.

In partnership with his wife Christine, Lombardi founded Lombardi Wines in 2013 with a barrel of Chardonnay and a barrel of Pinot Noir. He describes himself as a storyteller/connector at heart, and loves to tell the unique and interesting personal stories of Sonoma and Napa wineries and winemakers, and connect them and their wines to people across the country. As part of that effort, he was encouraged to take the leap of faith in creating his own label from his former employers Dan Kosta and Michael Browne. They told him, "We did it, so should you!"

Lombardi hired Cabell Coursey in 2015 to be his winemaker and viticulturist/grower relations manager after he had held those jobs for three years at Kosta Browne. Well traveled, he has made wines all over the world, including Burgundy, New Zealand, Oregon, and California.

Coursey and Lombardi make small lots of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from vineyards in the Sonoma Coast AVA. However, the winery owns no acreage or vineyards itself. Rather, the Pinot Noir fruit is sourced from growers in the greater Petaluma area, where the Lombardi family has been since 1947, and Lombardi himself has cultivated many close relationships. He says, "I'm most proud of the interconnections I have with grower families that provide access to incredible fruit and that I can make a style of wine that I love to drink. The greatest satisfaction is seeing that enjoyment from people who try the wines I love to make. I founded my winery to honor my Italian roots and immigration

## Come and Listen to my Story 'bout a Man Named Lombardi

story. Wine has always been a part of my family's history, starting from my great-grandfather Nazzareno Lombardi and his childhood friend Cesare Mondavi and their story of coming to America together in 1914."

The winery is not open to the public and does not have a tasting room. The wines are sold through an allocated mailing list. This limited production is by design, as Lombardi wants the winery to grow "organically." Newly active members are first offered the Appellation Series and a small allocation of limited production single vineyard designates. Consistent ordering gains members access to a wider selection of wines.

Lombardi actively participates in charity wine auctions across the country. He believes that connecting through wine helps raise much-needed awareness and funds for worthwhile causes.

**2018 Chardonnay Sonoma Coast \$44**  
The fruit was sourced from the Sangiacomo family of growers (and winemakers) in Petaluma. Fermented in 100% French oak barrels, of which only 10% were new, this Chardonnay was aged for 14 months in custom barrels sourced from French cooperages.

It is a very pale yellow, with aromas of melon and honeysuckle, and just a hint of vanilla. The dominant flavors are lemon and tangerine, backed up by peach. Not surprisingly, with so little new oak during fermentation, there is just a whisper of wood. The wine finishes with an ideal level of refreshing acidity. The ABV is



smhawk@winervana.com

13.5%. Like all Lombardi selections, this is a limited-production wine, with 240 cases made.

**2018 Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast \$48**  
This wine was fermented in 100% French oak barrels (25% new). It then saw 14 months of aging in custom barrels. It shows a very transparent ruby in the glass. The nose features aromas of rich black cherry, currants, and a hint of marshmallow. On the palate there is a silky mouthfeel, with flavors of tart cherry, blackberry, and a bit of cocoa. The focused acidity is complemented by delicate tannins. It all wraps up with a medium-long finish. The ABV is 14.2%. 300 cases made.

Although Oregon and Washington state are justifiably famous for their Pinot Noirs, Lombardi's selections prove that with high-quality fruit and a skilled winemaker, Sonoma can do equally well.

For more about Lombardi and many other wine reviews, be sure to visit [winervana.com](http://winervana.com).

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## Golf in the Time of COVID-19

A few days before he died at 89, my dad sat up in his bed and began to talk. He complained about his failing health. And he complained about the food at the senior-care facility where he stayed. And he complained about the lighting by his bed that was too dim to allow him to read. When he finally finished complaining, he took a deep breath.

"So," he said, "how's your golf game?"

I've thought a lot about that last conversation with my father over these past painful months while the world has faught through the COVID-19 coronavirus. Like pretty much everyone else, I didn't get very good sleep during these months. Indeed, I don't think I spent more than a moment lost in thought without considering the potential loss of my friends, family, or neighbors to this terrible disease. As vicious as the illness is, I found my heart breaking over the vision of anyone being strapped to a ventilator at McCormick Place all alone while they waited for their immune systems to kick in – or not. Could there be any more miserable way to die?

And that's where my final discussion with my dad comes in. Even as he knew that his time on this Earth was coming to an end, he nobly transitioned the dialogue to talk about golf – not his golf; not tournament golf, but my golf. I'm pretty sure I told him that I was still desperately clinging to a single-digit handicap but was holding hope out that with a new driver and some inspiring swing thoughts, I had great ambitions for the coming season. And I'm pretty sure he accepted that answer with a knowing smile and a nod.

Eugene loved to play the game. Both he and Mom got me hooked on it when I was 9. Until he was in his early 80s and struggling with bad knees, my dad relished golf in an almost unholy manner. One night I entered his basement and was shocked to discover he'd spent a significant amount of time cleaning and polishing his golf shoes for his next day's adventure. Who polishes their golf shoes? Even when he couldn't get through 18 holes on his own ball, Dad hooked up with a group of fellow seniors for weekly scramble events. Golf was an integral part of his life – so integral that he wanted to talk about it even when his time was near.

Sir Paul McCartney once said that the purpose of music was "to lift the spirits." Now that

we emerge like cicadas from a time of darkness, doubt, and despair, we all need a vaccine made of some spiritual elevation, musical or otherwise. While some might find respite in reading a good book in the backyard, and while others might haul in a crawl full of blue gill from a rural lake, or perhaps toss around some horseshoes at the local park, golfers want to golf. To the unenlightened around us, the game probably appears trivial, time-consuming, and maybe even dangerous given the possibility of contracting the virus from other golfers in our twosomes or foursomes, or maybe even from someone else's stray golf ball found in the woods.

I have no doubt that playing golf carries with it some risk. Just as does grocery shopping, picking up carryout meals and visiting a clinic for an unrelated issue. While the surest way of all to prevent the disease is total isolation, we (hopefully) have chosen as a society to now move forward with our lives while exhibiting proper distancing strategies and limiting ourselves to small social gatherings.

The game of golf, fortunately, is a game made for social distancers. Get within 10 feet of us as we swing and be prepared for a toothectomy. As for those times between swings, we have been forewarned to keep to ourselves and to either walk or rent individual golf cars. Not a big deal.

Even as these past months in home quarantine have been painful, many of us have found that the extra time with family has tightened bonds and reminded us of our good fortune to have others to engage us, support us, and love us. My first few rounds of golf this season were shared with my older son in between hours I spent on the tennis court with my younger one. Somehow, someway, we have along with my wife made it through the throes of the worst pandemic in recent history and still have our health, our jobs, and even our wits about us. In short, we have survived.

While golf was not essential during this dark period, just the thought of one day again enjoying the game with family, friends, and colleagues was enough to endure. And when that day comes when I am called upon to meet the Great Superintendent in the Sky, I pray that I have the grace and patience to gather my sons around my hospital bed and, after complaining about the food and the grouchy nurses, I take a deep breath and ask each of them: "So, how's your golf game?"

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