

GOLFChicago

Chicago's Premier Multimedia Golf Source & Authority

Fall 2021, Vol. 25 No. 4

SANDY PINES: NW INDIANA'S PREMIER STAY AND PLAY

PREVIEW: THE 43RD
RYDER CUP MATCHES

DESTINATION: PINEHURST



GOLFChicagoMagazine.com



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Tour Edge
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OPENING SHOT

Todd Mrowice

I'm writing this on the heels of the 2021 BMW Championship. A tournament, that many will agree, was one of the most thrilling finishes in recent memory. And yet, I find myself perturbed. Why did Medinah get crushed among the national media in 2019 after Justin Thomas (and the rest of the field) blistered it? Shouldn't Caves Valley be getting the same treatment, maybe worse considering it played two shots easier on the winning score? Or, did that gripping sudden-death finish drape a cloak over the criticism?

My ultimate point here is that Chicago should never have been taken out of permanent rotation. There are plenty of courses that could host the event. I know there are more factors at play than I have space for here, but if approaching 30-under par is going to be status quo, you don't need to take the J.K Wadley Trophy far from home. Olympia Fields showed in 2020 how it stood up to the top seventy. History shows that Conway Farms had three better showings than Caves.

Back in July, I had the opportunity to play Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora, host of the 2021 Illinois Open. A Tom Fazio design (just like Caves Valley) that exceeds 7,200 yards with plenty of penalty areas, natural beauty, and space for spectators. Many will remember it hosted the PGA Ameritech Senior Open and the LPGA Kellogg-Keebler Classic.

Speaking of beautiful courses, check out our cover! Sandy Pines Golf Club in DeMotte, Ind. We took a journey with the club's owners and golf directors and found that this amazing spot has everything you need in a golf destination. We know it's impossible to enjoy just the words as much as we enjoyed the property, which is why you should book your trip.

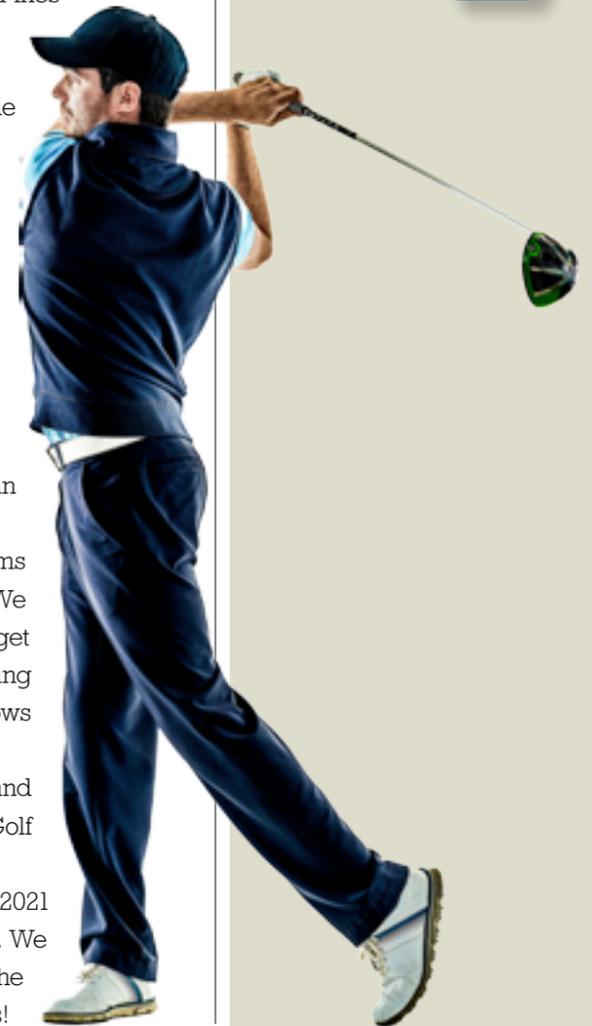
Our very own Neal Kotlarek (a Wisconsinite) gives you a rundown of what's to come at Whistling Straits this month for the 43rd Ryder Cup. Neal also creates a great deal of envy in this issue as he details Pinehurst Resort and all of its world class glory. But wait, there's more! Neal also had an exclusive Q&A with renowned golf course architect Tom Doak.

Our fitness feature is brought to you by Shannon Willits from Club Pilates. Shannon gives us some Pilates exercises that we can all perfect over the fall and winter to get us ready for 2022.

Dave Lockhart delivers another great addition to Links Gems as he details his experience at The Golf Club at Eaglewood. We also check-in with our friends at PGA TOUR Superstore and get all of the info on the Fitting Van Experience, a premium club fitting venture. Plus, the new clubhouse at The Preserve at Oak Meadows is complete and we have details.

All of this plus our usual Good Stuff, Sweet Home Chicago, and On the Corkscrews. Be sure to read Final Putt where Michigan Golf legend Dave Richards is remembered.

Thank you to all of our readers. We didn't quite know what 2021 would be like, but this year has far exceeded our expectations. We all remain in this together, and we couldn't be more proud to be the premier media source for Chicago golf. Now let's play until it snows!



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Founder: Bill Daniels

Publisher: Dave Weretka

Editor: Todd Mrowice

Art Director: Stephen Hawk

Senior Writer: Neal Kotlarek

Instructional Staff: Jantzen Miserak, Andy Mickelson, Andrew Ogata, and John Platt

Editorial Contributors: Stephen Hawk, Rory Hughes, Dave Lockhart, Greg Martin, and John Morrissett

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Editorial Inquiries

Todd Mrowice
golfchicagomag@gmail.com
847-917-4905

Advertising and Marketing Inquiries

Dave Weretka
dweretka@golfchicagomagazine.com
815-741-8005

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THE GOOD STUFF

Compiled by Todd Mrowice



Carry Your Sticks in Style

BIG MAX is a sneaky good company with a growing presence here in the U.S. Speaking of the States, this Dri Lite Hybrid Tour golf bag comes in five color combinations including this patriotic number. Whether you push, carry, or ride, this bag fits your game. Flat, footless design for ultimate stability on carts. Lightweight despite its size, 14-way divider, five water-repellent pockets, and a convenient cooler pocket.

\$259.99 us.bigmaxgolf.com



Go for Launch!

Good things come in small packages, and with the new Garmin Approach R10 portable launch monitor, truer words have never been spoken. This device can go with you to the range or stay at home. For your swing, it tracks more than a dozen metrics, gives detailed dispersion charts for training, records video clips, and so

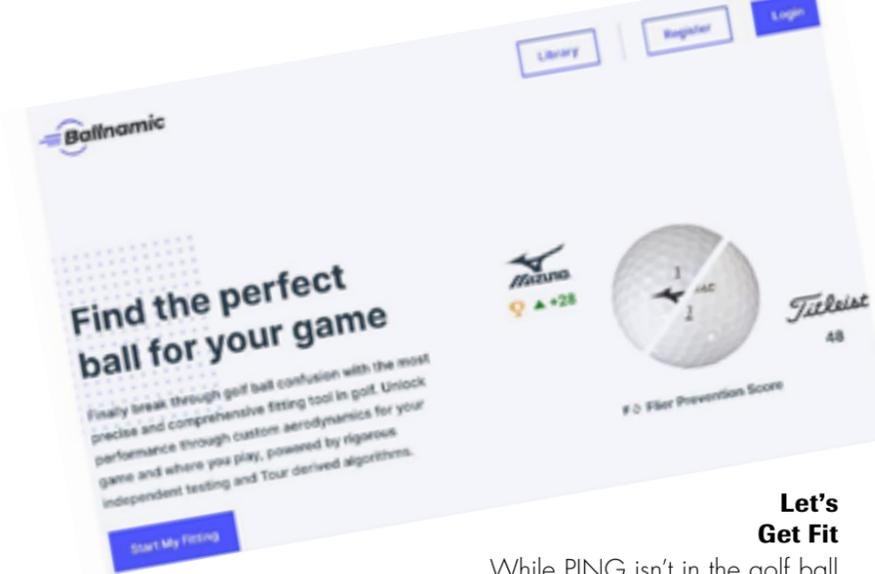
much more. You can also use it to play virtual rounds of golf on over 42,000 courses. Cost friendly to boot!
\$599.99 garmin.com



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The UA Storm Sweater Fleece 1/2 Zip from Under Armour will keep you warm whether you golf until turkey shoots or eskimo opens. The comfort and warmth of your favorite sweater combined with a lightweight fleece performance fabric. Repels water without sacrificing breathability and stretches with your golf swing. The 1/2 zip front also accommodates layering with ease. Available in eleven colors.

\$70 underarmour.com



Let's Get Fit

While PING isn't in the golf ball market, it seems that they want to make sure you're pairing the correct dimples with their clubfaces. Ballnamic is touted as breakthrough technology that collects data to find you the perfect golf ball. After plugging in all of the requested info about your game, a comprehensive results page is generated (after paying your fee) and you're on your way to the perfect golf ball marriage.

\$39 ballfitting.com

Great Hat- No Bowl of Soup Needed

Golf headwear has seen many phases, from necessity to billboard-esque. In 2021, it's all about being unique and stylish. That's just what d.Hudson Golfwear is up to. From dancing cactuses to retro looks, this San Francisco company has created hats for some of the most popular clubs in the U.S. The new d. Serpent Collection features a slithery front logo to go along with a snake skin design under the visor.



\$32 dhudsongolfwear.com

Trust Me, I'm a Pro

Tour Edge hit the ground running in 2021 with the release of the Exotics 721 Series. A line that had tremendous play on the PGA TOUR Champions. Now, the 721 Pro Series hits the market. A limited-edition line that is geared for the better player. Included in the lineup is a compact hybrid that has a taller face and lower spin. It features heel and toe weighting that can be manipulated and Tour Edge's Diamond Face 2.0 technology.

\$249.99 touredge.com





GOLFChicago Talks with Tom Doak

GOLFChicago had the opportunity to sit down with renowned course architect, Tom Doak. With a portfolio that includes astounding designs including Pacific Dunes, Old Macdonald, and the redesign of Course #1 at Medinah, Doak gave us some insight on his projects.

GOLFChicago: Along with designing some of the world's most spectacular golf courses, you are also a prolific author with seven books to your name. *The Making of Pacific Dunes* came out this year and tells the story of how the course was built. You've stated that from the moment you stepped on the property you realized that this particular project was what you spent 20 years training for. Can you provide insight on why you felt so strongly about that piece of land?

Tom Doak: There's 3/4 of a mile of frontage on the Pacific Ocean, to start with, and the inland parts of the property are perfect contour for golf. Plus, the weather conditions allowed for the same kind of links golf that I had spent a year studying right out of college. I've had some great sites since Pacific Dunes, too, but you can't get any better than that. **GC:** When I played Pacific Dunes, I was stunned by the beauty of the two consecutive par 3s. While perhaps an unconventional routing, it seems obvious today that keeping them together is part of what makes the course iconic. Why was that routing controversial at the time?

TD: I don't know that there has really been any "controversy" over the routing of Pacific Dunes; it's just very unconventional. When you build back-to-back par 3s, you are really calling attention to your routing, because it's so rare to see that. Before Pacific Dunes, I think the only top-100 course that had consecutive par-3 holes was Cypress Point, and those are two of the very best holes in the world; that's how good they have to be to justify the decision in some people's minds. So Mr. Keiser was resistant to the idea at first, until I showed him there were no other options that were nearly as satisfying. We couldn't lengthen the 10th hole to a par-4, because the other golf course

was in the way, and the 11th was not a hole we were going to pass by.

GC: Your previous book *Getting to 18* outlines the routing of the first 18 courses you designed. While 18 is a logical number to stop at, that cut-off means that we have to wait to read about Streamsong Blue and The Loop. So when is volume two going to be written?

TD: Yes, the members at Ballyneal, Stone Eagle, and Rock Creek are asking the same question. But writing books takes time, and hopefully I'm going to be busy building new courses again shortly, so I think it will be a few years before I write another book of any kind.

GC: Your newest project is Saint Patrick's Links in County Donegal. Describe the golf course.

TD: I've spent thirty years trying to get a project in Ireland, including two near misses on beautiful sites. The latter one will never be built on, because permits to build in the dunes are almost impossible to get in Ireland [or anywhere in the E.U.] now. St. Patrick's offered a loophole: there was already a course there, grandfathered in before the regulations were passed. Actually, there were 36 holes: one course was near the water but had a lot of parallel holes going up and down a big hill, while the other was in the bigger dunes in the back of the property, but it was quite short. The new course makes a grand tour of the property, with some big elevation changes on a couple of holes, and rippling links contours throughout the fairways. It has been an adventure to get the course finished during the pandemic, after spending so many years planning to build it, but the course has just opened in late June, and it will be ready for prime time as soon as Americans can get back over to play golf in Ireland. It is right next door to Rosapenna, and the Casey family who own that resort are managing St. Patrick's as well.

GC: While you were working on The Loop, your team at Renaissance Design built Stotatin Brae near Kalamazoo which won honors as "National Course of the

Year for 2021" by the NGCOA. I assume you take a lot of pride in seeing how your personal design principles were reflected in that golf course?

TD: It's amazing to me to see so many architects building courses that look like cousins of my own courses. For Stotatin Brae, mostly I'm just grateful that my four associates had a chance to get some recognition on their own.

Their names are Don Placek, Eric Iverson, Brian Schneider, and Brian Slawnik, and each of them is as talented as any of the associates I've ever had, which includes some guys who are big names now. It's just the nature of the business that a lot of articles call them "Tom Doak's team at Renaissance Golf Design," because readers will recognize my name. (sigh)

GC: Your newest project in Wisconsin serves up a different kind of challenge. The Lido Club was a celebrated course in Long Island that enjoyed inputs from C.B. Macdonald, Seth Raynor, and Alister MacKenzie. What interested you in taking on this project?

TD: People have been talking about re-creating the Lido for at least 20 years; at one point that was a potential concept for what became Old Macdonald, the fourth course at Bandon Dunes. It was an idea that wasn't going to go away until someone did it. Now there are two: Gil Hanse is building a version in Thailand, and mine is thankfully a lot closer to home! The challenge here is to be as faithful as possible to the original course, which is tough, because it's been gone for decades, and we only have a bunch of old photos and rough sketches of what it was. But our consultant, Peter Flory, assembled all of that for a video-game version, and we realized we could use that to get most of the dirt in the right places, and then interpret the photos just like we do on any other restoration to try to get the course right. In the process, we are using all kinds of mapping and construction technology I normally avoid like the plague, so it's been a really interesting crash course in how that stuff can help us in the future.

GC: What else is on the horizon for Tom Doak?

TD: It's hard to know for sure when [and if] any project will move forward, but here's what I know:

We're underway on a restoration of Perry Maxwell's home course, Dornick Hills in Oklahoma, with a lot of the funds coming from his family — which is really neat that they trust me to do that.

I'm helping out Zac Blair with his new course in Aiken, SC.

I'm pretty sure our resort course down the beach from Tara Iti (New Zealand) will get going in January of next year.

Also, I was just back at Bandon Dunes to complete the routing for a second par-3 course there, which might happen this winter, or the one after.

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Five Great Pilates Exercises for Golfers

As a Functional Golf Specialist and Pilates instructor who happens to be married to a PGA Professional, I've helped thousands of golfers achieve their golf-fitness goals. My husband Steve always says that the golfer is "almost always limited in achieving their golf goals due to a lack of physical ability." When I assess a golfer, I look at their movement in all three planes of motion and apply functional, core-based movement to address any deficits.

Posture is extremely important, and I've come up with a concept called the "ABCs of Pilates" — Alignment, Breathing, and Core — designed just for golfers. With low-back pain being a top complaint in the U.S., nearly every golfer that I have worked with has had issues with the lumbar spine, whether it is soft-tissue pain or disc issues. With that in mind, I make sure my golfers have a Pilates workout that encompasses the core, feet, and ankles; front and side body; and a focus on stability.

Here are my five specially-selected workouts to strengthen your golf performance and avoid injury:

Bridge (Reformer)



This targets the glutes and hamstrings, and is a great exercise to open up the front of the body and work on stability. This exercise also helps to create a strong athletic stance which is crucial to golf.

On the reformer, tilt your pelvis posteriorly to flex the lumbar spine, one vertebra at a time to a high bridge position. Then, soften the sternum and roll the spine back down to the carriage, beginning with the thoracic spine.

Twist Sitting (Short Box)

Helps to stabilize your lower body. In this exercise, the hips are fixed but the torso is



rotating, following a similar movement that you would in the golf swing.

Twist and Side Bends, aka Mermaids (Reformer)



An exercise to help lengthen and strengthen the side of your body. This is performed either sitting or kneeling sideways (more advanced) on the Reformer. The arms are in a big circle holding the straps while rotating the torso.

When the side of the body is less stiff, the other areas of your body move better promoting better golf form.

Supine Arms in Straps or Mid-back Series (Reformer)



Good for abdominal strength, Supine Arms in Straps is performed by lying supine on the Reformer carriage, with the pelvis and spine neutral. The legs are in tabletop position. One hand is in the loop with an

open hand grip. Your shoulder is flexed to 90 degrees.

Cross the arm over the torso while simultaneously flexing and rotating the spine and extending the legs. Complete repetitions, and then complete on the other side.

These movements combine core stability and breathing and are great for abdominal strength. Lots of golfers end up with back pain due to weak abdominal muscles. Building core strength will help to avoid any back pain and also will help with overall performance.

Eve's Lunge / Single Thigh Stretch (Reformer or mat)



For this quad and hip flexor stretch, keep the spine stable and hips as level as possible. Press the back leg against the shoulder block of the Reformer while bending the knee of the front standing leg, feeling stretch in the hip flexors of the back leg. Maintain gluteus maximus engagement in the back leg to keep the pelvis pulled forward and to avoid extending the lumbar spine. To increase stretch, lift the inside arm up toward the ceiling and hold for 30 seconds.

To get a really good stretch, perform this position with one foot on the reformer, and the other down on the floor. You can also extend the front leg to get more of a hamstring stretch. For golfers, getting a good stretch in these regions is super important.

We are highly sedentary people. Without a movement program that offsets all of this sitting, the body, being so adaptive, will stay in the sitting posture, even when standing. Thus, when the sedentary golfer goes out and starts playing, injury usually follows.

By regularly incorporating these Pilates exercises, golfers can maintain the spine angle at address, which is essential to efficiently

load and rotate through the backswing, harness the power of the core at impact, as well as successfully maintain balance through the finish. An inability to effectively maintain the spine angle throughout the swing puts a tremendous amount of force on the lower back and neck.

When we apply these Pilates moves, we are offsetting sitting, and preparing the body to play golf with more precision, power, and accuracy.

Shannon Willits and her husband Steve Abbe are the owners of Club Pilates in Ft. Myers, Cape Coral, and Estero, Florida. Steve is a PGA Professional and Shannon is a Master Pilates instructor for Club Pilates, a Fellow of Applied Functional Science (FAFS), and a certified Functional Golf Specialist with the Gray Institute. To learn more visit shannonwillits.com.

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Eaglewood, aka “The Little Green Menace”

There are literally hundreds of golf courses in Chicago to choose from—whether it's 9 or 18 holes. Public courses, private courses, resort courses, and executive courses. You name it, we have it. Windy City golfers are truly blessed with a vast array of courses.

When most avid public-access players are looking for a place to tee it up, they have their usual go-to track (roughly five to seven) within a half-hour of their home. Many go for the highly ranked and rated, bigger money layouts, but there are many designs around the area that have nearly as much challenge and maybe even have

a bit more of a “fun factor.” One such layout is The Golf Club at Eaglewood in the centrally located area of Itasca, just west of O'Hare Airport. Some twenty years ago the Eaglewood Resort and Spa took over this property and made a number of major renovations. You may remember its previous name of Nordic Hills.

What truly makes this design stand out is that it's one of the more hilly public tracks that you will find in Chicagoland. This Links Gem comes in at just slightly above 6,000 yards from the back tees, but it's no pushover. There are a few tight driving holes. A number of them where

you can possibly drive the green if you can belt it 250 yards plus off the tee. It's the sloping greens and intriguing bunkers that are the true defense on this course. The green sites and the snug tee shots are probably the reason this place has the moniker, “The Little Green Menace.” The greens have severe slopes from back to front. In one instance, I had a six-footer for birdie, tapped it, and finished about 15 feet by the hole. Missed that putt so it was a demoralizing bogey, ugh! Trust me, you can have some diabolical putts here, so do your best to stay below the cup. If you can do that, you will score well.

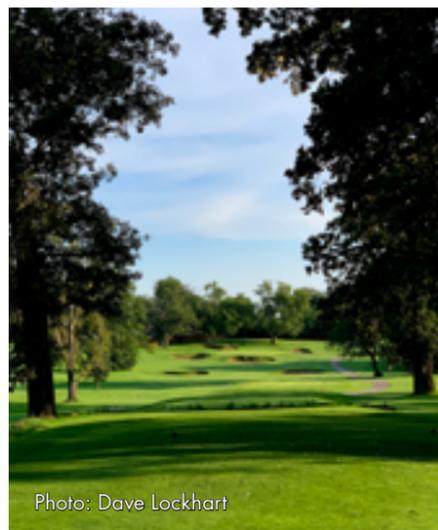


Photo: Dave Lockhart



Photo: Eaglewood Resort & Spa



Photo: Dave Lockhart



Photo: Eaglewood Resort & Spa

I really like the 10th hole, where you are on the highest point of the layout just in the shadows of the hotel located on property at Eaglewood Resort & Spa. From the tips, it's a 538-yard par 5 that has it all — from bunkers, to a number of trees, and a daunting pond that stretches just off the left side of the fairway. The green plays slightly uphill surrounded by a couple of bunkers. Make par or birdie on this “three-shotter” and you are likely beating your playing partners.

There are a few unique holes out here that you don't see very often, but hey, that's what makes it different and fun! I'll pick one from the front nine and one from the back nine. The 4th hole is 337 yards with a semi-blind tee shot that goes through a shoot of trees and has a 40-foot drop at around 230 yards out. It's not necessary to hit driver, but you better thread the needle

and keep the ball in play. If you don't, a double bogey may rear its ugly head and bite ya! No. 16 is a sharp dogleg, 311-yard hole, where you can't see the green from the tee. There are thick trees and OB on the left and a couple of well-placed bunkers on the right. A well-paced tee shot around 200 yards leaves you with a short iron into an undulating green. Par is more than satisfactory on this testy par 4.

Illinois Golf Hall of Famer Charles Maddox was the course architect when it opened back in 1932. Maddox designed a number of courses around the Midwest including local favorites such as Bartlett Hills, Stonehenge, and River Forest. He was a pioneer responsible for the development of many of the machines used to build golf courses, from horse and mule-drawn equipment, to the use of old army tanks after World War I, through the first steam tractors and giant

earth movers of today. His layouts have a reputation of being solid designs fitting the landscape seamlessly which I think he's achieved here at Eaglewood.

The resort lies in the shadows of its “Shangri-La” neighbor, Medinah Country Club. The landforms are fairly similar to famous course No. 3, but without the monster length, big water hazards and deep rough. “The Little Green Menace” can be tamed if you play smart and roll the rock. If you do that you could just have one of your better scores of the year! Moreover, it's the kind of course that can accommodate a wide array of players from beginners to scratch. Do yourself a favor and check out this gem. I guarantee you'll enjoy it and hopefully make some birdies, perhaps even an eagle!

For more information, visit <https://eaglewoodresort.com/golf>.

LINKS LAGER

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Sweet Home Chicago

Miniature Golf for the Birds

North Lawndale gained quite the fun attraction in early August as the Douglass 18 Miniature Golf Course opened to the public. Located next to the Douglass Park Golf Course, the putt-putt course is a collaborative effort between the Lincoln Park Zoo and community partners. The 18-hole course is youth-designed with the entire course representing aspects of the 205 migratory birds that pass through the park every year.

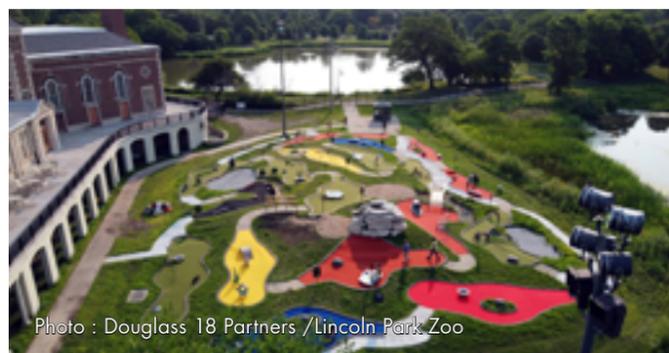


Photo : Douglass 18 Partners /Lincoln Park Zoo



Photo : Douglass 18 Partners /Lincoln Park Zoo

"After years in the making, it's inspiring and exciting to see our vision, imagination, and design finally come to life," said Tiffany Tam, a Douglass 18 youth participant and artist. "The transformation of the golf course is incredible! I'm proud to have been a part of Douglass 18 and can't wait for the community to come together and enjoy a round or two of miniature golf."

Once the project was hatched, 40 teens over the course of two years worked alongside lead teaching artists Eric Hatchkiss of the School of the Art Institute and Haman Cross III of Firehouse Community Arts Center to brainstorm obstacles. The designs were then modeled, tested, prototyped, and brought to life in the fabrication process. The artistic obstacles are inspired by the migratory birds found in the park and are designed to highlight different species' history, diet, threats, coloration, and other distinguishing features. The obstacle designs were displayed at community events (pre-pandemic), reaching more than 400 neighborhood residents to garner community feedback.

Douglass 18 was made possible by a Lincoln Park Zoo supporter who provided a \$800,000 gift for the co-created project.

Douglass 18 is open from May 1 through October 30 annually with the cost being only \$5 per player! For more information visit lpzoo.org.

Inverness Breaks Ground on New Addition



Photo : Inverness Golf Club

Inverness Golf Club broke ground on its new Family Activity Center, a new resort-like facility that will add paddle and pickleball courts, indoor golf simulators, a sports bar, an ultra-casual dining room, and business lounge. A complete overhaul of the existing clubhouse and dining rooms will be included in the overall transformation of the club.

For more information visit invernessgolfclub.org.

Mickelson Claims Illinois PGA Pro Championship

Andy Mickelson from Mistwood Golf Club won the 99th Illinois PGA Professional Championship at Ivanhoe Club with a winning score of 3-under-par 213. It was Mickelson's first career win in three appearances at the event.

"Coming in today I felt like it was going to be more of an Illinois Open setup," said Mickelson. "I truly did take it one shot at a time during the entire tournament. It's been five years since I've won a big tournament and done something special."



Glen Club Celebrates 20 Years

The Glen Club is celebrating 20 years in 2021. The club quickly became one of

the most respected courses and popular tee times after its opening in 2001. The Tom Fazio design was once home of the Glenview Naval Air Station before it became a sprawling home to elevation changes, natural areas, and 75 acres of prairie grass.

In a previous interview, Fazio stated; "Because The Glen Club is constructed on the former Glenview Naval Air Station, we had the unique opportunity to create the features and topography from scratch. The result is a visually stimulating design in the classic tradition, with beautiful, rolling fairways and harmonious transitions."

The course hosted the Korn Ferry Tour's Evans Scholars Invitational this past May and it is slated to return in 2022.

The Glen Club is operated by KemperSports. For more information visit theglenclub.com

An Evening With First Tee

First Tee of Greater Chicago is hosting an event on Thursday, November 11th called "Taste." The event will take place at Morgan MFG (401 N. Morgan St. in Chicago). For more information visit firstteegreaterchicago.org

25 Years of Bittersweet

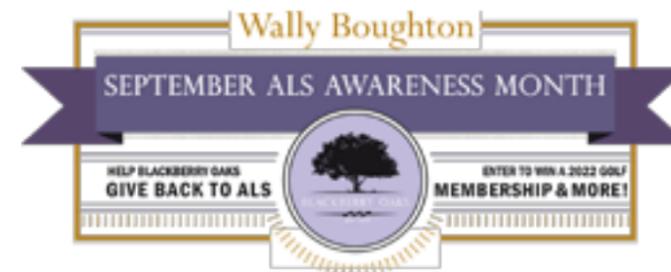


2021 marks the 25th anniversary of Bittersweet Golf Club in Gurnee. The club notes that improvements throughout the course and clubhouse were made to

ensure the club celebrates many more anniversaries. The 18-hole championship course is owned by the Village of Gurnee and managed by GolfVision's Management.

For more information visit bittersweetgolf.com,

Blackberry Oaks Helping Fight ALS



Blackberry Oaks Golf Course in Bristol is making a great effort to help fight against ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) in memory of Wally Boughton, one of the course's founders. September is ALS Awareness Month, and for the entire month you can purchase raffle tickets for \$5 each with the money going to support ALS research. Winners will be drawn on October 1st and prizes include a 2022 golf membership, \$100 gift card to Blackberry Oaks, a Wilson putter, Callaway golf balls, and TaylorMade golf balls.

In addition to the raffle tickets, \$1 of every green fee in the month of September also goes to ALS research. To purchase tickets and for more information go to blackberryoaks.com.

Mistwood's Jeray Finishes 26th at Senior LPGA



SENIOR LPGA CHAMPIONSHIP

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Nicole Jeray, LPGA Teaching Professional at Mistwood Golf Club, had a great showing at the LPGA Senior Championship. Jeray finished tied for 26th after posting rounds of 73, 74, 78 in the 54-hole event which was held at The Pete Dye Course at French Lick Resort August 27-29.

Balmoral Woods Hosting Fall Senior Event



Balmoral Woods in Crete is hosting a Fall Senior Championship October 2-3. The event is 36 holes of stroke play with no cut. Open to senior amateur players 50 and up, there are three divisions, all with winners and payouts.

For more information or to register visit balmoral-woods.com.

We-Ko-Pa: Your Scottsdale Golf Home Base of Operations

Many of the millions of people who flock to the Valley of the Sun to leave behind the cold and dreary Midwestern winters and bask in the Scottsdale sunshine are avid golfers aching to take advantage of the nearly 200 golf courses that dot the local landscape. With so many opportunities for outstanding golf, it can be difficult to find a home base of operations close enough to accomplish one's ambitious golf bucket list. In the case of proximity, pleasure and exceptional playability, few – if any – are better than We-Ko-Pa.

We-Ko-Pa begins where the city ends at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, just east of Scottsdale in Fort McDowell, Arizona. Open landscapes, vibrant colors, and incredible mountain views perfectly complement an extraordinary day on the golf course. But if you're looking for a bit more "play" out of your stay-and-play vacation to Scottsdale, look no further than the brand-new, state-of-the-art We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, just a driver and a nine-iron from We-Ko-Pa Golf Club – Arizona's ultimate golf experience.

The new, 167,000-square-foot We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort offers guests a larger casino with a garden court, specialty high-end dining, a sports bar with entertainment stage, and other best-in-class amenities.

The new facility is the cherry on top of what has been a 30-year stint as the torch bearer for casino gaming in the Valley of the Sun. And, speaking of new, Arizona's new gaming compact brings with it sports betting, craps, and roulette to go along with your favorite card and slot games all under one roof.

On the dining side is Ember – We-Ko-Pa's fine-dining experience – which starts with a scratch kitchen in full view from any dining area in the restaurant and serves up an extraordinary selection of the finest steak cuts and chops available. Choose from USDA Prime or American Wagyu beef in seven different sized cuts, braised buffalo short ribs, Colorado lamb chops, and veal and venison dishes all perfectly prepared over a wood burning grill.

As far as golf is concerned, the two courses – Cholla and Saguaro – are as good as anything around. In fact, Saguaro has held the top spot in *Golfweek's* state-by-state rankings for 14 of the last 15 years; Cholla currently holds the No. 7 spot.

The Cholla course – coming up on its 20th anniversary in December – embodies some of architect Scott Miller's favorite design philosophies. Traditional landing zones are relatively large. Trouble is easily identified, well defined, and not terribly penalizing.

And if players don't feel comfortable over the ball and want the added benefit of a bail-out area, they can usually find it fairly easily. Cholla is more "traditional desert golf" than its Saguaro counterpart. There are some forced carries and clear landing areas – especially on par-5 second shots. Unlike other Scott Miller tracks, however, Cholla is not an ultra-forgiving "resort" course where every single wayward shot finds its way back to the middle of the fairway. Players will have to pick their spots.

On the Saguaro side, the first time out can present a little changeup for people who are either used to traditional desert golf, or they haven't played a Coore/Crenshaw design before. The forced carries and clear landing areas were scrapped for a more natural approach where the course flows with the organic feel of the land itself. Coore and Crenshaw didn't move much dirt to complete the design on Saguaro, so the dips, turns, arroyos and elevation changes have been there for hundreds if not thousands of years.

Another non-typical thing for Scottsdale golf you'll find at We-Ko-Pa's Saguaro course: links-style design. The course is built for walking and guests can play any shot they would normally play on their favorite Midwestern courses back home. Players won't be penalized too badly for missing greens by a few feet and shot shaping will do you more good on Saguaro than anywhere else in Scottsdale.

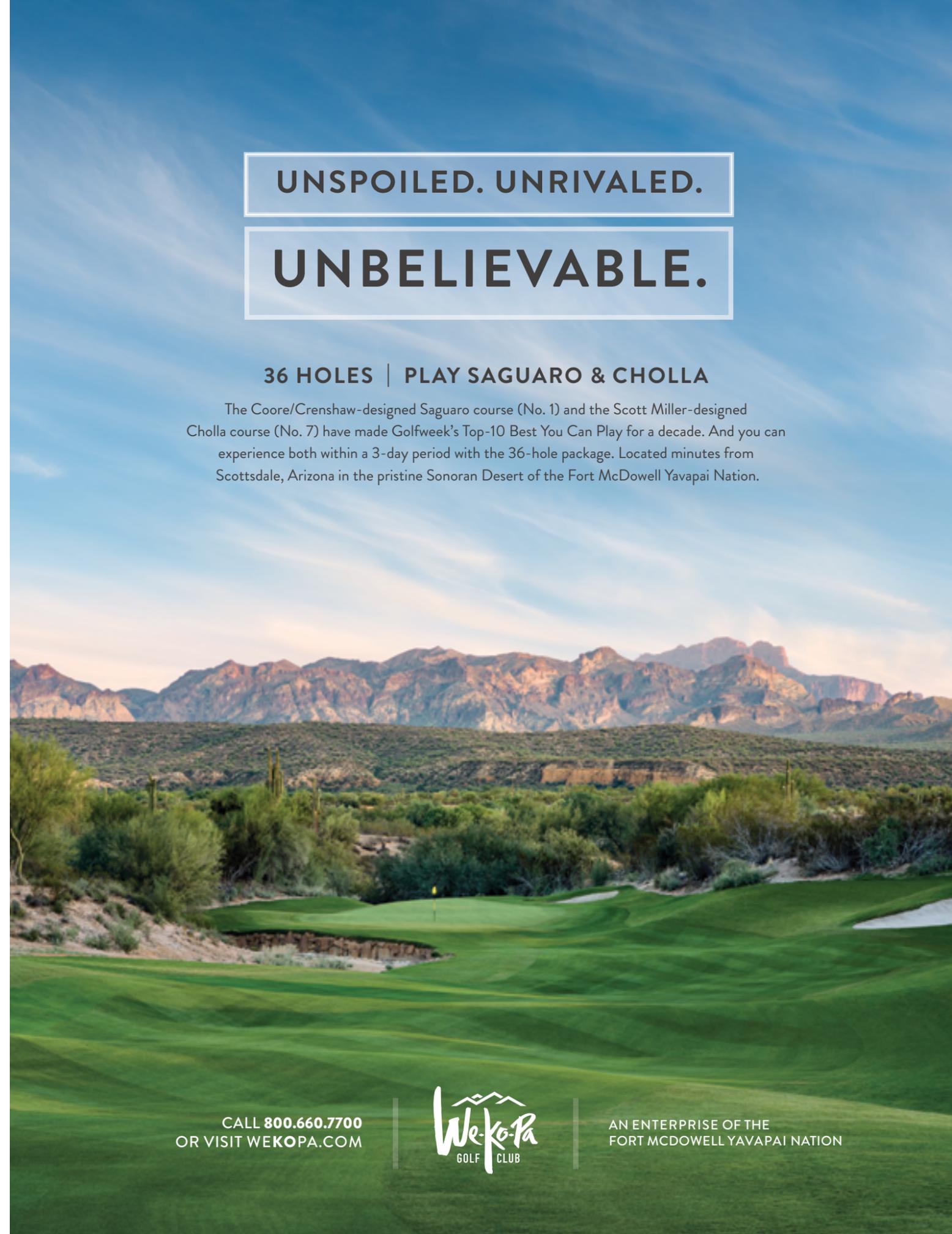
The routing and playing-style differences between Cholla and Saguaro are more noticeable than other 36-hole facilities, but the commitment to an unbelievable experience – and attention to detail – is the same throughout the entire property, regardless of season. But Cholla and Saguaro also have a lot in common. Both are meticulously maintained, both have received high praise from the golf media and consumers alike, and both offer a tranquil golf experience free of houses and roads, thus preserving the unobstructed mountain views of the Sonoran Desert. Or, more succinctly put, We-Ko-Pa is your home base for your trip to Scottsdale. 🏌️

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The Coore/Crenshaw-designed Saguaro course (No. 1) and the Scott Miller-designed Cholla course (No. 7) have made *Golfweek's* Top-10 Best You Can Play for a decade. And you can experience both within a 3-day period with the 36-hole package. Located minutes from Scottsdale, Arizona in the pristine Sonoran Desert of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.



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By Dave Weretka and Neal Kotlarek

Golf is Pinehurst. Pinehurst is Golf.

In 1895, Bostonian James Walker Tufts purchased 598 acres of land in the North Carolina sandhills for the tidy sum of \$1.25 per acre. The owner of the American Soda Fountain Company thought the property would make for a fine health club.

Today, 126 years later, Pinehurst Resort has become the ultimate remedy for golfers who travel to this expansive golf complex from across the world to play nine championship courses, highlighted by the No. 2 course which will host the men's U.S. Open in 2024, 2029, 2035, 2041, and 2047, the USGA's first anchor site for the tournament.

Known to many as "America's Home of Golf," the Pinehurst area (which most prominently includes Pinehurst Resort) is the perfect destination for a buddy trip. Given hundreds of holes of championship golf in an idyllic setting an hour's drive from Raleigh-Durham International Airport, groups heading here don't need to make elaborate

schedules complete with maps and timelines. Just create your wish list and confirm the tee times. Make sure to leave some time to eat and relax in between rounds.

The legacy of Pinehurst as a golf haven began with a search initiated by Tufts to hire his resort's first golf professional. When Donald Ross arrived in North Carolina, he had no experience in course architecture. No matter, Tufts entrusted the young Scotsman to use his background as an apprentice to Old Tom Morris to design the first four courses at Pinehurst Resort. Some 396 Ross designs later (40 in North Carolina, alone), golf architecture in America would never be the same.

The most fascinating aspect of Ross's relationship with Pinehurst Resort is that he continued to tinker with his courses throughout his life. The primary characteristics of a Ross work are crowned, rolling greens which invariably lead to vexing chip shots should the approach to a green fall

short or go long. Sometimes, a ball inches from perfection can veer back down away from the flagstick by 10 or even 20 yards. While some would call this cruel architecture, Sam Snead marveled at Ross's creativity as he felt it challenged golfers to be their best.

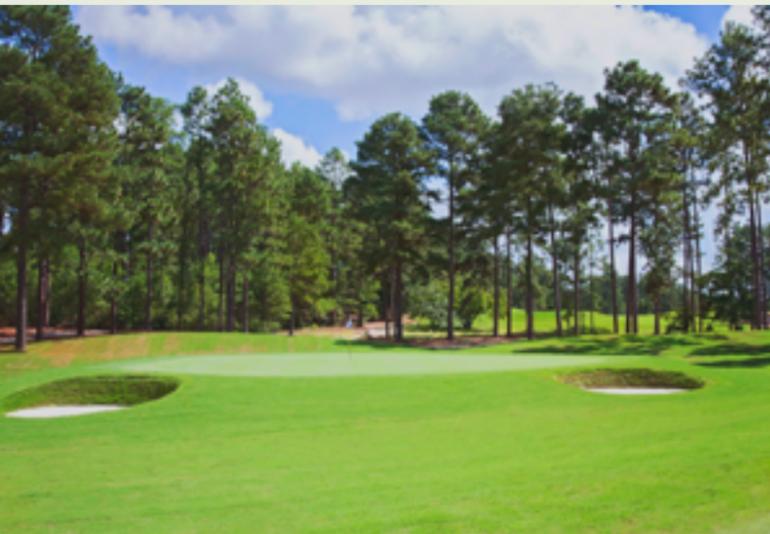
In 2011, the resort's classic No. 2 course underwent a dramatic transformation courtesy of Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore. While the fairways of the course maintained their original width, roughs were ripped out leaving behind irregular sandy ground dotted with wisps of wiregrass. Not very long ago, the course was 95 acres of manicured grass. It is today 50 acres of fairways and greens surrounded by 45 acres of dramatic lunar landscape. Most importantly, it is now as beautiful as it is fun.

Along with the four great Ross courses, Pinehurst Resort serves up five additional layouts designed by the likes of Jack Nicklaus, George and Tom Fazio, and Ellis

Maples. While each has a character distinct to its designer, all seemingly pay tribute to Ross.

Even if it seems improbable that a nine-course complex needs more golf, the resort expanded once again in 2017 with the fantastically enjoyable Gil Hanse-designed The Cradle short course. Called by The Golf Channel "the most fun 10 acres in all of golf," the course features 75,000 square feet of greens, seven acres of fairways, three sandscapes and zero acres of rough.

Just how fun is The Cradle? During our visit, we watched in delight as sixsomes of barefoot golfers carried beverages from hole to hole listening to music piped in around the course as they launched balls toward the greens. On one hole, we even saw a couple steer a stroller from tee to green as they presumably taught their future hall-of-famer the art of the game. And on yet another hole, we witnessed a hole-in-one which was cheered on by spectators sitting around



Cradle Aerial



No. 2 13th Hole



No. 4 2nd Hole



No. 2



Tobacco Road



Rees' Fingers No. 7



No. 8 11th Hole



No. 4 16th Hole

the course in Adirondack chairs. What a blast! While The Cradle may not offer the challenges of the No. 2 course, it is a great way to start and end your golf junket.

One of the most interesting insights we gleaned from our trip to Pinehurst was how many golfing families are influenced to make the trip. Indeed, over each of four rounds we played at the resort we were paired with father/son and husband/wife duos who wanted to share their bucket list trip with a loved one. In our 20+ years of taking golf trips, we never encountered such a delightful cross-section of fellow travelers.

Accommodations at Pinehurst Resort include villas for larger groups, the recently renovated Manor Inn (Arnold Palmer's preferred stop when he visited, the inn has dual hospitality suites that can fit groups as large as 20), as well as rooms at the four-diamond rated Carolina Hotel which is known by regulars as the "Queen of the South."

There are no less than 10 dining and breakfast options at the resort. Our personal favorite is the Pinehurst Brewing Company which pairs smokehouse-cooked meats with a

wide array of microbrews and spirits made exclusively by North Carolina distillers. Do yourself a favor and try their homemade Blackberry Habanero sauce. A little sweet and a little heat. You can thank us later.

While golf is undoubtedly the primary focus at the resort, a wide array of entertainment options and amenities abound for non-golfers. The Spa at Pinehurst serves up all types of treatments and therapies, and features a serene saline lap pool. Other activities include: carriage rides, lake sports, a fitness center, swimming pools, lawn sports, and even a BMW guest drive experience. For those who can't get enough golf, Thistle Dhu is an 18-hole putting course available free-of-charge to hotel guests. One amenity is an absolute must: a walk through the clubhouse to enjoy classic photos which capture the property's rich legacy.

Beyond Pinehurst Resort, the Pinehurst area is blessed with an array of other celebrated golf courses, including those designed by Dan Maples, Arnold Palmer and, of course, Donald Ross.

Located just minutes from the Village of Pinehurst, Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club offers one of the top golf

courses in the state designed by Ross in 1927 (and lovingly restored by Kyle Franz in 2017) and is set to host the 77th U.S. Women's Open in 2022. Along with this outstanding course, The Loop is a fun four-hole short course featuring three par 3s and a short par 4.

Mid Pines Inn and Golf Club and Southern Pines Golf Club are sister properties of Pine Needles and also serve up great courses designed by Ross. Mid Pines is celebrated as a "pure" Ross design as it was restored in 2013 to the exacting specifications of its original footprint. Over the years, the course has hosted many national tournaments, including the 2002 USGA Senior Women's Amateur Championship. The inn is a stately hotel built in 1921 and incorporates suites and multiple dining rooms. Opened for play in 1906, the 6,500-yard Southern Pines course is among Ross's earliest creations.

Tobacco Road Golf Club was literally built on land once tended to as a tobacco farm. The expansive golf course moves through multiple landscapes including a former mine and sand quarry.

Talamore Golf Resort is an all-around amazing golf experience. The Rees Jones-designed The New Course at Talamore underwent a remastering plan for its 25th anniversary which brought back original green concepts along with enhanced playability and pace of play. The New Course tops out at 6,840 yards, par 71.

Within the Talamore Resort is Mid South Club, a private golf retreat designed by "The King" himself, Arnold Palmer. 545-acres of longleaf pine forests, lakes, and gently rolling hillsides, this Carolina experience is as challenging as it is beautiful. Inching just over 7,000 yards, Mid South lets it be known that you must drive the ball 225 yards or more from the back tees in order to hit fairways.

As far as lodging goes, the Talamore Villas along with the Lodges at Mid South are both first class accommodations that are capable of handling any group size.

The Pinehurst golf area is a must-play for every golfer's itinerary. For more information about the area, visit the convention bureau's website: www.homeofgolf.com.

For more information about Pinehurst Resort visit www.pinehurst.com.



Let's face it. This is the greater Chicagoland area, which is filled with golf enthusiasts, and the idea of a "hidden gem" is becoming less and less likely. The course that you feel fits into your back pocket and you're its one and only? I've got news for you, your course is seeing other people. Lots of people. I'm sorry that you had to find out this way.

I've got great news for you though. Fall is the perfect time to get out there and explore new horizons. We are Chicagoans and Chicago suburbanites, but we love visiting our surrounding states to see what they have to offer. So when I tell you that an exceptional course exists 90 minutes from O'Hare (75 minutes from the city) that you likely have not played, and it's incredibly cost efficient, are you going to be ready to hit the road? Great! Because you're heading to DeMotte, Ind., home to Sandy Pines Golf Club.

The city of DeMotte is located just east of I-65 in Northwest Indiana. It's what pops into your mind when you picture a small town, being that the population is only about 3,800. And within DeMotte's border is Sandy Pines,



Sandy Pines Golf Club

Time to Redefine "Hidden Gem"

Todd Mrowice

which in many ways is its own small town. The property not only has a championship 18-hole layout, it also offers inviting food options, brand new accommodations, and a staff that can not be more friendly and genuinely happy to see their guests.

Originally built in 1973, Sandy Pines underwent a massive overhaul in 2004 after course owners Greg Hamstra and Mitch Van Kley purchased the property. Under the direction of course architect Tim Nugent (White Deer Run, Foxford Hills, del Lago Golf Club), the work included adding ponds and bunkers along with bent grass tees and fairways. The endgame in mind was to create a course that would challenge players of all skill levels. Something that Hamstra and Van Kley feel that they've accomplished.

"This course really feels like it belongs in the Carolinas," said Hamstra. "The White Pines are 50 to 60 years old so it's very mature. Tee to green it flows tightly and I think you have a nice balance here of challenging holes and scoring holes."

Van Kley added that the change of terrain will likely catch visitors off guard. "This is a unique property when you take into account it's not too far outside of a busy area, and then you drive into wooded areas with elevation changes and sand. When we purchased the course we had a geologist come in because we noticed the ridge that runs the entire length of the course always had a different kind of sand—it had a white tint. Turns out it's different because the shores of Lake Michigan were once there. During construction we even found fossilized items."

Moving earth around wasn't something that these two gentlemen had to read up on. Greg Hamstra is the President & CEO of The Hamstra Group, Inc., a company that handles real estate development, construction, and property management. Mitch Van Kley is the Executive Vice President & CFO of the company. Together, they have overseen projects that include hospitals, dairy farms, churches, libraries, and much more. But, missing from their resume was a golf course. With both living near the course, it was a venture the duo felt confident in taking on.

"It was pretty simple, actually," said Hamstra. "It was already home for us and when the opportunity to purchase the course came up we decided to jump in."

Van Kley added, "We knew with the right remodel, Sandy Pines could be something very special."

From the tips, Sandy Pines can stretch out to just under 6,900- yards (par 72), with a 73.4 rating and 136 slope. In front of the tips, you'll find four additional sets of numeral tees to accommodate any level of golfer. I/II Combo at 6,539 yards, II at 6,312- yards, III at 5,758 yards, and IV at 4,914 yards.



My favorite aspect of the layout at Sandy Pines is the harmonious balance between "gettable" par 4s and truly challenging par 3s and par 5s. Even if you're a long hitter, Sandy Pines makes you earn it. Personally, my average drive hovers somewhere around 265. Upon completion of my first round at the course I found that the spots I got into trouble were mainly the par 4s because I didn't take the proper line on my tee shots. Surprisingly, my best holes were the yardage-heavy par 3s and 5s.





Using the yardage from the tips, your par 3 numbers come in at 189, 249, 160, and 205. That's right, two of them over two bills! Hole No. 8 is the 250-yard beast. The slightly diabolical aspect to this hole is that short is safe. However, if you successfully rip one, long is dead meat. And if you hit the number but just miss, pot bunkers are left and right of the green. Talk about mean.

I'll openly admit, I'm a sucker for three things. My son, my daughter, and scenic par 3s. And if you're like me, the 17th hole will have you taking orders in no time. This 205-yard tee shot is essentially straight away, but the massive pond that sits between you and the green drifts off to the right almost as if to say, "come with me." At that yardage, I can't even imagine the number of golf balls swimming in there. Banking that pond all the way around is a thin width of sand that may end up saving those that come up short. As the sand approaches the green, it develops into a large bunker that protects the front of the putting surface. Bail out to the left if you can manage to keep your eyes off of the water.

Par-5 yardages leave something extra, even for long hitters. They are 552, 605, 554, and 549. The No. 7 hole maxes out at 605 yards but most players will, of course, play from tees in front of that. Still though, 591 yards is a long, long way home. Your tee shot is hit from an area of surrounding trees to a fairway that gradually opens up; that is, right before it encloses you on the right side with sand and water. A great tee shot here is one thing, but having to thread the needle with your second shot is where the trouble comes in. This hole actually has



two green complexes, both well-guarded with bunkers.

My favorite hole at Sandy Pines just might be the par-5 2nd; I'm still trying to decide. This beauty requires an uphill tee shot where you'll need to carry a strip of bunkers. Once you've reached the top, the land actually meanders down gradually to the left. You need to properly play angles to the green, which is easier said than done. Once you have your approach shot you'll need to clear a pond as well as three bunkers short. Anything long and you'll find a pair of bunkers or an uncomfortable pitch back towards the pond.

"We were looking at the routing for No. 2 and ultimately decided to purchase the 40 acre landfill across the street," said Hamstra. "That is now one of the most unique spots on the course and is actually one of the highest points in all of Jasper County."

Hamstra and Van Kley do not like attaching the words "signature hole" to Sandy Pines, citing that it would be difficult to even come up with a Top 9. I don't disagree with them. If there is one hole that I remember most, it's the par 4 6th hole. This short hole is such a blast to play, I can see good players getting anything from birdie to double bogey or more. Driver should stay in the bag unless you are insane or insanely confident in your ability. A "Y-shaped" creek stays with you the entire length of the hole on the right side and then splits the fairway near your approach shot. There are bunkers lurking everywhere and the entire green complex is gently housed by trees. The Sandy Pines website (sandypinesgc.com) has amazingly detailed flyovers of every hole. I would suggest scoping this one out ahead of time.

I previously mentioned, "incredibly cost efficient" and I wasn't lying. After everything you've read thus far and everything you're going to read ahead, keep in mind that the most you're going to pay for a round at Sandy Pines is \$80. You can catch twilight rates as low as \$35, senior rates (Monday - Friday) for \$40, and several other pricing options on their website.



If you go 90 minutes in any direction around Chicagoland, I don't know if you'll find a better deal than that.

A unique aspect to Sandy Pines that doesn't have to do with hole routing, fairways, or greens is the staff. The club actually has two individuals that hold the title of Director of Golf. Lauren Peretin and Andy Simpson are the "dynamic duo" behind the day-to-day success at Sandy Pines.

"This course can be pretty much what you want," said Peretin. "I like that it can be your little weekend vacation because it's just far enough away to give you a change of scenery. Plus, this quality golf course for about half the price of what you'd pay around the Chicago area makes it a great destination."

"The golf speaks for itself," said Simpson. "We see a lot of return trips based on golf, yes, but the welcoming vibe to go along with all of our amenities is what we hear as well. This isn't just a place to make money, it's home."

If you've ever experienced a "non-stay and play" golf trip, you'll know that trekking back to the hotel or waiting for a shuttle/Uber is just plain inconvenient. Staying onsite is paramount, and Sandy Pines recognized that. Two brand new cottages just made their debut on property. These cottages have four bedrooms (king beds), four bathrooms, and are positioned along hole No. 9, across the street from the driving range. Your front door is quite literally steps away from anything you want. Each cottage features a centralized living room, kitchenette, and an outdoor patio for you to begin or end your day. No expense was spared when designing these cottages. Three words: rainfall shower heads.

"It's all first class, that's what we were aiming for and that's what you'll experience," said Van Kley. "We're excited that we can now fully accommodate groups with our cottages so you can feel that everything you need is right here on property."

If you make your trip to Sandy Pines in the spring (March 15 - April 30) or fall (October 1 - November 30) seasons, your foursome can get into one of these cottages for \$800/night, \$40 per additional guest. Summer cottage rates run May 1 - September 30 and are \$900/night, \$50 per additional guest. Additional cottages are in the works for spring of 2022.

continued on page 36



The 43rd Ryder Cup Matches

Fans Set To Roar at Whistling Straits

Neal Kotlarek

Golf gallery roars come in many different sizes and flavors. There's the "birdie roar" which occurs on a tournament's final day when one of the leaders rams home a critical putt to inch a stroke closer to victory. Then there's the "eagle roar" for the rare occasion when a player converts a seemingly miraculous bunker shot or greenside chip on a par 5 to leap over a slew of competitors on the leaderboard.

But there's still another golf roar. It is heard every two years in either Europe or the United States when the Ryder Cup Matches pit the best professional Americans against their counterparts across the pond. Back in 2012, the matches took place in Chicago's western suburbs at Medinah Country Club. For two glorious days, the American team led by Tiger Woods and then-US Open champion Webb Simpson poured in birdie after improbable birdie to take a commanding lead going into the final day's singles matches. Throughout that Friday and Saturday, fans didn't need a scoreboard to know how the American teams were performing. All anyone had to do was stand somewhere on the course or even outside the club gates to hear the deafening cheers and chants of "USA! USA! USA!" after the national team sunk another

crucial putt. In fairness, the noise was defused a bit during the final day when Team Europe stunned the Americans with a miraculous comeback to earn the cherished cup. Forever in history known as "The Miracle at Medinah" or "The Meltdown at Medinah" depending on what side you were pulling for.

As a golf writer who has covered tournaments at all levels for over 30 years, I was inspired by the glee the galleries exuded when a player won a hole or earned a point. Think of the thunderous cheers heard during the World Cup finals. Or of the booming howls heard after a 4th quarter touchdown in the Super Bowl. Then add a decibel or two. That's the Ryder Cup roar.

On September 24 – 26, galleries will take to the fairway edges and greensides of Whistling Straits in Haven, Wisc., to support Team USA as it takes on Team Europe in the 43rd Ryder Cup Matches. Originally scheduled for 2020, the event was postponed last year due to the pandemic. While golf tournaments were played throughout much of the 2020 season, both teams—along with the PGA of America which manages the event—felt strongly that Ryder Cup Matches without spectators (and, thus, sans the "Ryder Cup roar") were not the spectacle which has made them the greatest golf show on earth since 1927 when they originated. Indeed, these matches truly only reached their passion peak in 1979 when the competition was adjusted from US v. Great Britain and Ireland to US v. all of Europe. That inclusion of the finest professional golfers from the likes of Spain, Germany and Italy significantly increased the competitive landscape between the two teams. Every two years, the event switches between a European site and a US location. The 2018 matches were won by Team Europe in a rout, 17-1/2 to 10-1/2 points. In 2016, Team USA leveraged its home-field advantage at Hazeltine National to win 17 to 11.

Much care has seemingly been taken by Team USA to avenge its 2018 loss. For starters, the team captain is Steve Stricker, a Ryder Cup veteran and a Wisconsin native who will presumably offer his team insights on the fickle winds off Lake Michigan which borders the golf course. Supporting Stricker will be five vice-captains—five-time Ryder Cup player Zach Johnson, 2016 Ryder Cup



captain Davis Love III, 2018 Ryder Cup captain Jim Furyk, 12-time Ryder Cup player Phil Mickelson, and five-time Ryder Cup player Fred Couples. Through mid-August, at least, there remained the possibility of Tiger Woods being named as a vice-captain to join the team for both strategic and morale purposes. Woods continues to work on his recovery from a car accident which has made him unavailable.

The “X-factor” in all of these preparations is Whistling Straits. Considered one of the top 25 golf courses in America by *Golf Digest*, the course was designed by Pete Dye. The course is already tournament-proven as it hosted the PGA Championship in 2004, 2010, and 2015. Sculpted along 2.5 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, Whistling Straits is a hybrid between the great links courses of Ireland and Scotland, combined with a little bit of Pebble Beach and a whole lot of Pete Dye. The late designer considered Whistling Straits one of his greatest accomplishments. Provided 560 acres of shoreline and a vast budget, Dye was directed by plumbing magnate Herb Kohler to transform the former aircraft weapons firing range into a legendary layout. “I want the course to look like it’s in Ireland,” he said. Dye used all of his 40+ years’ experience combined with 13,000 truckloads of sand imported from area farmers and a Panzer division of earth movers to design a course like no other in Wisconsin. Or in the Midwest. Or in America, for that matter.

“I get excited the moment I step on this property,” said Mike O’Reilly, director of operations at Whistling Straits in a June interview. “It’s a fantastic course for match-play as every hole challenges the player to strategize where to place the tee shot and where to aim on the green. There’s lots of risks and lots of rewards.”

Gary D’Amato has observed the evolution of Whistling Straits from

its inception to its construction to its present status as one of the country’s finest public golf courses. “It’s hard to believe that this spectacular landscape of soaring dunes, fescue-covered mounds and jagged-edged bunkers once was flat as a pancake,” said the writer for *Wisconsin Golf* magazine. “Only Pete Dye could imagine such a place, and then bring it to life. Whistling Straits is Ballybunion without the salt spray.”

O’Reilly makes an interesting comparison as Whistling Straits plays so similar to European links courses that it would seemingly give an edge to the Europeans who spend much of their season playing courses that are firm and fast. “The best team normally is the one who wins,” said O’Reilly. “The American team will consist of players who have enjoyed successes in the Open Championship.” To his point, Collin Morikawa won this year’s Open Championship, with Americans Jordan Spieth, Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, and Daniel Berger all finishing in the top 10. Morikawa, Johnson, and Koepka had already qualified for this year’s team as of mid-August, along with Bryson DeChambeau, Justin Thomas, and Olympic gold medalist Xander Schauffele. The other six members will be captain’s picks and are expected to include Tony Finau, Daniel Berger, Spieth, Harris English, and Patrick Reed. Those final six selections were to be announced following the Tour Championship at East Lake during the first week of September.

Team Europe will be led by PGA Tour superstar Jon Rahm along with Tommy Fleetwood, Tyrrell Hatton, and Matthew Fitzpatrick. Likely qualifiers as of mid-August were Rory McIlroy, Viktor Hovland, Paul Casey, and Lee Westwood. Team captain Padraig Harrington will choose the final three selections.

Event organizers are preparing for a gallery of nearly 40,000 per day at the event. While officials are cautiously optimistic that the outdoor venue will provide a fun and safe environment for

the matches, specific health and safety guidelines will be updated as the event draws near.

All Midwesterners know that late September weather may play a significant role in how the course challenges the Ryder Cup players. Temperatures have been known to drop by as much as 20 degrees during autumn afternoons. Winds coming off the lake could play a big factor in how aggressively the contestants attack the flags.

Gallery members will not have to search far to locate key holes which could determine the winners and losers. The greens of both No. 9 and 18 are right behind the clubhouse. Each requires difficult approach shots to greens protected by water and sand. Without many trees across the course, designer Dye placed “about 1,000 bunkers” everywhere across the property. In fact, no one knows the exact number of bunkers on the course as they are deviously located near greens, near landing areas, and far away from greens and far away from landing areas.

“While the sloping greens and Lake Michigan winds play a factor on the course,” said WGN sportscaster Dan Roan who played Whistling Straits in June, “the number, size and variety of bunkers is what makes it challenging.” Roan pointed to No. 17 as a key hole for the Ryder Cup contestants “if they make it that far.” Nicknamed “Pinch Nerve” due to a wide array of obstacles from tee to green. The 249-yard par 3 offers no safe areas around the raised putting surface. Lake Michigan lurks along the left side of the green while a formidable raised pot bunker resides to the right. Wild grasses and more bunkers blanket the rest of the green. “Simply put, the player has to land on this large green or suffer the consequences,” said Roan.

Whistling Straits is one of four championship courses

that make up Kohler Golf. The award-winning Irish Course resides on the same property as Whistling Straits and was also designed by Dye.

Twenty minutes away from those courses, Blackwolf Run serves up two remarkable championship courses while completely different in look and feel to the fairways and greens of their counterparts. The stunning River course features water or valleys on 14 of its 18 holes. The Meadow Valleys course serves up rolling terrain and natural gorges. Both of these courses, along with the Straits courses, are perennially ranked among the top 10 golf courses in Wisconsin.

Introduced to the public in June, The Baths of Blackwolf Run is a 10-hole par 3 course that pays homage to Kohler Company’s 128-year history of bath-design products. The delightful and tricky course can be played with just a few clubs and is complemented by a two-acre putting course. Speaking in front of a crowd of youth groups and local golf organizations at the new course’s grand opening, Herbert V. Kohler Jr., executive chairman of Kohler Company and co-designer of the course, said that The Baths was designed as a multi-purpose facility. “Our intent for The Baths is that it will quickly become a place where people from all walks of life will be introduced to the great game of golf,” he said. It is expected that The Baths will be used by golf guests before or after playing one of the Kohler Golf’s championship courses but will also be accessible to juniors and seniors learning the game.

The golf courses are part of Destination Kohler, which incorporates the five-star American Club Hotel, the Inn on Woodlake, the Kohler Cabin Collection and the Kohler Waters Spa, along with dozens of other amenities including fine dining and the Kohler Golf Academy.

PROFILES

Todd Mrowice



The Fitting Van Experience

The pandemic golf “boom” has impacted every aspect of the industry. Now, more than ever, consumers are investing money in their games. From where you play to what you’re wearing on the course, chances are you’ve spent some extra coin on your golf habit over the past year plus. And if you’re one of the many that invested in new equipment, here’s hoping that you had them custom fit to your specs.

PGA TOUR Superstore does a fantastic job of custom fitting clubs at no charge. It’s part of the fabric when visiting the experiential golf retailer. If you’re the type of person that wants a “next level” experience though, the Fitting Van Experience is your place to be. This private, one-on-one session with a certified Fitting Van Specialist is a deep dive into how you swing your sticks and what the best route is for you to get to lower scores. How do they get you there? A combination of game-changing technology, manufacturer-specific equipment, and the personal attention from your specialist. This can include a new club purchase or an evaluation of what you currently game.

Danny Kusek, a Fitting Van Specialist at the PGA TOUR Superstore location in Downers Grove (1017 Butterfield Rd.), believes players of all skill levels benefit from this club-fitting experience, because he’s seen it firsthand.

“The average player will see a huge benefit to having their clubs custom fit for them,” said Kusek. “They have the

fitter’s undivided attention, they make an appointment so there is no waiting in the store, and they are encouraged to give the fitter what their detailed needs and wants are from their current equipment or new equipment. More accomplished players can plan on seeing smaller misses and equipment that compliments their game.”

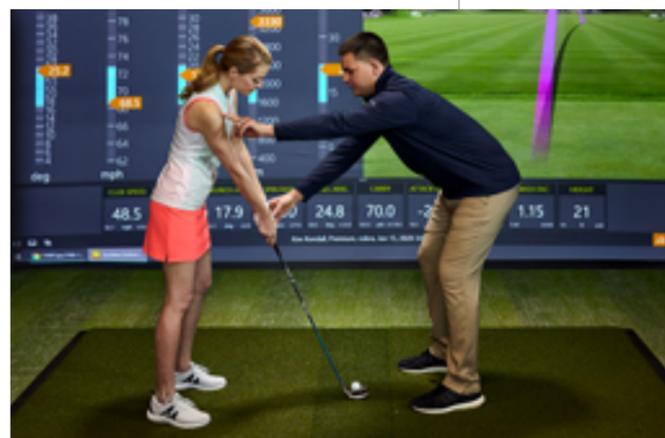
The current options available to book for the Fitting Van Experience include an iron fitting, driver fitting, fairway/hybrid fitting, putter fitting, wedge fit/gapping, and a 10-club gap analysis. Each individual service varies from 60 to 90 minutes and pricing ranges from \$39.99 to \$49.99. Reservations can be made by calling your local store or booking online at pgatoursuperstore.com.

While you may be considering the Fitting Van Experience for yourself, another person to consider is a youth golfer close to you. Especially those in high school that are reaching new strides with their golf games. Parents, before investing in those new clubs,

this service will ensure your dollars are well spent.

“Having equipment properly sized is a monumental benefit,” said Kusek. “I equate it to driving a car after you’ve adjusted seats, mirrors, radio, and climate controls. Proper fitting makes everything much more comfortable.”

In addition to the Downers Grove location, you can also find the Fitting Van Experience at PGA TOUR Superstore locations in Schaumburg (1319 E. Golf Rd.) and Vernon Hills (295 Center Dr. next to Hawthorn Mall).





The Preserve Finally Gets a New House

I'll never forget the phone call from my dad in February of 2009. "Well, Oak Meadows is burning down," he said. Confused, I took to the *Daily Herald* website and there it was. The clubhouse I had spent many summers running around in as a youngster, engulfed in flames. The victim of a lightning strike, the old Tudor-style building took six hours to extinguish with over 100 firefighters from 26 fire departments. Thankfully, nobody was injured. But that old building will always hold a special place in my heart as Dad and his seven buddies had permanent tee times there for nearly 20 years.

In 2011, the old clubhouse was demolished. In 2015, a major restoration project began on the golf course. In late 2017, The Preserve at Oak Meadows was born with a true grand opening coming in 2018. \$16.8 million produced one of the premier championship courses in the Midwest, let alone Chicagoland. The flooding from Salt Creek, a thing of the past. Temporary greens, forget about it! What now exists is one of the most naturally beautiful (and seriously challenging) courses you can play. The only thing that was missing was a place to have a frosty beverage with your foursome. Well, they took care of that and then some.

"The Chicago area has a long list of tremendous options for golfers, and The Preserve at Oak Meadows ranks near the top of the list," said Director of Golf Operations, Ed Stevenson. "With a beautiful new clubhouse and amenities to complement the challenge and natural beauty of the renovated golf course, The Preserve now offers golfers a complete and unique experience."

The new clubhouse, a product of Daniel Wohlfeil Design, is 14,000 sq. ft. and complements the renovated course. While, in my opinion, the new clubhouse is strikingly modern and fresh from the front entrance, it's the views from the course that do it for me. My eye catches it perfectly while making the turn to the back nine, as well as coming up the unmistakable 18th hole, which was largely untouched from a renovation standpoint.

The multi-functionality of the clubhouse along with the way it seamlessly flows from

one space to another is a thing of beauty. Full-height glass gives you an unobstructed view of the surrounding preserve, as if you're in a tranquil nature center. And, of course, a welcoming bar with indoor and outdoor seating. Coming soon: a full dining menu, event space, a new pro shop, and much more.

For Stevenson, the work is not over for The Preserve; rather, the attention begins to shift.

"For the past six years the focus was on projects and construction at The Preserve. Now that the dust and disruptions are over, the focus can shift to fun and competition. The Preserve has already served as a qualifying site for USGA Men's and Women's US Amateur Championships, and will host the Illinois State Senior Amateur Championship this fall. With the clubhouse complete, there are even more opportunities for future tournaments and events."



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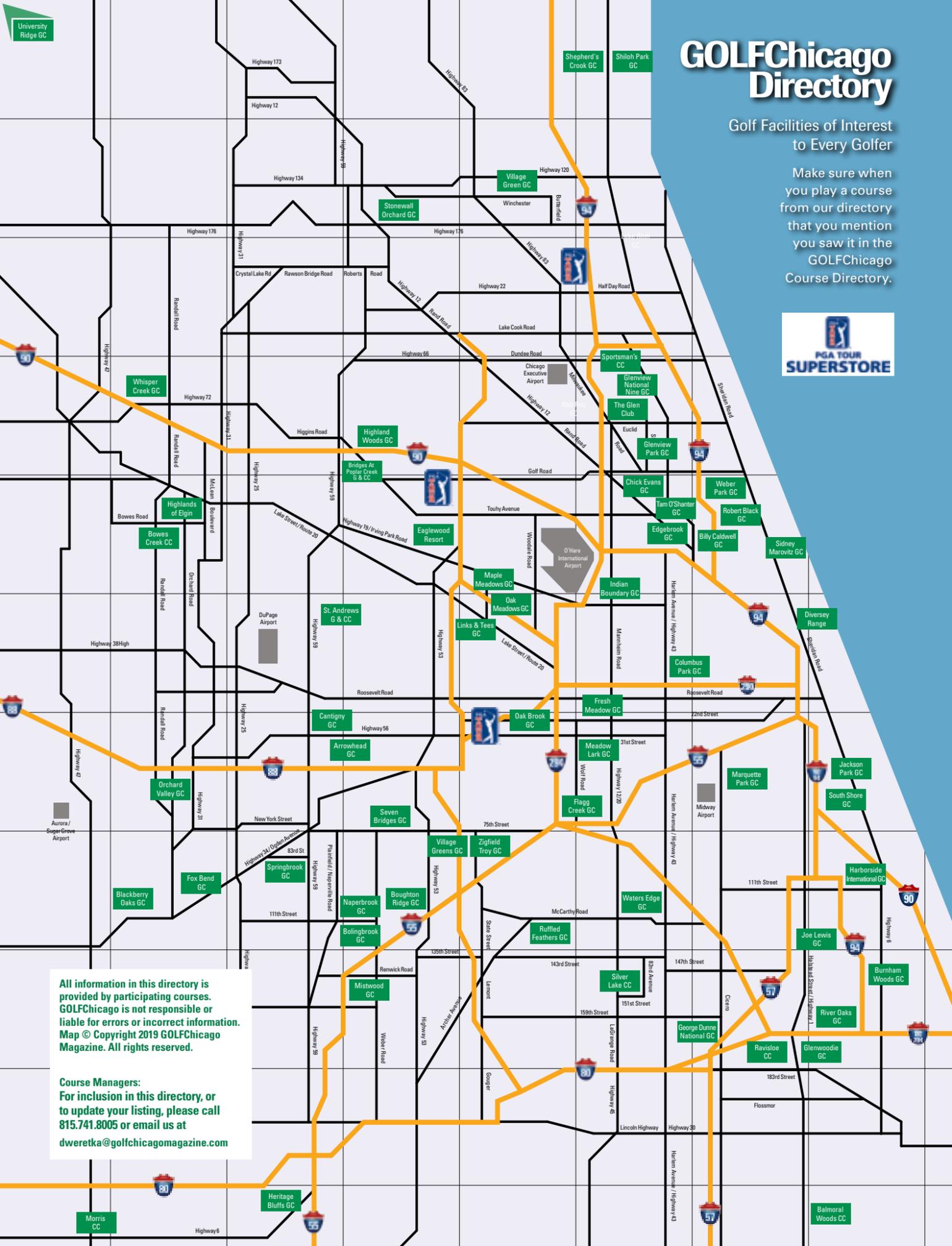
Call: 219.688.7934

facebook.com/sandypinesgolfclub

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DeMotte, IN 46310





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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@golfchicagomagazine.com



Arrowhead

630-653-5800
26W151 Butterfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
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

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.



Bittersweet Golf Club

847-855-9031
875 Almond Road
Gurnee, IL 60031
www.bittersweetgolf.com

Easily accessible from I-294, Bittersweet tests the shot-making savvy of avid golfers and provides a fair but fun challenge for casual players. The stunning landscape features mature oaks, vibrant wetlands, wildflower meadows, and abundant wildlife. Private-club conditions, including some of the smoothest greens around, make this public course a north suburban must-play. Amenities include a grass-tee driving range, a short-game practice facility, and a fabulous 19th hole. A popular outing venue, Bittersweet also offers golf instruction onsite. Book tee times online or call us to speak with our friendly, knowledgeable staff.



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
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.



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.



Chicago Park District Golf

312-245-0909
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.



Cog Hill Golf & Country Club

866.264.4455
12294 Archer Ave.
Palos Park, IL 60439
www.coghillgolf.com
Cog Hill Golf & Country Club, a Jemsek Golf Facility, is a historic 72-hole public golf facility located 30 miles southwest of Chicago. The year-round facility includes a driving range equipped with lights and heated Toptracer stalls, two golf shops, patio dining, and a pavilion for events, along with a 280-seat banquet hall.

- Rated in "America's 100 Greatest Public Golf Courses" by *Golf Digest*
- 2020 GRAA Top 50 Public Range in the Nation



Green Meadows Golf Club

630-810-5330
18 W. 201 W. 63rd St.
Westmont, IL 60559
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.



Maple Meadows Golf Club

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



The Preserve at Oak Meadows

630-595-0071
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.

- *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 www.DuPageGolf.com



Klein Creek Golf Club

630-690-0101
1N333 Pleasant Hill Rd.
Winfield, IL 60190
kleincreek.com
Klein Creek Golf Club is an 18 hole public golf course located one mile south of North Avenue and easily accessible from I-355. Designed by Dick Nugent, the layout features an open design in which water is present on 15 holes. Trees frame the layout's gentle doglegs, and tall prairie grasses border the fairways. Contoured mounding frames the fairways and greens, allowing a variety of approach options and great risk-reward opportunities.



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.



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.



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Affordable GOLF. Friendly SERVICE. Fantastic EXPERIENCE.
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- Burnham Woods: 18 Holes
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- 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



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.



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.



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.



Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center

847-965-2344
6700 W. Howard St.
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!



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.

With all cottage rentals you'll have access to some deals on go, including 9 and 18 hole replay rates as well as an unlimited driving range access during your stay. You'll also receive 10% off of purchases inside the Sandy Pines pro shop, because you're going to want the shirt, the hat, and some additional items to show off to your friends. Also included is a complimentary daily breakfast.

Speaking of food, don't even think about Door Dash. The Sandy Pines clubhouse has the SP19 American Kitchen + Bar. This casual, comfortable restaurant specializes in American comfort food along with the proper spirits to celebrate, or forget, what your scorecard totaled.

No SP19 meal is started correctly without the SP19 Nachos which are topped with slow-cooked BBQ pulled pork, white queso sauce, pico de gallo, and sour cream. For your main course, the restaurant offers something

for everyone. The Kougar is a signature burger that's topped with, you guessed it, that same delicious pulled pork in addition to applewood smoked bacon, crispy onions, and (drumroll please) macaroni and cheese!

If you're looking for more fork and knife, you can carve into a 12 oz. New York strip or a 10 oz. sirloin. Fish options include salmon, perch, bluegill, cod, and shrimp. You can also build your own pizza or build your own chicken. An extensive menu to go along with breakfast makes SP19 the perfect food compliment to your "stay and play" at Sandy Pines.

Making this property a truly versatile space is The Pavilion at Sandy Pines. This indoor/outdoor event space is the ultimate compliment to your golf outing, corporate retreat, baby shower, or just about any type of event. In fact, Sandy Pines hosts about 60 weddings every year on property. The feel here is that you're the only ones onsite for your special day. The Bridal House is available to brides and bridesmaids with an open layout that includes salon stations, a bridal suite, and an open area with a farmhouse table that seats 16. There is also a groom's suite with a changing area, a full-size bathroom, leather couch and chair, and a flat screen TV. Check out the event-specific site to see some amazing pictures; everyone will want an invite. sandypinespavillion.com

After I had some time to reflect on my trip to Sandy Pines Golf Club, this was my ultimate takeaway. I've traveled all over the U.S. and a little beyond to play golf and experience resorts. I never could have imagined such a tranquil, fun, and accommodating golf experience would be so close to home. It's comparable to destinations I've encountered in the Carolinas, the southern U.S., the desert southwest, and more. Maybe my eyes weren't open before, but they sure are now.

Sandy Pines Golf Club
10527 Bunker Drive
DeMotte, IN 46310
219-987-3611
sandypinesgc.com

ON THE CORKSCREWS

Stephen Hawk

I'm obviously a wine enthusiast, and with my wife will drink all or most of a full bottle of wine with dinner every night. However, you may enjoy less wine with your meals. If so, consider 375 mL half bottles. They are also handy if you want a red and your companion wants a white, like the two shown here. Half bottles are also convenient for picnic outings. And, empty half bottles are great for storing leftover wine; just fill the half bottle as close to the top as you can, reseal it (easily done if the closure is a screw cap), and park it in the refrigerator.

The only real downside to half bottles is that they will cost somewhat more than half what the same wine in a full bottle will, since, other than the wine itself, the remaining expenses of filling, labeling, packing and shipping are more or less the same as for a full bottle. For instance, the Chardonnay is \$15 for a half bottle, and \$26 for a full one. Similarly, the Pinot Noir is \$15 for a half bottle, and \$29 for a full one (but really, not much of a penalty on this one). Finding your favorite wines in half bottles can also sometimes be difficult, although like wine in cans they are becoming more common. And now, on to the wines.

In 1972, attorney, private pilot, and wine aficionado Fred Fruth was piloting his plane over the Russian River Valley area. Down below, he saw a natural amphitheater carved into the hills of eastern Sonoma. In addition to this other interests, he had been thinking of starting a winery, and it seemed as if this might just be the place to do it.

Soon after, a tour of the extensive property confirmed that the site indeed had the climate and soils to grow first-class wine grapes. Furth and his second wife, Peggy, purchased the land, named the estate Chalk Hill, and started producing wine about a decade later. They gradually planted more than 270 acres of vines. Years later, Furth said, "I have always been interested in wine because my grandfather had vineyards. I'm actually more interested in the working-the-soil aspect, but I have many very talented people in the winery

who know how to produce a world-class wine. When I bought this property, I was told it was too hilly to be a vineyard, but I simply planted the grapes in rows going uphill. People said you can't do that, but I'd seen it done in Germany so I knew it would work." After a rich and varied life, Furth died in 2018 at the age of 84.

Lawyer Bill Foley acquired Chalk Hill in 2010. Although Foley is titled as "vintner," I doubt he sees the interior of the winery very often. He is a vintner in the broader sense of "someone who sells wine." He also owns the National Hockey League's Vegas Golden Knights, is the Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors for Fidelity National Financial Inc., is Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for Fidelity National Information Services, Inc., and owns fifteen other wineries.

The Chalk Hill AVA is one of 13 in Sonoma County, and is distinguished from the neighboring appellations of the cooler Russian River Valley to the west and the warmer Alexander Valley to the northeast. Elevations are higher and soil fertility is lower. The soils include gravel, rock, and heavy clay. Under the topsoil is a distinctive layer of chalk-colored volcanic ash which inspired the name of Chalk Hill.

Each vineyard block has been planted based on criteria that include: soil profile and chemistry, slope, orientation to the sun, and climate. Under Fred Furth's direction, Chalk Hill was an early leader in planting its hillside vineyards "vertically," following the rise of the terrain, rather than across it. Because of this, the topsoil must be protected with a diverse cover crop serving many purposes. It anchors and protects the soil, preventing erosion; captures and affixes nitrogen; and harbors a varied community of beneficial insects that aid in pest management. Water conservation is addressed through a precisely controlled drip-irrigation system. Air movement through these vertical channels of the vineyard reduces mildew. All of the grapevines are a grafted combination of plants: a specific wine-grape variety above ground, and a complementary rootstock below.



smhawk@winervana.com

More than two-thirds of Chalk Hill's 1300 acres remain uncultivated. In addition to the vineyards, the property features wilderness areas, the winery, a hospitality center, a culinary garden, a residence, stables, and an equestrian pavilion.

Chalk Hill Chardonnay 2018 \$15
This offering underwent 100% malolactic fermentation, followed by 10 months of sur lie barrel aging in French, American, and Hungarian oak, of which 25% was new. It is rather pale for a Chardonnay, but that doesn't mean it's insipid. It features moderate aromas of citrus and melon, which continue on the palate, plus some vanilla custard. It has a full, unctuous mouthfeel, and plenty of zippy acidity. ABV is 14%.

Chalk Hill Pinot Noir 2017 \$15
This wine also underwent 100% malolactic fermentation, followed by nine months of aging in French oak, of which 25% was new. It presents with a transparent, light to medium purple in the glass. It is mildly aromatic, with flavors of raspberry, tart cherry, and a bit of dust on the medium body. Enjoy this easy-sipping Pinot now. ABV is 13%.

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Requiem for a Michigan Golf Legend

One day in the late 1980s, I was flying aboard a single-engine plane on a golf junket with Michigan public relations maven Dave Richards en route to Scottsdale. Dave gazed at the flight plan and was intrigued by the possibility that we could gas up at Hutchinson Regional Airport in Kansas. While Hutchinson is, and remains, an unlikely place for intrigue, the city is, and was, proud home to Prairie Dunes Country Club, one of America's greatest golf courses. Being within the vicinity of a fine layout is, of course, akin to being outside of a stadium while it's holding a Super Bowl—a nice thing. But only thrilling if you have a ticket to get inside.

Prairie Dunes is a private club. We knew no one at the club and our only "cache" was the lame excuse that we were golf media. But that last fact gave Dave a reason to call the head golf professional. Dave explained who we were, that our plane was parked "only 3.9 miles away!" and why we would really and truly enjoy a walk-around on one of Perry Maxwell's greatest designs. "You came all the way from Milwaukee to just look at a golf course?" the pro said incredulously. "Why don't you yank your clubs out of the plane and enjoy a round, compliments of Prairie Dunes Country Club?"

I thought of this story a few weeks ago when I learned of Richards' death at age 63. He had been in declining health for years following multiple back surgeries and a 2019 stroke. Prior to these recent setbacks, he was the most enthusiastic promoter of golf I ever met. Back in the early 1980s, Dave was the face of Northern Michigan golf. Over the ensuing two decades, golf course openings exploded across the whole of that area, including those at Shanty Creek Resort, Grand Traverse Resort, Crystal Mountain Resort, Boyne Golf Resorts, and Treetops Resort. As all of these were operated by individual entrepreneurs, the only common thread running through them was Dave Richards. Though his residence was in the Detroit area, Dave essentially lived each summer at one Northern Michigan hotel or another. He ran a blue Mercury Marquis into the ground picking up writers at regional airports, making pitches to new accounts, and playing host at media events.

Over the years, Richards introduced me to golf pros, tourism directors, architects, general managers, chefs, the governor of Michigan, and even the owner of Honey Baked Ham (who was also an investor in a golf course). He seemingly knew every golf pro-

fessional and course superintendent in Michigan, along with the names of their children and the type of grass seed used on their properties. When a job opening occurred, he would reference two or three candidates as perfect fits to fill the spot.

"Dave was integral to the success of Northern Michigan golf," said Kevin Frisch of Kevin Frisch PR, a Michigan firm specializing in golf promotion. Frisch had previously worked with Richards at Golf Marketing Services. "Dave had amazing energy and truly believed in his mission to put Northern Michigan golf on the map. Through force of personality, persistence, and given some amazing properties to promote, Dave helped make the area what it is today—one of the country's great golf destinations."

Along with the golf courses and resorts he represented, Richards was instrumental in introducing the world to two of Michigan golf's greatest talents: Rick Smith and Tom Doak. Director of Golf at Treetops in Gaylord, Smith became swing coach to some of the PGA Tour's stars, including Phil Mickelson, Lee Janzen, and Jack Nicklaus. Doak has become one of the world's premier architects, with celebrated courses at Bandon Dunes, Streamsong Resort, Cape Kidnappers in New Zealand, and Saint Patrick's in Ireland.

No matter the property or the client, Richards worked tirelessly to deliver his message. He was: gregarious, funny, outspoken, charming, relentless, passionate, dedicated, reflective, brilliant, stoic, and always thoughtful. On occasion, I would walk to my mailbox and discover a book, a photo, a shirt, a postcard, or a sleeve of golf balls sent special delivery by Dave. Now that he is gone, I realize how integral he was to my life.

As we strolled from hole to hole at Prairie Dunes that fall day some 35 years ago, Dave strutted up to the top of a mound on the 8th hole to soak in the beauty and scope of Perry Maxwell's masterpiece. There, below Dave's feet and all around him, rested a sea of sweeping sand dunes, rolling hills, wildly contoured greens, and tall wild grasses swaying with the afternoon breeze. "If there is a heaven," Dave said, "I'm pretty sure it looks just like Prairie Dunes."

I am pretty certain there is a heaven. And I would like to think that for the sake of Dave Richards, behind those pearly gates rests an idyllic golf course that brings my dear, departed friend the same joy he felt that fine, soft autumn day.



Dave had amazing energy and truly believed in his mission to put Northern Michigan golf on the map. Dave helped make the area what it is today—one of the country's great golf destinations.

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