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Season Opener 2021, Vol. 25 No. 1



TOUR EDGE HITTING STRIDE

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Tour Edge
 EXOTICS

10 Tour Edge ... 35 Years In The Making
The signing of Bernhard Langer, a new agreement with Golf Channel, and what appears to be a huge 2021 season.

14 Lake Tahoe
Take a deep dive into all that this awe-inspiring area has to offer.

20 The Covid Effect
Catching- up with course operators about the year that was 2020 and what's ahead for the game we love.



Cover: Bernhard Langer. Above: The Tour Edge PGA Tour Champions group.



- 5 Opening Shot**
- 6 The Good Stuff**
Todd Mrowice Prowls the Aisles
- 8 Fitness**
Kody Anderson
- 12 Travel**
The Awe-inspiring Lake Tahoe region
- 13 Instruction**
Technique with Mike Carbray
- 16 Equipment**
- 24 Sweet Home Chicago**
- 25 Profiles**
Dave Lockhart Visits Eagle Springs Resort
- 26 GOLFChicago Map and Directory**
How to Get There
- 31 On The Corkscrews**
A Young Female Winemaker
- 32 Final Putt**
The Future is Now for First Tee

OPENING SHOT

Todd Mrowice

First and foremost, I hope that all of our loyal readers find themselves healthy and as happy as humanly possible. As we turn a big corner, the spring of 2021 appears to be the first step in making our way back to normalcy. All of us at GOLFChicago thank you for continuing to bring us into your homes and golf shops.

Speaking of which, we are thrilled to be celebrating our 25th year! To think of where the golf landscape was in 1996: Tom Lehman was the scoring leader and player of the year for both the PGA and PGA TOUR (not to mention British Open champ). Nick Faldo was slipping on his third, and final, green jacket. And some 20-year-old won his first professional event ... Tiger Woods at the Las Vegas Invitational.

We're looking forward to a great year starting with this, our Season Opener issue. It's appropriate that our hometown friends at Tour Edge grace our cover. We take a dive into the tremendous success the Exotics line has had on the PGA TOUR Champions, namely with the signing of the legendary Bernhard Langer.

The growth that club manufacturers saw in 2020 was remarkable across the board. Inside you'll find the clubs that we've called "dibs" on for this year. You have to be prepared to wield those clubs though. This issue we have Kody Anderson from SMART Golf & Fitness to help get your lower body into your swing.

As golf comes back, so does travel. So many places to choose from, but hopefully we'll help you make your decision easier as Robert Kaufman shows off the playground for outdoor activities that is the Lake Tahoe region. Incredible golf among incredible views, and so much more. Dave Lockhart travels to historic Eagle Springs Resort, and you'll find plenty of options south of Illinois in the Let's Golf travel guide that's placed between our pages.

Familiar spotlights including The Good Stuff, Sweet Home Chicago, and On the Corkscrews are a few page turns away. Plus, a very special Final Putt written by Lea Jesse, CEO of First Tee - Greater Chicago.

Enjoy and when we meet again for our May issue let's hope there are a few rounds under our belts.

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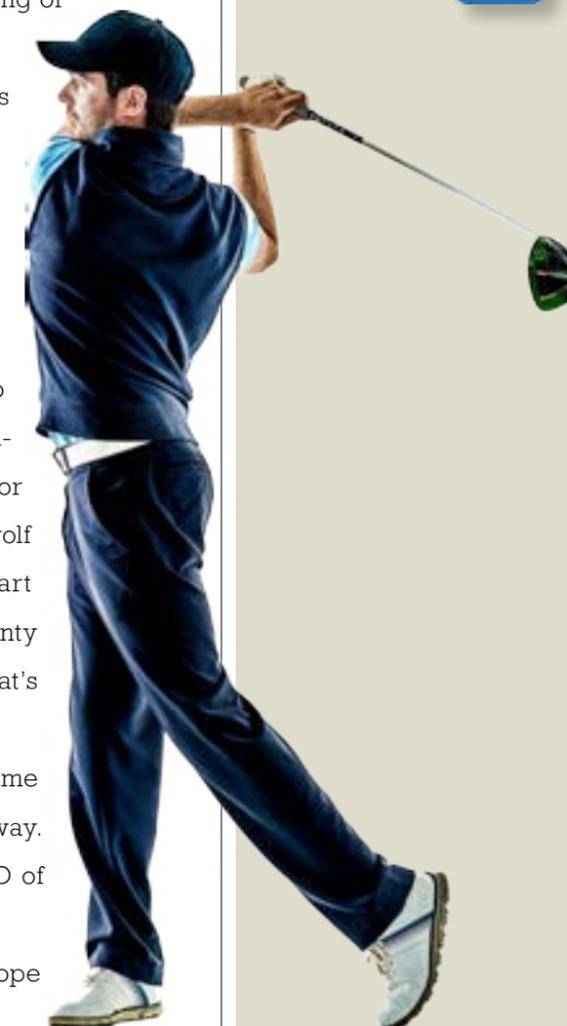
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THE GOOD STUFF

by Todd Mrowice



Nothing Else MATTRS

Materials. Technology. Research. Might seem like a lot for a shirt, but that's how PUMA rolls. The brand's new MATTR lineup is performance fabric to the highest degree. The Leucadia polo is 92% polyester, 8% elastane, and has a subtle palm tree all-over print. Gives us all of the warm feels!

\$75 cobragolf.com



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How the Lower Body Moves In the Golf Swing

The golf swing is an incredibly complex full body movement that requires both precision and power. It is one of the only athletic movements in sport that demands finesse with speed. When we break the golf swing down and look at the specific muscles and movements required of the body, we find that nearly every muscle in the body is used. This involves several specific movements at specific joints. In this article we look at some of the key muscles involved in the swing, along with the individual joint movements required to make a full, safe, powerful swing. The details of each muscle used in each part of the swing could fill a book or have individual articles for themselves. Today, we'll focus on how the lower body moves in the golf swing.

Starting From the Bottom

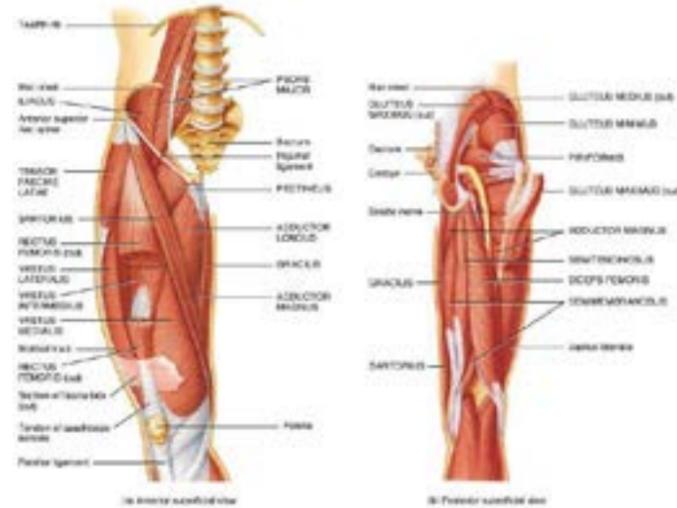
Let's start at the lower body and work our way up. This is where everything starts. The ability to use the ground in the golf swing is immensely important to create a powerful repeatable swing. Our feet are our only connection to the ground, so proper mobility within the foot and ankle is something we look at in every one of our assessments. For a right handed golfer during the backswing, the left ankle, or the lead ankle, needs to move into eversion. This occurs when the outside of your foot tilts up. At the same time, inversion is required of the right foot or trail foot. The opposite is required in the downswing. The left foot, or lead foot, needs to move into inversion. At the same time the right foot, or trail foot, needs to move into

eversion in order to maximize ground force interaction.

Improper mobility of the ankle joint could lead to a sway or slide in your golf swing. This is far more common than people realize. There are several small, intricate muscles that aid in the inversion and eversion of your ankle. Namely, the tibialis anterior and posterior invert the foot, while the fibularis and extensor digitorum evert the foot. These muscles contribute heavily to your body's ability to balance as well, so don't neglect the lower leg muscles when training!

What About the Knees?

Moving up the chain we get to the knees. We saw the ankles were a source of mobility to allow our body to properly rotate. The knees are the opposite, they are a source of stability in the swing. As we continue through the chain we'll start to see an alternating pattern that is very important to a safe, pain-free golf swing. The knee joint has several groups of muscles that cross the joint to provide the knee with its proper motion of flexion and extension. A proper setup requires a bit of knee flexion, while extension comes in to play to complete the swing and end in a tall finish. We see plenty of Tour players let the lead leg



drop towards the ball in the backswing. It may seem like this motion is coming at the knee, but it isn't. This motion is external rotation of the lead hip, and is something we look at next.

Next Up Is the Hips

How the hips move in the golf swing is one of the most important factors in avoiding back pain while playing. The hip is one of the most complex joints in the body, and has several muscles to control it.

The hip joint is meant to be mobile. If we look back at the previous joints, the ankle is mobile, the knee is stable, and the hip is mobile. This trend will continue as you move up the body as well. The hip needs to maintain its mobility in the golf swing in order for the joints above and below it to remain

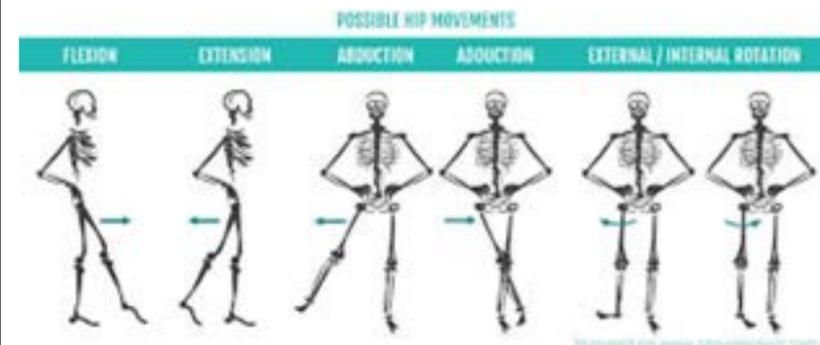
stable. If the hip lacks the proper mobility needed, we try to create rotation and mobility through either the lower back, which is supposed to be a stable section of the body, or the knees, which also need to be stable. We sacrifice stability either above or below the joint. If the lower back starts trying to make up for this mobility, this can lead to back pain, which is extremely common in golf. So if your lower back is something that hurts in the golf swing, you may need to look at whether you're creating rotation through the hip properly. The image below shows all of the possible movements at the hip joint. We are going to focus on internal and external rotation.

Focus On Hip Rotation

In the back swing the trail leg needs to internally rotate while the lead leg has to externally rotate. This is absolutely crucial in creating a safe backswing that doesn't compromise your back. A quick and easy way to see if your hip internal rotation is where it needs to be, make sure you're checking both your lead and trail leg. From the top of the backswing and moving into transition to the downswing, the trail leg will begin to move into external rotation. This is where using the ground comes into play. The hip should act like a corkscrew for your foot as you rotate using the ground, and that trail ankle should begin to move into eversion. The lead hip will begin to internally rotate more and more until you get to the top of the follow through.

For great videos and to learn more, please visit smartgolffitness.com.

Kody Anderson is a Golf Fitness Instructor at SMART Golf & Fitness Instruction. smartgolffitness.com/kody-anderson/



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Tour Edge Hitting its Stride ... 35 Years in the Making

Todd Mrowice



It's been a long time coming for Tour Edge Golf. The club manufacturer launched by David Glod in 1986 (out of his garage at that) has undoubtedly had success over the years. Whether the company was improving high handicap players with wildly popular lines such as Hot Launch and Bazooka, or whether low handicap players were being made into "believers" by the Exotics lineup, Tour Edge has been a smaller wave in what can be a very crowded pool of OEMs.

The intestinal fortitude by the company to continue producing clubs made out of superior materials, and not go for the jugular at price-point is nothing short of impressive. The restraint that the company has shown over the past 15 plus years might be even more impressive, however. Imagine having a product in the hands of some of the best to play the game, and you can only chirp about it. No running to the mountain tops or blasting out a multitude of press releases. That's where Tour Edge has been, as a club was in a winning bag on a professional tour every year from 2005 to 2016. To date: 10 victories on the PGA TOUR, 10 on the PGA Tour Champions, and one on the former Web.com TOUR.



That time has passed though, and the company has been embarking on a new era that's filled with more victories, more recognition, and new products that continue the lineage of the winning sticks that came before them.

Tour Edge had been making a lot of noise on the PGA Tour Champions with a team made up of Scott McCarron, Duffy Waldorf, Tim Petrovic, and Tom Lehman. An amazing lineup of champions, for sure. But then the Exotics line caught the attention of one of the game's most accomplished, and particular, players in Bernhard Langer. For a guy with two Masters victories as part of his near 90 professional trophies, Langer has been known as someone who doesn't stray from equipment he likes. No matter how dated that equipment may be.

"Bernhard came to us, originally, for one club which was a 22-degree hybrid," said Jon Claffey, Vice President of Marketing for Tour Edge. "That club went into play in November at Augusta, it helped him and he had a lot of confidence with it. It also gave him confidence to come back to us and say he wanted us to fit his entire bag."



INSTRUCTION

Mike Carbray



Throw in the Towel

Fast forward to February of this year, when Tour Edge made the signing of Langer official. He was added to the PGA Tour Champions group; later the same month, Ken Duke joined as well. The company was now able to scream from those mountain tops.

“To be able to sign this awe-inspiring icon to our professional staff is a crowning achievement in our 35 years as a golf brand,” said David Glod in February. “He’s one of the very best players to ever play the game, so to have him trust Tour Edge to keep him at the top is something we are extremely proud of.”

Langer is an international ambassador to the game, a legend, and someone that doesn’t seem to have the word “retirement” in his vocabulary whether speaking in German or English. Tour Edge has landed its “big fish”.

Upon signing, Langer had this to say: “I’m extremely excited to be joining the Tour Edge staff, they have been truly incredible to work with as I start updating my equipment. I have been playing many of the clubs in my bag for a long time, and when I started working with Tour Edge out on the PGA Tour Champions, I realized that they were the best option to getting me exactly what I needed to continue to perform at the highest level.”

Tour Edge could have stopped at signing top-level champions to its professional staff. They could have coasted through 2021 and called it a monumental year. Not so fast, though. An announcement was made just as February was ending that the company had agreed to become the presenting sponsor for GOLF Channel’s coverage of PGA Tour Champions tournaments. So not only is Dave Glod seeing his hard work come to fruition with clubs being in professionals’ bags, he (and all of us) get to see that familiar Tour Edge logo sprawled across our television screens every time we watch PGA Tour Champions coverage. It’s beginning to feel like we’re a long way from Batavia.

“Being the presenting sponsor of GOLF Channel’s coverage of PGA Tour Champions tournaments is a big step forward for Tour Edge in streamlining all of our recent efforts on the PGA Tour Champions,” said Glod. “This is part of a long-term vision that cements the PGA Tour Champions as the perfect home for Tour Edge and our branding efforts.”

Of course, with all of these massive agreements and accomplishments, the company hasn’t forgotten about the consumer. The evidence of that can be seen in the 2021 lineup that packs a punch no matter what your skill level may be.

The Exotics line, which is what you’ll find on tour, ushers in the 721 Series. No stranger to creating some of the best fairway metals in the game, Glod touts the powerful launch and low spin of the new C721 fairways, which feature Ridgeback Technology. In addition, the new C721 driver has been placed at or near the top in many club tests, something that loyal Exotics fairway users will be excited about. Last, but not least, there is a lineup of C721 hybrids that will fill your distance gap with ease.

In addition, you’ll also find two new sets of Exotics irons in the C721 and E721. Both feature the company’s new Dual VIBRCOR Technology, and are receiving rave reviews.

If game improvement is your need, Tour Edge does not disappoint with the new Hot Launch 521 Series which casts a large net to fit a huge percentage of golfers. Drivers, fairways, hybrids, irons, wedges, and iron-woods are all available.

Tour Edge products have always performed. It’s great to see the juice from the squeeze.

“We’ve always believed in our products,” said Claffey. Now, though, we’re reaching a stratosphere we’ve never been to. It’s exciting and I can’t wait to see how we continue growing.”

Finally, spring is here! Maybe you put the clubs away for the winter and are just getting back to the game, or perhaps you spent countless hours looking at golf instruction tips on YouTube and are now on your 10th swing thought of the week. Here is a great drill for you to get back to solid contact and clear your mind of all the swing thoughts that are fogging your brain.

One common issue I see in many students at the start of the season is lack of rhythm in their swings and lack of connection between the arms and body. Our bigger muscles forget their roles in the swing after a prolonged layoff. There is a strong tendency for the hands and arms to take over and to do more work than they need to in the backswing. The hands will swing too fast and try to do the work. The swing becomes an arm-only method. This can lead to off-plane swings, over swinging, poor impact, and a list of other potential issues.

To get your body and arms working together in the takeaway, take the towel off your bag and place it under your armpits [Photo 1]. Use a wedge or 9 iron and make some small half-length swings back and through. You want the towel to stay in place through the entire swing. You should feel pressure in your armpits as you do this. On the takeaway, try to get the butt of the club and your belly button starting the backswing together. This movement will get the bigger muscles engaged and start working with the hands in unison. This is referred to as a one-piece takeaway. The result of this is the club being on plane in the backswing. You will feel your torso turning more and being more active in the takeaway. This is a good thing.

After a few practice swings, put a ball down and try the drill. You only want the ball to travel 20 yards or so at first. The slow speed movement will make it easier for you to feel, and the parts will start to work together. Do not worry about trying to hit the ball far at first. After 20 swings with the towel drill, take the towel away and try to copy the feel without the towel.

Use the Towel to Fix Your Faults

If the towel falls out of your lead arm in the takeaway, you used your hands to start the backswing, the club has traveled behind your hands, and your lead arm has separated from your chest [Photo 2].

If the towel falls out of your trail arm, your chest has not turned in the takeaway and your arms are doing all the work, leading to an upright swing [Photo 3].

If the towel falls out of both arms, the arms are working independently without the chest and the backswing will be too long [Photo 4].

Give this towel drill a try the next time you go to the range. It will help you to get all your body parts working together in the correct sequence. You will start to use your body to create speed and power

and not arms and hands only. Ball striking will improve, you will hit more greens, and have more fun on the course in 2021. 🏌️

Mike Carbray, PGA Director of Instruction
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Photo 1



Photo 2

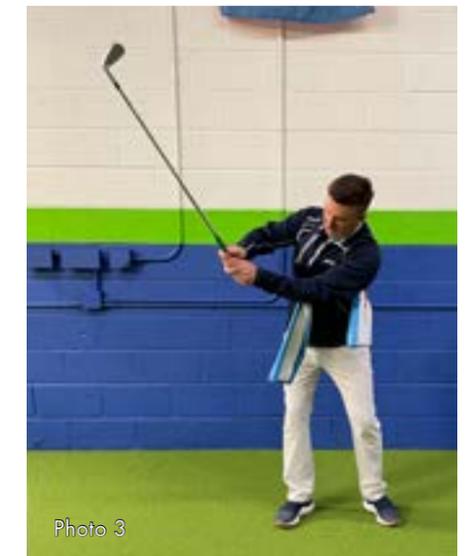


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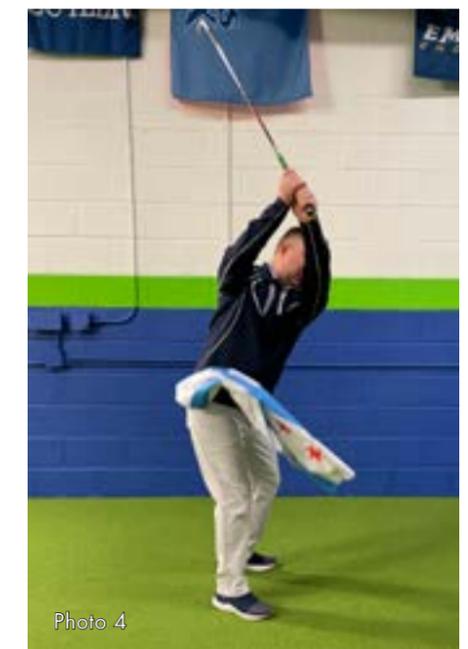


Photo 4

Tahoe Unmasked: An Escape to the Sierra Nevada

Robert Kaufman with Dave Weretka

suffice to say, travel with a capital “T” remains anywhere from low on the radar to non-existent. And getting on an airplane may only enhance the reluctance to wander far away with the cloud of COVID-19 still hovering. Yet, as the looming light at the end of the pandemic tunnel appears brighter, the option to start spreading your wings seems on the near horizon.

Any chronic wanderer quickly discovers the only cure for a prolonged high-grade cabin fever is busting loose on a trip. If that means a combination of golf and outdoor adventure, the perfect remedy could be an escape to the Lake Tahoe, Reno, Carson Valley region. But like any popular destination with a bevy of guidelines for traveling during a pandemic, just be sure to pack plenty of patience. Certainly, fresh mountain air and a big crystal blue lake will make it that much easier to maintain an even temper and restore some mental clarity.

The Sierra Nevada playground is split between California and Nevada. Its acclaimed centerpiece is North America’s largest alpine lake at 1,644-foot deep, 22 miles long, 12 miles wide, and with 72 miles

of shoreline surrounded by boundless mountain terrain providing a four-season menu of outdoor activities, from skiing to hiking to clear kayaking on Lake Tahoe to biking and world-class golf!

Elevated Links

The Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Graeagle, Carson Valley, Reno golf arena may not be home to any “bucket list” course in the sense that the Monterey Peninsula has Pebble Beach or Scotland with The Old Course at St. Andrews, but what it can claim are over 40 golf courses consisting of hundreds of fairways and greens in all shapes, sizes, and difficulty for golfers to navigate over a variety of mountain landscapes. Not to mention the ego-boosting high elevation helping the golf ball travel farther. Regardless of ability, the diversity, combined with easy flight access to Reno, should place this destination near the top of your golf travel “A-list”. The only dilemma: which courses to choose from?

Our Covid-19 tour teed off at Tahoe’s northern end in Kings Beach with an old-school golf experience at Old Brockway Golf Course (built in 1924), surrounded

by Jeffrey pine and plenty of lake views. Rated one of the top 9-hole courses in the country, the course is family-owned by Lane Lewis. Old Brockway also boasts direct linkage to the perpetually highly-ranked aforementioned 18-hole course along the famed 17-Mile Drive. In 1934-35, a rising entertainer named Bing Crosby hosted his “Crosby Clambake” here with friends for a small purse of money, but after outgrowing the venue, Crosby traded beaches and moved the event to Monterey Peninsula where it is known today as the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.

Around the corner from Old Brockway is Gar Woods Grill & Pier, where you can dine on the deck and watch the sunset over the lake. Make sure to take a walk out on the 130-foot pier and soak in the beauty. The Korean short rib street tacos are a must. You won’t regret it.

On the opposite end of the golf course spectrum, Clear Creek Tahoe is a 13-year-old private club and master-planned community. It is secluded within a pine-forested timber ranch, just 10 miles up Highway 50 from Glenbrook Bay. The admission ticket to Clear Creek Tahoe may not be bargain friendly, but

the behind-the-scenes amenities and activities, including a personal favorite 18-hole course designed by the renowned team of Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore, make this setting one of the most coveted real estate assets throughout the Lake Tahoe panorama. Clear Creek Tahoe is especially appealing for anyone seeking a permanent getaway to take advantage of Nevada’s zero state income tax.

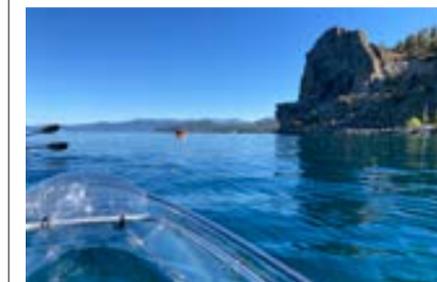
“It’s the club and everything that comes with it, including the Summit Camp where the entire family can spend time, kids and grandkids,” said member Buddy Goldstone. “It’s the spectacular setting, it’s the lake house on the beach at Lake Tahoe, and it’s the people that makes it a great place.”

Adjacent to Harveys Lake Tahoe Hotel in Stateline, Nev., is arguably the crown

jewel of Tahoe’s golf scene, Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. Not only is it the lone course to physically border Lake Tahoe (the entire right side of the par-3, 17th fairway is beach), the ninth fairway allows for a tee shot to travel from the Golden State of California to the Silver State of Nevada. Even if you don’t play, this is the place to be every July for the annual American Century Championship to spectate plenty of golf drama produced by top stars from the NFL, MLB, NHL, and Hollywood. For winter sports fans, a section of the course along the lakefront is transformed into an ice rink to entertain several NHL hockey games.



Edgewood Tahoe GC



A unique way to view the lake is to actually get out on it. We’ve been coming here for years and this was the first time to actually experience it. A Clearly Kayak tour may be just what you need. Take a leisure tour around the shoreline in a transparent kayak and enjoy the clear (up to 70 feet deep) blue water. They also offer evening LED and ECO tours. Check them out at clearlykayak.com

Around the lake, make sure to stop off and take a tour of the Thunderbird Lodge. Built in 1939 and home to eccentric millionaire George Whittell Jr., it boasts a fascinating history. He loved to party and play cards with neighbors such as Ty Cobb and Howard Hughes. Known to have exotic pets such as Mingo the elephant and Bill the lion – the stories are endless and almost unbelievable. The Lodge also includes a 600-foot underground tunnel, blasted out of granite that leads to the boathouse. The boathouse contains a 55-foot mahogany and stainless steel

continued on page 23



Old Brockway GC



Edgewood Tahoe GC

2021 Equipment “Dibs”

by Todd Mrowice

Who could have predicted the golf “boom” that we saw in 2020? Aside from weekend tee times being at a premium, golf equipment also saw tremendous numbers, including record highs in sales. That momentum for manufacturers has carried over into 2021, with lineups aimed

towards new materials and specs to get you more distance and accuracy (that’s the point, right?) GOLFCicago took a deep dive into what’s available to consumers this year, and found our favorites that we’re claiming “dibs” on. Now who’s got a lawn chair we can borrow?



TaylorMade SIM2 \$529.99
SIM2 (standard), MAX (higher launch/forgiveness), and MAX-D (draw-bias)



Callaway Epic Speed \$529.99
Speed (standard), MAX (higher MOI/forgiveness), and LS (low spin)



TaylorMade SIM2 \$399.99
Also available as SIM2 MAX and SIM2 MAX D, both \$299.99



Tour Edge Exotics C721 \$249.99
Ridgeback spine, carbon fiber crown, Diamond Face 2.0 Technology



Honma TR21 \$249.99
Sakata premium shaft with a forward adjusting sole weight



Ping G425 \$269.99
Facewrap Technology and Spinsistency produce distance and predictable spin

Drivers



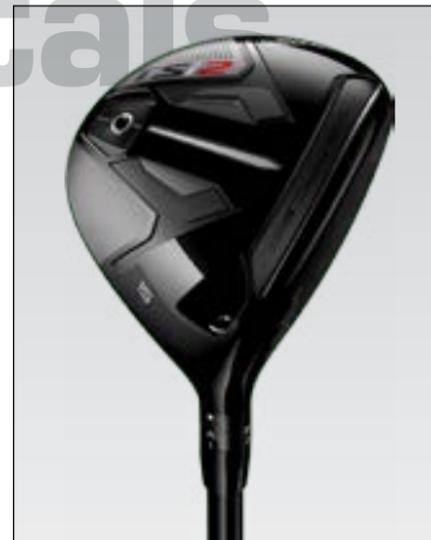
PING G425 \$499.99
MAX (higher MOI), LST (low spin), and SFT (draw-bias)



Cobra RADSPPEED \$449.99
RADSPPEED (standard), XB (larger profile), and XD (draw-bias)



Callaway Big Bertha B21 \$299.99
Oversized Bertha shape, Flash Face SS21 with Jailbreak Technology



Titleist TSi2 \$299.99
Active Recoil Technology 4.0, higher, faster launch with lower CG

Fairway Metals



Mizuno CLK \$249.99
WAVE Sole Technology, adjustable by 4 degrees, MAS1C Maraging Face



Srixon ZX \$229.99
Compact, smaller head shape with Rebound Frame to increase ball speed

Hybrids

2021 Equipment "Dibs"



Mizuno JPX921 Hot Metal \$999.99 (4-GW steel)
Third generation Chromoly with a re-engineered CORTECH face



Cobra RADSPED \$899.99 (4-PW steel)
First 3D printing in golf club design, forged PWRSHELL face, extreme heel/toe weighting



TaylorMade MG2 Tiger Woods Grind \$199
Unique grinds designed for Tiger, ZTP Raw Groove face design, custom order only



Cleveland CBX2 Full-Face \$149.99
Fourth generation ROTEX face, Tour Zip grooves, optimized for open face shots



Scotty Cameron Phantom X5 \$429.99
Redesigned for '21, precision milled stainless steel, highly contrasting sightline, available 3/26



TaylorMade Spider FCG Slant \$349.99
High-MOI mallet with blade-feel and release, Aged Copper Pure Roll insert

Irons



Srixon ZX7 \$1,137.99 (4-PW steel)
Compact player's iron, also available in more forgiving ZX4 and ZX5 models



Tour Edge Exotics C721 \$1,029 (4-GW)
Player's distance iron with Diamond Face 2.0 and VibRCORE gel injected into hollow bod



Callaway Mack Daddy CB \$129.99
JAWS grooves and a special Golf Pride SG-1 11.5" grip designed for choking down

Wedges



Titleist Vokey SM8 All Black \$179.99
Limited run, progressive COG, spin-milled grooves, refined sole grind options

Putters



Odyssey 2-Ball Ten \$299.99
Double bend face-balanced mallet, Stroke Lab shaft, Microhinge Star insert



PING Heppler Anser 2 \$229.99
Firm impact feel/sound, contrasting copper and black finish for optimum alignment

Golf Thriving (Not Just Surviving) Amid Pandemic

How Local Courses Navigated a Year of Uncertainty

Neal Kotlarek

Photos: National Golf Foundation

There was little need for Ed Stevenson to study the April ledger sheet when he walked into his office on May 1, 2020. Golf, after all, had been banned by the governor's office throughout the entire month due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of his duties, Stevenson, the executive director of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, manages the district's three golf properties. Beyond the woes of April, he couldn't have been overly optimistic of much improvement in coming months. A revision of the executive order allowed for four twosomes to tee off every hour going forward. How could any golf course make money hosting 40 guests a day?

The woes of DuPage County's courses, of course, were mirrored at the 350+ other public golf courses across Illinois. And as disastrous as April was for them, the challenge of staffing and maintaining clubs for a few dozen players from May through the foreseeable future was beyond daunting; it was downright catastrophic. Along with the standard daily expenses required to operate, managers had to deal with new responsibilities including clubhouse sanitation, cart cleaning and vigilance to ensure players were following protocols. As long as the

governor's position on golf as a potential virus super-spreader sport was maintained, economic challenges were inevitable.

"We knew by mid-March that the Illinois golf season wasn't going to be normal due to the pandemic," said Stevenson. "We just didn't know when or if things were going to get better going forward. Every golf course operator in the country wanted his patrons to be safe, of course. So we just had to wait for the situation to improve."

Like Illinois, the state of Michigan was originally reluctant to allow golf to resume while the pandemic raged across the country. Governor Gretchen Whitmer deemed golf a non-essential business in March and didn't lift that designation until April 24th with the provision that golf carts be banned to ensure social distancing.

As vice-president of Gull Lake View Golf Club & Resort in Kalamazoo, Bill Johnson confronted the imposing task of opening up six golf courses that sat idle awaiting Whitmer's executive order to be lifted. "The numbers certainly differ between resorts and stand-alone golf courses," said Johnson. "So being in Michigan, here's the actual truth: our April rounds were down 93%. By May we were 'only' down 38%."

Indeed, Gull Lake View Resort had to overcome additional burdens throughout the entire 2020 golf season. Not only were Michigan golf courses unable to open until late April, a resort that caters to golfer groups from a three-state region would necessarily be slowed down by both travel and overnight stay restrictions. "It was looking bleak," Johnson added. "Lodging was down 100% in April and 80% in May. With no lodging, no restaurants, events, or alcohol sales, our only source of revenue was green fees. We did notice by May that golf was gaining ground and popularity. That was the saving grace."

Even though April and May were miserable months for golf courses across the country due to the pandemic, it turned out that the diligence of golf course operators in positioning golf as a safe, socially distant sport proved to be a critical factor in persuading governors to rethink their positions. Given the safeguards put in place by operators—including limited foodservice, no rakes in bunkers, no touching of flagsticks, no ball washers, and limitations on golf cart usage—golf stood out as an outdoor game that was inherently socially distant. Prompted by advisory committees largely made up of state golf course associations, state PGA administrators, and golf course operator organizations, governors across the country eased restrictions on the amount of play allowed along with food and beverage service. So even as the pandemic continued to rage across the country, golf courses were opened for business, albeit with continued constraints on indoor dining and cart usage. With soccer fields, ballparks, movie houses, and basketball courts shuttered, golf suddenly, fantastically, and (almost) miraculously became one of the few group recreational activities allowed by state governments.

In Illinois, foursome golf was formally permitted to resume with tee times spaced 10 minutes apart at 6 a.m. on May 29th. Many restrictions remained in place, including: no flagstick removal, no congregating in groups larger than 10, the bottom of cups to be elevated to an inch below rims for ease of ball removal, 50% capacity allowed on practice ranges and putting greens, golf carts for solo use only (but members of the same household could ride together), sanitization of carts after use, clubhouse to remain closed, and individual caddies were prohibited. Also, no handshakes were allowed.

While some of the restrictions seemed over-protective, they were meticulously crafted to create confidence within the governor's office that

golf would not become a "super-spreader" activity. CDGA Executive Director Robert Markionni said that the association worked with the Illinois PGA and other state golf groups to develop a common ground that would address every aspect of golf as a responsible, socially distant experience.

"We spoke as one voice," said Markionni. "While we all wanted golf to resume in Illinois, the safety of players and course staff was the first priority. Without all of these protective measures being volunteered, it was pretty clear that there would be no golf."



Andy Mickelson, director of golf at Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville, echoed Markionni's position.

"I think the thing that allowed me to personally keep my sanity was being involved with the IPGA board and the governor's office directly," said Mickelson. "Our strategy was pretty simple and not politically motivated. We presented a case to the governor's office of how we could best operate while keeping public safety first and foremost. Constant engagement by the allied golf associations, our IPGA Board, and especially our executive director really pushed things forward. We always believed that if we could best make the case in the court of public opinion and additionally find the right folks in the governor's office to listen, we could prove that golf was a perfectly safe activity. On top of that, the mental health of playing and being outside far outweighed any dangers to golfers even at the height of the virus concerns."

As many Illinois courses had already opened—even on a limited basis—in early May, most of the infrastructure to cater to 40 players per hour was

already in place by the first week of June. The big unknown was what kind of demand there would be for golf during a pandemic and whether that demand was sustainable.

The weather throughout all of June was perfect for golf, with temperatures on most days in the low 80s and not much rainfall. Very quickly, it became obvious to operators that golf had come roaring back. Not just in Chicago and not just in Illinois. Courses across the country were reporting tee sheets filling up from dawn until dusk. And due to restrictions on cart usage as well as limited supplies of carts due to single-driver requirements, golfers got used to walking 18 holes.

"That was probably the most interesting aspect of last season," Markionni of the CDGA said. "Golfers might have started out walking due to cart restrictions but then, even when some of those were lifted and supply had increased, many golfers wanted to keep walking. Golf wasn't just fun for them, it was also a chance to exercise." He added that the golf operators he talked to didn't mind the loss of cart revenue. "Sure, some income was lost. But the general feeling was that golfers who wanted to walk would return again and again. That was an even better outcome."

How popular was golf in Chicagoland in 2020? A metric used by the CDGA is the number of rounds posted in the association's handicap system. In 2020, the number was 1,828,730 scores. That compares to 1,675,977 rounds posted for all of 2019—a 9% increase despite losing all of April and with limited play in May. A more dynamic comparison is found reflecting the number of rounds posted from May 1, 2019 to the end of the year (1,443,450) vs. the number of rounds posted from May 1, 2020 to the end of the year (1,749,293). That increase of 305,843 rounds shows a whopping percentage increase of 21.2% year-over-year. This despite the limited play of twosomes allowed every 15 minutes last May.

The numbers with DuPage County Golf were even more remarkable, reflecting green fee revenues of \$2.95 million—38% above those revenues from 2019. While the county saw a loss in food and beverage revenue due to clubhouse restrictions and golf outing banquets, the county was able to show a net gain of \$834,871 for the year, again despite losing all of April and a good portion of May.

"None of us could have predicted the way golf came roaring back in June," said Stevenson. "Not only were our Maple Meadows and The Preserve at Oak Meadows courses busy," he said. "Our 9-hole Green Meadows course attracted golfers who wanted to walk but just for nine holes."

Mickelson said that the most encouraging element to Mistwood Golf Club was where those pockets of growth came from. "We were seeing significant family engagement in the game, first time golfers, re-engaged golfers, and most importantly, massive expansions in junior golf. Our reach to juniors, particularly through programs like PGA Junior League, more than doubled in participation year-over-year."

Mickelson went so far as to predict continued growth in 2021 when, presumably, ballparks will open to some capacity along with soccer fields and restaurants. "I think we are entering a golf renaissance," he said. "Golfers who were either new to golf, re-engaged, and juniors will continue to be strong consumers for the foreseeable future. Yes, other sports and distractions will come along as we open things back up, but the seed and roots that were planted in 2020 run deep and we will see this tree bear fruit for a while (hopefully!)"



Markionni of the CDGA was similarly optimistic about the new season. "For starters, we know that April and May are bound to be better than in 2020," he said. "We certainly expect that people will go back to some of their normal activities like coaching baseball and attending sporting events. But we'd like to think that the great experiences golfers had in 2020 will bring them back to the course this year, even as COVID-19 restrictions ease."

The CDGA plans to run a full slate of amateur tournaments in 2021, kicking off with Mid-Amateur Qualifying in April and extending through the 90th Illinois State Amateur Championship July 20-22 at Mistwood Golf Club.

In reflecting on the 2020 season, Bill Johnson felt that the pandemic's impact on golf had even larger implications than just increased play and revenues. "Five years from now it is my guess that most will think about the pandemic," he said. "My mind goes to the social injustices that came to the forefront in 2020. At a time when others were talking about cancel culture and exclusion, golf truly became a game of inclusion. We saw people of all races, ages and genders flock to their local courses. At a time of chaos, golf offered tranquility. Those who were new to golf or who returned after being away rediscovered what we always knew: that this game is safe, communal, challenging and fun."

Tahoe Unmasked

continued from page 13



Genoa Lakes GC



Toiyabe GC



Thunderbird Lodge

speedboat known as "Thunderbird." The Lodge is now a part of the state park system; call ahead for tour times. Visit them at thunderbirdlodge.org

Moving on from the lake scene to the valley environ, the switchback road over the Kingsbury Grade, topping out at 7,344-feet, drops into Carson Valley (20 minutes from South Shore) where the Lakes Course at Genoa Lakes Golf Club and the semi-private Robert Muir Graves-designed Toiyabe Golf Club (five minutes north of Carson City) are accentuated by the dramatic backdrop of the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada. While both are excellent options, the Lakes Course may tip the scale with the 19th hole, a no-brainer straight shot to "Nevada's Oldest Thirst Parlor" in the nearby town of Genoa, established 1853.

Shifting Gears

Before attempting any strenuous outdoor activity in a higher elevation, make sure your heart and lungs are in good working order. In no time flat after traveling from sea level, they will be tested to the max. Especially when starting at 7,000 feet and huffing and puffing your way to 8,157 feet on a mountain bike along the notorious 14-mile (one way) Flume Trail. Don't make this your first stop off of the plane. Give your body a couple days to acclimate and thank us later.

The 10-minute shuttle ride from the bike shop at Tunnel Creek Café delivers bikers to the trailhead located at Spooner Lake day use area in the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park. Greeted with more than 1,000- feet of climbing during the first four miles (and the body screaming

"turn back!" while watching motor-assisted e-bikes whiz by) the chugging continues on the rolling uphill terrain through Aspen Grove on the Carson Range to the top at Marlette Saddle. Fair warning: regardless how much oxygen is inhaled and exhaled, the ride is about to pay huge dividends.

At the dam on Marlette Lake is where the single-track 4.5-mile Flume Trail starts. It traverses along the mountainside high above Sand Harbor and offers spectacular vistas of Lake Tahoe. The track drops 40 feet per mile.

"Make sure if you want to look at the views, stop and look. Don't become part of the view by riding off the trail," says Max Jones, two-time national mountain bike champion and owner of Flume Trail Bikes.

Once reaching the end of Flume Trail, all that remains to stay injury free is a three-mile, 1,500-foot descent to the finish line and a look back at an experience that takes your breath away.

With all bones still intact and no visible scars, the door sadly shuts on a much-needed getaway, far from a pandemic-induced hibernation. This Lake Tahoe experience definitely has us fired up for an encore.

Robert Kaufman is an internationally published golf travel writer/photographer based in Northern California. <http://www.pictureperfect.com>

Sweet Home Chicago

Labiak Wins 2020 Illinois PGA Professional of the Year Award

Mark Labiak of Ruth Lake Country Club was recognized as the 2020 Illinois PGA Professional of the Year by IPGA Executive Director Carrie Williams in a February announcement. Also recognized were Chris Green of Glen View Club as Illinois PGA Teacher of the Year, and Mark Hirn of Bloomington Country Club as Assistant PGA Professional of the Year.

Maryville Golf Academy's Juan Espejo was cited for a Distinguished Service Award while Jaime Nieto of The Preserve at Oak Meadows won the Deacon Palmer Award which bestows special recognition on a PGA professional who personally displays outstanding integrity, character and leadership, in an effort to overcome a major obstacle in their life.

Martin to Head Chicago Offices of Troon Golf Management

Twenty-five-year golf and hospitality veteran Philip Martin was introduced as the senior vice-president of operational oversight of all Troon brands serviced out of the company's new corporate offices located on the north side of Chicago. Martin's prior service with Troon includes stints as general manager of various Troon-managed clubs located across the country. Troon Golf Management is the world's largest club management company in the world and services 585 locations and over 630 golf courses. Locally, Troon manages Kemper Lakes Golf Club in Kildeer, Ill. In January, Troon acquired Indigo Golf Partners (formerly Billy Casper Golf Management) which oversees operations at all City of Chicago golf courses and the area's Forest Preserve courses.

"It is an exciting time for Troon Golf Management to open this regional office," Martin said in a March interview. "Our acquisition of Indigo Golf Partners obviously expands our presence in Chicago, one of the great golf markets in the country. Our goal of every property we manage is to create a great golf experience for our guests."

Joining Martin's Chicago team as senior vice-president of business development is Matt McIntee. The original founder of Green Golf Partners, McIntee is in charge of regional growth and client relations.

Club Champion Signs Lexi Thompson as Brand Ambassador

LPGA Tour star Lexi Thompson has joined Jordan Speith, David Leadbetter and Louise Ridderstrom as a brand ambassador for

Club Champion. Headquartered in Chicago, The four local Club Champion studios are located in downtown Chicago, Deerfield, Willowbrook, and Schaumburg.

"Proper fitted equipment is undeniably a huge factor for any golfer's game," Thompson said in announcing her new role. "I'm thrilled to work with Club Champion because they offer a truly Tour-level fitting that can benefit everyone from professionals to beginners."

To arrange a fitting, visit www.clubchampiongolf.com

Camps and Classes Offered at George Dunne National

George Dunn National will offer an array of junior summer camps and lessons from March through late October. Led by PGA Professional Kurt Uniek, the programs include junior classes which are held once per week (five-week class). The classes cover the basics for ages 6 to 14.

Half- and full-day summer camps stretch through five days and are overseen by PGA professionals on a ratio of six students per instructor. The half-day sessions are geared toward ages 6 to 13, while the full-day sessions are geared to ages 9 to 16 and cover full swing, short game, rules, and etiquette. Beginning May 2nd and priced \$25 per date, kids 7 to 16 can play nine holes in age-appropriate pairings. Parents are welcome to spectate.

The club is also hosting a Junior Summer League for juniors ages 7-16. For more information visit www.georgedunne.forest-preservegolf.com

Cantigny Promotes Tullar as New Head Professional

Former assistant professional Matt Tullar was named head professional of Wheaton's Cantigny Golf complex in February. Employed at the 27-hole property since 2010, Tullar will oversee all golf operations including the Cantigny Golf Academy, Cantigny Youth Links, the golf shop, tee time reservations, and outside services. In all, he will manage an in-season team of 80.

"Promoting Matt was an easy decision," said Terry Hanley, Cantigny Golf general manager. "He's a true professional: hard-working and well-liked by our staff and guests. Matt knows Cantigny Golf inside and out, and he's full of good ideas that will make us even better."

Lohmann Quitno to Renovate Abbey Springs GC in Fontana

Abbey Springs Golf Course in Fontana, Wisc. has announced a \$2.5 renovation project that includes overhauling green complexes, reconstruction of greenside structures and bunkers, incorporation of fairway drainage, and expansion of pond retention. The property owners approved the plan by Marengo-based Lohmann-Quitno Design in early February. The project will launch in early August and should be completed by April 30, 2022.

Built across a diverse, forested stretch of land in 1971 by Killian & Nugent Design, the course has not received substantial updates since.

For tee times and more information, visit www.abbeysprings.org.

Williams Named PGA Executive of the Year

Mike Williams of Landscapes Unlimited was named Illinois PGA Executive of the Year, the first time the award has been given. The award recognizes a PGA Professional that has performed outstanding services for multiple facilities. Williams has served on various committees and on the Board of Directors for the IPGA. The award is one of the highest honors the IPGA can bestow.

PROFILES

Dave Lockhart



Links Gem

The term "hidden gem" is often ballyhooed when it comes to discovering golf courses. Many of which you may have never even heard of, however, Eagle Springs Resort's 9-hole course may just be the foundation of that desirable label. It's certainly off the beaten path, but is very accessible to many of us in the Chicagoland area. Located in the town of Eagle, Wis., the resort is less than a two-hour drive from downtown Chicago, tucked away in the unspoiled rolling hills of America's Dairyland.

Built in 1893, Eagle Springs Resort is an intriguing 9-hole track that is barely on the cusp of 3,000 yards. In fact, it proudly stands as Wisconsin's oldest golf course and has been family owned for six generations. Matt Krug recently took over the reins as owner from Mike Bolan. Matt's wife is Mike Bolan's niece, and Krug is thrilled to continue the family's legacy. "To us, it means that we get the privilege of continuing the legacy and experience that Eagle Springs has provided to so many generations," said Krug. "We get to have the 'mom and pop' experience together."

When you enter Eagle Springs Resort from the main road you feel as if you're going to someone's house hidden peacefully in the woods. The first thing you see is the unpretentious clubhouse, a small practice green, and a tee pointed to a

fairly significant slope. It's the back tee of the first hole, which is a blind shot to a short par 4. The hole includes a unique bowl-shaped undulated green that was expanded by Bolan some years ago. It rewards a solid approach where your ball will likely gather towards the hole, which may just lead to a kick-in birdie on this sparkling opener.

"The most memorable is probably the second hole," added Krug. "It's The Volcano, a hole with a green roughly a third of the size of the island green at The Players Club (TPC) in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla."

I know what you're saying, "The Volcano?" This is a 144-yard par 3 that rises from the earth, calling for a precise iron shot that will hopefully hold the green. Miss the putting surface and you are either in the small pot bunker, or down the hill where it's about a 20 to 30 foot drop giving you a chip shot that you have likely never encountered before. This unique, one-of-a-kind 'volcano' hole is a gas to play, and could have many significant eruptions. Hopefully good ones!

Other notables include the 4th hole which is a staunch 401-yard par 4 that plays uphill to a grand green that has a large mound in the middle. If your approach misses to the left there is a major drop-off and you are a goner into the woods. With the undulation, every putt on this green

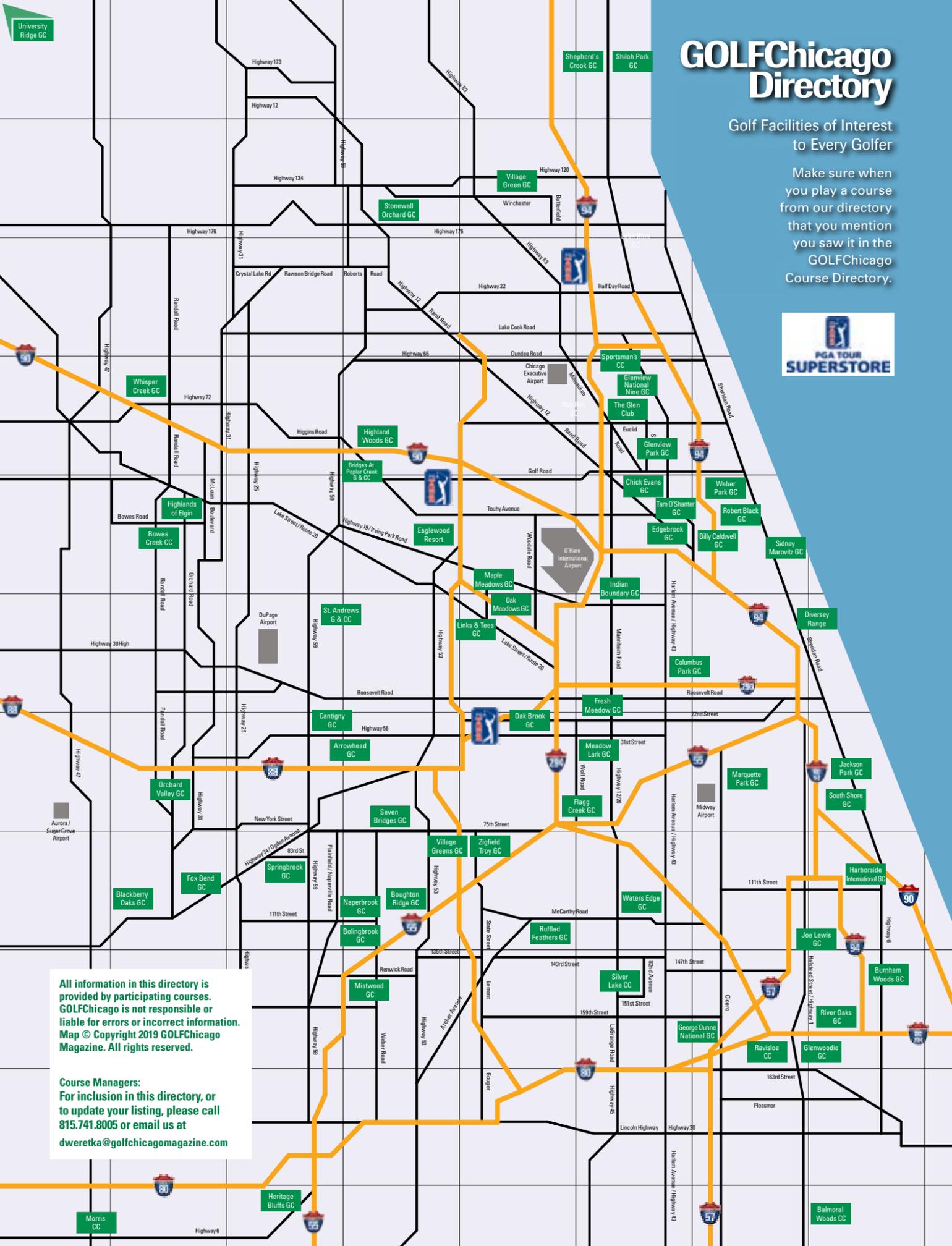
is one to be taken seriously. The 7th hole is a lovely scenic par 3 with an elevated tee and a stately welcoming green that provides a great birdie opportunity.

Golf architecture "geeks" may find it interesting that the first two holes are credited to A.G. Spalding. Yes, that Spalding of the major sports equipment company. How A.G., who is in Baseball's Hall of Fame, came to build those two holes at Eagle Springs Resort is unknown. Likely, it was just the significance of the Spalding name, which was quite prolific in the day. Mother Nature is credited with the rest of the layout which is intertwined magically into the landscape.

A vintage car, a historic building, and a fine wine. They almost all look better with age. You can't replicate what stands at Eagle Springs Resort. It's like going back to a simpler time on this peaceful and natural Wisconsin terrain. Green fees last year were a paltry \$18.75, with carts also available. It's so much fun to play for 9, 18, 27 holes or more.

Golf Digest recognizes Eagle Springs as quite the gem too, ranking it as the 23rd best 9-hole course in the world. It may just be the lowest-priced course on that list as well, coming in at only around \$20 for this divine nine. Eagle Springs is certainly a worthy Links Gem and truly epitomizes the term "hidden gem".





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Arrowhead

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26W151 Butterfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
arrowheadgolfclub.org

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Balmoral Woods Golf Club

708-672-7448
26732 S. Balmoral Woods Dr.
Crete, IL 60417
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. It's 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.



Blackberry Oaks Golf Course

630-553-7170
2245 Kennedy Rd.
Bristol, IL 60512
www.blackberryoaks.com

Located just 40 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 to learn more and to reserve a tee time. Home of the Blackberry Amateur, the premier Midwest amateur golf event. www.blackberryamateur.com



The Bluffs Public Golf Club

815-467-7888
24355 W. Bluff Rd.
Channahon, IL 60410
heritagebluffs.com

18 Holes: Par 72
Yardage: 5,035 - 7,171
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Bowes Creek Country Club

847-214-5880
1250 Bowes Creek Blvd.
Elgin, Illinois 60124
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 provides the public golfer a private-club experience, without an annual membership.



Cantigny Golf

630-668-8463
27w270 Mack Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
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.



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18 W. 201 W. 63rd St.
Westmont, IL 60559
DuPageGolf.com

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Maple Meadows Golf Club

630-616-8424
272 Addison Rd.
Wood Dale, IL 60191
DuPageGolf.com

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The Preserve at Oak Meadows

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900 N. Wood Dale Rd.
Addison, IL 60101
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.

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- *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 www.DuPageGolf.com



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



Golf Center Des Plaines

847-803-GOLF
353 N River Rd.
Des Plaines, IL 60016
www.dpparks.org

9 Holes: Par 27
Yardage: 80 - 210
Chicagoland's only fully-lighted 9-hole course is open late year-round. 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.



PGA TOUR Superstore

1017 Butterfield Rd.
Downers Grove, 60515
1319 E. Golf Rd.
Schaumburg, 60173
295 Center Dr. Vernon Hills, 60061

PGA TOUR Superstore carries the largest selection of golf clubs, clothing, footwear, and accessories for your game. With the most advanced technology for club fitting, we also offer the Fitting Van Experience which is a TOUR caliber assessment. With three Chicagoland locations, come see why nothing compares to PGA TOUR Superstore.



Ravisloe Country Club

708-798-5600
18231 Park Ave,
Homewood, IL 60430
ravisloe.com

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 Vouite Bistro, and La Banque Hotel.



Springbrook Golf Course

630-848-5060
2220 W. 83rd St.
Naperville, IL 60564
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 W. Highway 60
Grayslake, IL 60030
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.



Harborside International G.C.

312-782-7837
11001 S. Doty Ave. East
Chicago, IL 60628
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 Highlands of Elgin

847-931-5950
875 Sports Way
Elgin, IL 60123
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.



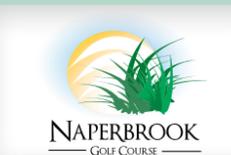
Mistwood Golf Club

815-254-3333
1700 W. Renwick Rd.
Romeoville, IL 60446
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

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.



Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center

847-965-2344
6700 W. Howard Street
Niles, IL 60714
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

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 W. 115th St.
Worth, IL 60482
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
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.

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ON THE CORKSCREWS

Stephen Hawk

March is Women's History Month, and an apt time to feature winemaker Katy Wilson, one of the few but growing number of women in the wine industry. She founded her winery when she was just 26, but already had years of experience.

She grew up on a walnut orchard in California's Central Valley with a love of farming, and true to the cliché learned to drive a tractor before she could drive a car. During her first semester at college, she was exposed to the possibility of a life in wine.

The first stop after graduation was Testarossa Winery in Los Gatos, Calif., where she discovered the possibilities of Pinot Noir. Next, a big move to Torbreck Vintners in Australia, where she was given the chance to work with some of the oldest vines in the world. Then it was back to Napa Valley, where she spent a year making Cabernet Sauvignon at the famous Joseph Phelps Vineyards. The peripatetic Wilson then went half-way around the world once again, to work at Craggy Range in New Zealand.

Finally, she landed on the Sonoma Coast at Flowers Winery, famous for their Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Wilson worked her way up from harvest enologist to assistant winemaker, and realized the Sonoma Coast would be where her wandering ended, but not before a stint at Kamen Estate Wines in 2009 as the associate winemaker, making big, bold Cabernet Sauvignons and Syrahs for five years.

In 2009, Wilson launched her own winery, LaRue Wines, as well. It is named in honor of her great-grandmother, Veona LaRue Newell, who Wilson has described as inspirational and unique. Others have used the adjectives bold, independent, and feisty. The winery is very much a boutique operation, focusing on small lots of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, with total annual production limited to just 500 cases. Drawing on the cool conditions and remote coastal vineyards of the Sonoma Coast, Wilson strives for wines that are complex and vibrant with elegant acidity, and that drink well when young but also age gracefully. She is guided by a steadfast, non-interventionist winemaking philosophy that champions the land.

You Won't Rue These Wines

LaRue Heintz Chardonnay 2018 \$60

The fruit for this Chard was aged for 17 months in once-used French oak. It pours a clear bright yellow, and the nose offers up aromas of mango and grapefruit, with a touch of lemon meringue. The palate features a full, smooth mouthfeel and flavors of lemon and creme brûlée, all supported with mouthwatering acidity and a hint of vanilla.

LaRue Sonoma Pinot Noir 2018 \$60

This wine saw 20 months in French oak barrels, 20% of which were new. It is a quite pale cherry red, but looks can be deceiving. It starts with aromas of dark stone fruit, particularly plum, followed by predominantly strawberry on the palate, with some cranberry. Hints of violets and vanilla lead to a medium finish. It all wraps up with zippy acidity and delicate tannins. For more about LaRue Wines and many other wine reviews, be sure to visit winervana.com.



smhawk@winervana.com



Situated on 166 rolling, wooded acres, The Bluffs hosts an incredible 18 holes of championship golf on a setting seldom seen in the Chicago area. Located right off of Interstate 55, two exits south of Interstate 80, The Bluffs is the best kept golf secret in the Chicagoland area!

Big changes are coming to The Bluffs in 2021! Visit our website at heritagebluffs.com/construction-updates to stay up to date with everything happening!

(815) 467-7888

HeritageBluffs.com



The Future is Now for First Tee

As Arnold Palmer famously said, "Golf is deceptively simple and endlessly complicated; it satisfies the soul and frustrates the intellect. It is at the same time rewarding and maddening – and it is without a doubt the greatest game mankind has ever invented." Golf is a beautiful game, it's a challenging game – it pushes us to ask ourselves, "Who do I want to be, and how do I want to show up?" At First Tee – Greater Chicago, we believe that if we can teach kids how to be good golfers, they can learn how to be great people. We call it "building game changers."

I have always had a particular passion for youth development and education causes – providing kids with the experiences, support, and resources to succeed in life. While I was not a golfer prior to joining First Tee – Greater Chicago, I was immediately drawn to the organization's focus on instilling kids with values that help them build their resilience and strength of character. Being new to golf myself, I can learn alongside our kids and experience firsthand how much these values hold true in the game and translate into life off the course. When I visit our program sites, I make a point to seek out the kid who is struggling so I can share my story and encourage them not to give up.

Never have these lessons been more important than in the past year, which has taken its toll on our kids' mental health and physical well-being. It is so important that our kids can get outside to play, learn, and interact with peers. Thankfully, we can safely do that through golf.

Earlier this year, we broke ground on our first fully-operated facility at Waveland Park, a \$1.5 million capital campaign and an exciting and historic milestone for our organization. Phase One, set to open in Spring 2021, includes developing a kid's clubhouse with a learning center, lounge, and golf simulator – which will be open all year. Phase Two, expected to open in Spring 2022, will focus on a complete outdoor putting, full-swing and short game practice area,

with design assistance from PGA TOUR player Luke Donald. While we continue to fundraise for our Waveland facility, we look forward to opening day when we can welcome hundreds more kids each year to our new home, helping them cultivate strong character through play that will last them a lifetime.

Waveland will serve as a model for us to develop facilities throughout Chicago's south and west sides in the next three to five years, allowing us to reach thousands more kids on their personal journey. For me, golf will forever be so much more than a game, and Waveland will be so much more than a golf center. I believe in our mission, and in making a difference in so many kids' lives here in Chicago.



Photo: Loggy Media

Waveland will serve as a model for us to develop facilities throughout Chicago's south and west sides in the next three to five years, allowing us to reach thousands more kids on their personal journey.

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