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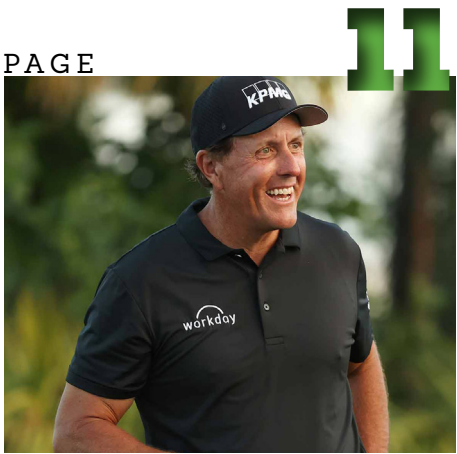


» MUNICIPAL « GOLF COURSES

the Foundation for Golf in the U.S.A.

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Southern New England Golfer | SNEGOLFER.COM



PHIL THE THRILL



SAM BURNS



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[EDITORIAL]

Welcome to our second issue of 2021. The pandemic seems to be nearing its end, and the golf courses continue to see huge increases in play. Life is good!

I'm not sure that we will ever top the 46 pages of golfing information that was in the May 2021 issue, but this one does. I was playing golf at Goddard State Park in East Greenwich, R.I. when I realized how lucky the golfing public is to have courses that do not charge much money to play this wonderful game. The nine-hole rate is \$10 for seniors and juniors, and just a few dollars more for everyone else. Cart fees are \$15 for two riders.

Wasn't that a thrill to watch Phil Mickelson win the PGA Championship at Kiawah Island. What a triumph, and what a course. We have a little story about his "win for the ages" on page 8. Joe Calabro started a golf news website for Rhode Island as something to do during the pandemic. Scott Cordischi highlights his efforts and we've got him writing a Junior Golf story in this issue.

We had a Zoom press conference for The Travelers Championship on May 10, and tournament director Nathan Grube and Travelers executive vice president Andy Bessette talked about raising \$1.6 million last year even though there were no fans. "There were 37 people standing around the 18th green when Dustin Johnson won," recalled Bessette. "How great it will be to have fans again this year," he added. Bruce Berlet does a fine job highlighting the event that will be held the week after the U.S. Open.

We try to get at least one travel story in every issue. This issue is highlighting Cape Cod where a group of us played Hyannis Golf Club (a fine muni), New Seabury, a wonderful 36-hole facility that is one of the tops in the country, and Blue Rock a fine Par 3 course in So. Yarmouth. Thanks for the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce for setting up this fine press trip.

We have one of the best amateur tournaments in the country right here in E. Providence, R.I. with the Northeast Amateur Tournament. You can get up close and personal with the players, many who you will be seeing on television when watching the PGA Tour. One of my best interviewing memories was sitting for twenty minutes talking to a 16-year-old for 20 minutes. His name was Justin Thomas! Collin Morikawa has won the event, and Tiger Woods, Ben Crenshaw and Bryson DeChambeau have played in the tournament that is free for spectators. The event will be June 23-26.

Enjoy the issue. Please tell your friends to subscribe (it's free) and please support the advertisers who feel that this is a good vehicle for reaching their customers. Keep your head down and swing easy.

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MUNICIPAL COURSES— WHERE SO MANY LEARN THE GAME

This reporter started playing the game of golf at twelve-years-old. That's a very long time ago, but some of my best memories in sports and many of my best friends are a direct result of golf. Our family didn't have a lot of money, but I was lucky in that my Dad's brother was left-handed, and as he bought new clubs he handed the old ones down to me.

At first it was just a driven, three-wood, 3-5-7-9 irons and a putter. A couple years later he bought a full set and gave me his hand-me-downs (his newer 3-5-7 and 9 irons). They were heavier than the first clubs he had given me, so they became the 2-4-6 and 8. These clubs lasted me until I got a full-time job at 22. Yes,

ten years with a double set, but I had them figured out enough to break 80 occasionally.

Where did I learn how to play? Municipal golf courses. My brother and I's favorite was Willimantic Golf Club in Connecticut. It cost \$1.50 for nine holes and you could play all day for \$3. We'd get dropped off in the morning and play until almost supper time. One day we managed to play 45 holes, but we only did that once—very sore feet!

The point is that without municipal courses, we would not have been able to play very often. When I got my driver's license I would go to Triggs Municipal Golf Course in Providence with my schoolmates. It cost \$2.50 for nine holes in the

middle 60's. We'd caddie once in a while to get money to play golf.

Golf is truly a game of a lifetime. This reporter has probably played over 1,000 softball games, but can't do that anymore. But I can still manage to get fresh air out on the golf course and still have something competitive to play and thing about when not playing. What can be better than that!

This issue is paying homage to those cities and towns that had the foresight to realize that golf is a wonderful sport for a lifetime and provides exercise and enjoyment to their constituents. We have seven writers covering these municipal golf courses throughout southern New England in this issue. If you haven't played a muni in a while, give it a try. ■

**Bruce Vittner is publisher/
editor of snegolfer.com**

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The Keys to Putting

When a student comes in for a first-time lesson, it starts with a discussion on the state of their game, where they are at, and where they want to be. The typical student that is struggling to break 100 or 90 finds the greatest drop in scores by cleaning up the short game starting with putting – it is the lowest hanging fruit! The Tour Average for putting is approximately 28 putts per round. The normal average putts per round we see for the higher handicaps is approximately 38-42. There are a few ways to get your putts per round to drop. 1-- Your approach shots need to finish closer to the hole, 2 --. You need to stop missing those pesky 3-foot putts, and 3-- You need to get better at lag putting. For this article, we will focus on the last two points.

On the practice green, place 5 tees around the hole in a circle pattern, I like to use a yardstick to make sure it is the 3 ft. distance. The reason we use a circle pattern is so that you are not putting from the exact same spot over and over again. You need to change it up with each stroke so that your brain stays alert. Place a ball next to each tee, go through your routine and make your stroke. Go around the circle twice so that you accumulate 10 attempts and record your results of how many out of 10. The Tour Average make rate at 3 feet is 98%. Use your first round of these as a baseline number and try to better your results by at least 1 putt every time you try the drill. So, if your first round is 5/10, shoot for 6/10 in the next round. Your goal should be to hit 10/10 putts from 3 ft. while doing this drill. This will build your confidence on the short putts and take some pressure off the lag putting.

For lag putting, you will use the same hole as the 3 ft. drill. Pace out from the hole to 10 ft., 20 ft. and 30 ft. and place tees at each distance. Now, starting at the 10 ft. distance, your goal is to get the ball to stop inside of the 3 ft. tees around the hole, which is actually a 6 ft. circle (3 ft. in each direction!). You will find that 2 putts are much easier to come by

when you look at your longer putts from this point of view. The game I play is to putt out into the hole from each distance in order 10, 20 & 30 ft., and the repeat 2 more times for a total of 9 holes played. My goal is to either 1 or 2 putt from each distance, with a maximum score of 18 for the 9 holes played. I find that I will 1 putt a few of the holes, so I typically will end up with a score of around 15.

By spending some time on your putting and getting your total putts per round down to the low 30's, you will be able to shave off quite a few strokes from your score. If you would like to lower your score with fewer putts or get an analysis of your putting stroke with Sam PuttLab, please contact me at the Golf Academy to book a putting lesson. www.toddcampbellgolf.com ■

Todd Campbell's studio will be moving to a new location about the end of June. He will be located at Cranston Country Club just a few miles away from Mulligan's Island.

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RIGCSA Awards \$22,000 in Scholarships

The Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association has awarded \$22,000 in scholarships this year to the following students listed below. Each student received a scholarship in the amount of \$2,200.

This past year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RIGCSA was unable to hold their annual Scholarship & Research tournament. Fortunately, through the generosity of past sponsors, the RIGCSA was still able to award scholarships in 2021 to all qualified applicants.

The C. Richard Skogley Memorial Scholarship will be determined at a later date. This is awarded to a student in the Turf Program at the University of Rhode Island.

This year the RIGCSA will host their 38th Annual Scholarship and Research Tournament at Potowomut Golf Club on September 21, 2021. All proceeds from the Scholarship & Research Annual Golf Tournament go towards providing scholarships to deserving students and funding vital industry research at the University of Rhode Island.

The RIGCSA is fully committed to ensuring that all qualified future applicants will be awarded scholarships. We realize that amidst an ongoing pandemic it may be difficult to commit to a tournament, however without your generous support, programs such as this one wouldn't be possible. If you are unable to participate in this year's upcoming tournament please consider a donation directly to the Scholarship & Research scholarship fund. If you would like more information or would like to contribute, please contact Julie Heston, RIGCSA Chapter Executive at (401) 934-7660, jheston@verizon.net or visit their website at www.rigcsa.org. ■

RIGCSA 2021 Scholarship Recipients:

Rebecca Drohen, Fairfield University
Aubrey Forman, Assumption University
Ashley Marino, Roger Williams University
Kaitlin McLeod, Quinnipiac University
Eric Medeiros, Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Theophanis Mihailides, Community College of RI
Kaitlin Parks, Providence College
Heather Sykes, Brigham Young University

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THE MUNI: WHERE GOLFERS ARE BORN

It is not the pro tour, with all of its wonderful players with the perfect swings, the coaches and electronic devices that hone those swings, that is the backbone of the game of golf. It's not even the private country clubs on which the game flourishes and expands.

No, it's on Municipal courses, munis, where many of those golfers flock to the links every weekend, first learn to whack a little dimpled ball, and discover both the joys and frustrations of this game that so many play til the day they go under the ground.

It's also the muni where so many return after they retire, because they can no longer afford the ever increasing costs of the private clubs.

Rhode Island has a plethora of public golf courses, but only three that are municipally owned; Triggs Memorial in Providence, North Kingstown, at Quonset Point and Jamestown Golf Club on Conanicut Island.

North Kingstown is the only one of the three that is maintained and operated by the town. Triggs and Jamestown are leased by independent companies, Triggs for the last 30 plus years by FCG Associates, and Jamestown by New England Golf Course Management since 1987.

Jamestown, a nine-hole venue, is widely believed to be one of the oldest public courses in the nation, built in 1895, originally laid out on the Littlefield-Clarke Farm. It opened in 1901 and until 1904 it was named the Conanicut Golf Club.

In 1901 a clubhouse was constructed on the south side of the property, and in 1951 it was moved to its present location on Conanicus Ave. Recently, construction on a new clubhouse was completed. The course is 74.26 acres and contains a variety of environmental sensitive land management areas.

"We're pretty busy all summer," said General Manager John Mistowski, whose family has leased the course since '87. We're doing all right."

There is no membership. It's a daily fee course. "In past years we average between 20 and 30 thousand rounds of golf," said Mistowski. The Mistowskis and the town were honored in 2006 by the RI Audubon Society for their work in advancing the society's environmental mission.

The muni has always been the foundation of the future of golf. Players may matriculate to private clubs,

but many who first pick up a club at a yard sale, hit their first shots at a muni. Many blue-collar workers never leave.

"Not only the backbone of the game, but at one point or another, most good players have gone through one type of municipal facility or another in their career, usually when they're younger," said Karl Augenstein, the General Manager of Triggs Memorial.

"I know that early on (Brad) Faxon, (Billy) Andrade and the Quigleys all played golf here at one time or another. Before Brett Quigley went on tour he used to practice here on a regular basis," said Augenstein.

"A lot of those guys played in public links tournaments, at Triggs or at munis. I know that Paul and Dana Quigley grew up somewhere in the midwest (before moving to Rhode Island) and learned to play at munis," he added.

While Covid 19 has been a plague that nobody wanted and everyone hopes to vanish forever, it has benefited the public and municipal courses. "I think generally in the industry, not just munis or public golf courses, rounds were up significantly last year because a lot of people wanted to get outdoors, so they started to play golf," explained Augenstein.

"In the demographic that we saw, the biggest increase was in young people, those between 20 and 35. That was kind of missing. Our demographic had been aging over the last 20 years. The biggest segment of our business has been seniors, but last year we saw a huge influx of younger people. That really increased the number of rounds. Now we're trying to figure out how to keep them involved in the sport."

Prior to last year Triggs averaged rounds in the low 40 thousand per year. "We call them starts, between nine holers and 18. We were consistently doing that, from 2007 until 2019. There was no growth. It was very flat. Last year we were over 50,000. That was very significant, and I think that was across the board with all golf courses."

It certainly was the case at North Kingstown. "Our number of rounds were up, like crazy," said John Rainone, who serves as both the General Manager and Head PGA professional. "In a typical year we do around 35,000 rounds. Last year we did 48,000 rounds. Every month since last May has been a record month and its continuing.

"It's more of everybody, but it's most noticeable among younger people because there were so few of them before."

"Golf has become more popular with young people," agreed Mistowski. "They want to go outside. It certainly

has been better. We're only seasonal, but it's definitely gone up."

North Kingstown, better known as Quonset, was originally a nine-hole Officers course, built by the Navy during World War II. Walter Johnson was the designer when the first nine was built, and he returned to design the second nine in the 1960s to the current layout.

"The only other golf course that he did, that I know of, was Potowomut," said Rainone. "He was chief civil engineer down here. He also supervised the construction of a lot of Donald Ross courses. There were a lot of Donald Ross courses that Donald Ross never set foot on. (Johnson) was the person overseeing the actual construction."

Triggs was designed by Ross in the early 1930's and opened in 1933. It has been labeled by the Donald Ross Society as one of his finest works. Nestled in the Mt. Pleasant section of Providence, it hosted some of the greats of the game in the Providence Open. Hogan, Sarazen and Snead all played Triggs.

A few years ago, Dave Adamonis Jr. brought the Providence Open back, and it attracts some of the top club pros and amateurs from all over the northeast.

Triggs also hosts the U.S. Challenge Cup's World Series of Junior Golf each summer, which brings many of the top junior players here.

But for the most part, Triggs and North Kingstown as well as Jamestown benefit from the ordinary people, who go to work every day.

"The great thing about a municipal golf course is the people who play here," said Augenstein. "We have a lot of characters. There are a lot of stories, whether golf or something else. Munis tend to be more inclusive than private clubs or even other public courses because of location. We have a huge cross section of people. We have a very strong number of minorities who play golf at Triggs.

"We (also) have a lot of women" who play golf here. "Thirty years ago, we had a pretty small group of women playing golf here, and then the late Nathalie Price started leading a whole new group into the game, and that has just grown significantly, and here the women have equal access to the golf course."

While all three munis are basically daily fee facilities, both Triggs and North Kingstown have inner clubs for both men and women.

"It's always been small, but it's starting to grow and it was starting to grow before Covid," said Rainone. "The golf course is in such good shape. We have a new superintendent (Dan McDermott) who started two years ago, and while the course has always been in good

shape, he's taken into the next level.

"We're doing a lot of things that help us stay ahead of our competition, creating new golfers and we benefit from that down the road. It's really taken off," added Rainone who added that "A lot of the proceeds from the golf course go to help the town with its pretty impressive recreation programs."

Despite an enormous amount of play, Triggs is one of the best maintained public venues, thanks to the work of long-time superintendent Jay Hoyle and his crew. But there's always work to do to make improvements.

"I would say the biggest challenge from a business standpoint is reinvesting into the facility," said Augenstein. "It's difficult because it's a lease. Capital improvements is an ongoing aspect we have going with the city. It's an ongoing thing. We have several projects that we'd like to get going. The obvious ones are redoing the parking lots, improvements to the clubhouse, and we have a ton of tree work to be done. Those big expenditures are difficult issues." ■

Tim Geary is the retired sportswriter for the Fall River Herald and writes a Rhode Island column in most every issue of sngolfer.com.

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Phil and Brooks were playing a match. Brooks noticed that Phil was throwing rocks out of the bunker and even grounding his club before hitting his shot. Was he allowed to do this?

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Normally you are not allowed to do either of those things, but the tournament committee can make exceptions to the rules when necessary to help play. The course at Kiawah Island had sand everywhere, and the committee thought it would speed up play and not cause as many questions of whether it was a bunker or not, so they said there were no bunkers and that players could ground the club and remove items without penalty everywhere.

59th Northeast Amateur to be Held at Wannamoisett June 23-26

You have the wonderful opportunity to see some of the best future PGA Tour stars up close and personal at Wannamoisett C.C. in East Providence from June 23-26 at the 59th Northeast Amateur Championship. There is no charge for the event and you can follow any players that you wish.

One of the best interviews I ever did was with a 16-year-old from Kentucky at the Northeast Am many years ago. Most of the players (all amateurs are not making any money) stay with families who are members of Wannamoisett C.C. This young man was very articulate, fun to talk to, and when you watched him play, you knew he was going to be very good. His name was Justin Thomas. Yes, that Justin Thomas who was staying with the Wexler family and he still keeps in touch.

Many of the greats on the PGA Tour have played in this amateur event that this year is rated the fifth best men's amateur golf event in the United States. Ben Crenshaw, Luke Donald, John Cook, Bryson DeChambeau, Collin Morikawa and even Tiger Woods have played in this venerable event. Local golfer and current PGA member Peter Uihlein won this event in 2012 in record-breaking fashion. Sam Burns, who has had great success the last month on the PGA Tour and is this issue's Rising Star, played in this event three times before turning professional.

Ben Tuthill, former R.I. Amateur champ and chairman of the event for quite a few years, spoke about the field for 2021. "We missed playing last year because of Covid-19, but we have a great field lined up. We have many of the top amateurs in the country, but I'm even more excited about all the great local players who will be participating."

"Davis Chatfield, a member of Wannamoisett, and his partner Tucker Clark, both from Notre Dame, make it to the semi-finals of the U.S. Four-Ball recently. Both are in the field. Massachusetts's Matt Parziale, who played in the Masters a few years ago, is also in the field. Nick Maccario, who won many amateur events last year in Massachusetts is also playing, said Tuthill.

Rhode Islanders in the field include Billy Forcier, Michael Hamilton, Bobby Leopold, Jamie Lukowicz, Chris

Roloff and Patrick Welch who is starring at Oklahoma. Massachusetts has John Broderick, Chatfield, Steve DiLisio, Chris Francoeur, James Imai, Xavier Marcoux, Andrew O'Leary, Parziale and Michael Thorbjorsen who is doing very well at Stanford University.

Connecticut has mid-amateurs Richard Dowling, Cody Paladino and Brad Tilley, junior Ben James, and Chris Forsdick who is playing at Virginia. Besides the locals, players to watch are brothers Pierceson and Parker Coody from Plano, Texas who both play for the Longhorns. Kelly Chinn, a junior at Duke and Aman Gupta from Oklahoma State bear watching.

"We have 96 players to date," said Tuthill who said that the usual field is 92. "We invite spectators to come and watch many of the golfers who you will see on television, and you will be impressed by the quality of golf on our demanding, Par 69 golf course that was designed by Donald Ross." You will be glad that you went, and you will have memories that will last a long time. And it is FREE! ■

Bruce Vittner is the publisher/editor of [snegolfer.com](#) and has watched over 30 Northeast Ams.

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Phil the Thrill— Mickelson Becomes Oldest Major Champ

Phil Mickelson became the oldest winner of a Major Championship in men's professional golf on May 23 when he won the 2021 PGA Championship at Kiawah Island, S.C. He won the event just three weeks before his 51st birthday on June 16. The former oldest winner was Julius Boros who won the 1968 PGA Championship at the age of 48 years and four months.

Mickelson, who was the fans' favorite all week had his brother, Tim, on the bag, held off two-time PGA champ Brooks Koepka, who played in the final twosome with Phil, to win by two strokes. It was almost like match play as the two battled throughout the round with both having the lead at different points. There were five holes where there was a two stroke swing between Koepka and Mickelson. Phil had a three stroke lead with three to play, but hit it over the green on the very difficult par 3 17th over a pond and made bogey to cut the lead to two strokes.

The 18th became a lovefest for Mickelson as he hit his second shot onto the green, and was inside Koepka, and both two-putted to finish. The crowd went wild. How great it was to see huge crowds after the pandemic restrictions.

The last decade of golf has not been easy for Mickelson. He suffered badly from psoriatic arthritis, and has changed his whole diet and lifestyle so that he can compete. Being 50, he opted to play a bit on the Champions Tour and won the first two events he entered. He never lost his desire to compete on the biggest golf stage in the world, however, and his win at Kiowa reinforced his place as one of the greats in golf.

A couple of insights about Mickelson. This reporter was interviewing Mickelson after the first round of the Deutsche Bank Championship in Mansfield, Mass in 2007. Jay Monahan, who is now the Commissioner of the PGA Tour, but was then the Tournament Director for the event, walked up to Mickelson and handed him two tickets to that evening's Red Sox game.

That night Clay Bucholz pitched a no-hitter for the



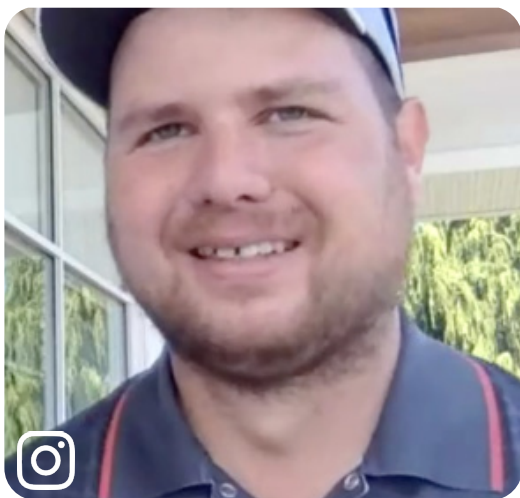
Sox. When I spoke to Mickelson after his Saturday round, all he wanted to talk about was the no-hitter and how exciting it was. He was close to the lead, but being a sports fan, he was more excited about talking about the Sox.

The other thing that always impressed me was how he spoke to the media in good times and bad. His answers are always very thoughtful and he is a great person for getting good quotes.

This reporter was very fortunate to have played Kiawah six years ago. That seventeenth hole only played 150 yards for us old guys, but it was so intimidating. There are also a few balls from southern New England that are still in those hazards that line almost every hole. The memories of the place will last forever, but now there is something that adds even more importance to that wonderful Low-Country design by the late Pete Dye. ■

Bruce Vittner is the publisher/editor of snegolfer.com and is a member of the Golf Writers of America and the Golf Travel Writers of America.

Joe Calabro, Golf News in RI



Raised in Lincoln, Rhode Island, Joe Calabro was just like most kids his age. A sports fan, he loved the major sports like football, basketball, baseball and hockey and dreamed of possibly being a professional athlete someday.

Golf? Most kids his age didn't really have an interest in it because it was too slow and, hence, too boring. "I remember my dad used to take me to the Seekonk Driving Range which isn't even there now," he said. "Rick Holcomb used to give me lessons but I just wanted to hit my bucket of balls as far and as quickly as I could so it would be over."

But Calabro admits that, once you get a little bit older, you come to a realization that you're not very good in those major sports, and that golf is actually a pretty cool sport after all. "I caddied at Kirkbrae Country Club as a kid, and we had some pretty cool people as members," he recalls. "Karen Adams (former WPRI news anchor), Frank Carpano (NBC 10 sports anchor), Bryan Berard (former NHL defenseman) and Brian Boucher (former NHL goalie) were

all members. That's where I really started to learn the game."

Fast forward to April 13, 2020 when the COVID pandemic was about a month old. Calabro decided to do something he had been thinking about for a year – start up a new website dedicated to local golf news. On that date GolfNewsRI.com was born.

"The whole idea started with an idea that my friend Rich Cappalli and I came up with in the parking garage across from PPAC in 2019," Calabro said. "He thought it would be cool to have an app or a website that had reviews of all R.I. golf courses which got me to thinking. About a year later I decided to start the website."

GolfNewsRI.com bills itself as RI's home for local golf coverage. There are some local course reviews, stories about local USGA qualifying events, high school golf coverage and more.

"Content-wise, we're doing great," Calabro said. "But there is so much more we can do. I really want to ramp up our high school golf coverage because that stuff can take off when the kids you cover share it on their social media accounts, and then their parents either share or retweet it."

Calabro said that they send an email blast out to their subscribers (subscription is free) each morning. The site has nearly 700 Facebook followers and they are trying to grow their Twitter and Instagram pages as well.

He is also dipping his toe into the podcast pool with a new podcast entitled "The Golf Dudes."

"When I was at Lincoln High School, I was editor of the school newspaper," he said. "Then I went to the University of Hartford where I majored in communications and worked for the student television station."

"After I graduated from college in 2010, I caddied at Kirkbrae that

summer to make some money before landing my first job at COX covering high school sports for a show called 'Varsity Life,'" he said.

That lasted for about four years before he was laid off when an opportunity arose at GoLocalProv.com. "GoLocal was skyrocketing as a media entity at the time and Josh (Fenton) hired me to be content manager," Calabro said. "Josh knew that I loved sports, so he let me do some sports coverage as well with PC, URI, and the Patriots. It was a great experience." That lasted for about five years until last spring when he decided to launch GolfNewsRI.com.

But starting up a website (and business) during the pandemic? "The great thing about starting it up when I did was that Rhode Island never shut down the sport of golf during the pandemic," he said. "There were some restrictions early on, but golf was never shut down." Now, a year later, Calabro tries to keep his website filled with as much local golf information as humanly possible.

"It's not easy, but the Rhode Island golf scene has so much going on, and I am really excited about this summer," he said. Business-wise, it has been "tough" Calabro admits. But he feels that the website is starting to gain traction to the point where he is now able to secure meetings with potential sponsors.

"I still have my day job at Icon Imports, a local wine importer and wholesaler," he said. "In the meantime, I will continue to try to keep building the website and expanding our coverage."

As a Rhode Island golf fan, I wish him the best of luck. ■

Scott Cordischi is a Rhode Island sports broadcaster and writes a column in each issue of snegolfer.com.

[Rhode Island Golf News]

May was a busy month for Rhode Island Golf, between the competitive season starting up, high school golf wrapping up and a few locals making national news. Here is a roundup:

- St. Mary - Bay View senior Brooke Brennan fired a ten-over par 82 to win the RI Girls High School Golf State Championship at Warwick Country Club.

Brennan held off top seeded Kylie Eaton, as well as, challenges from Wheeler's Ayoung Lee and Cranston West's Ava Santamaria to take home the title.

"It was a well-earned victory. Brooke worked extremely hard on her game and comportment on the course. Awesome kid, awesome family, I'm very proud of all my players," said St. Mary – Bay View Head Coach Terry King. This is Bay View's first Golf State Title since 2002 when Ally Cafree won it as a sophomore.

Wannamoisett's Davis Chatfield and Notre Dame teammate Palmer Jackson advanced to the semi-finals of the U.S. Four Ball Championship at Chambers Bay in Washington. They lost to eventual champions Kiko Coelho and Leopoldo Herrera III.

The loss ended an incredible run that started with two medal play rounds, followed by an 11 teams for six spots playoff. From there, to a 21-hole quarterfinal thriller to the semi-final.

The new clubhouse at Jamestown Golf Course is open for business. Construction began on the new clubhouse back in April of 2020. "The Golf Course only has the first floor of the clubhouse, the town has the upstairs floor," a representative from Jamestown Golf Course told this reporter.

Jamestown Golf Course is located at 245 Conanicus Ave in Jamestown, Rhode Island.

The CVS Health Charity Classic has been postponed for the second straight year, Billy Andrade confirmed to Southern New England Golfer. The tournament was postponed last year due to the coronavirus pandemic that saw everything shut down.

The 2021 CVS Health Charity Classic will continue its mission through an online public auction and other virtual initiatives to engage in the Southern New England community. We hope to resume an in-person experience next year," writes the CVS Classic in a statement. The event normally takes place at the end of June at Rhode

Island Country Club.

Three players finished in a tie for first place at the first RI Amateur Qualifying tournament at Swansea Country Club. Wanumetonomy's Tim Carroll, Button Hole's Lucas Schott and Kirkbrae's Derek Audette all finished with a one-over par 73 to set the pace.

Of those three, the highlight came when Audette eagled the third hole from 154 yards out. He hit a nine iron. After scoring conditions were good early one with a few players getting to under-par, things changed late morning and into the afternoon.

Wind was picking up on the back nine. When I finished it was blowing. I think later guys struggled because of it," Audette told this reporter. The cutline ballooned to seven-over par, with 25 guys making it.

The RI Amateur is set for July 12-17 at Kirkbrae Country Club.

Potowomut's Rob Grossguth and West Warwick's John Napolillo posted a final round 68 to win the RI Senior Four-Ball at Cranston Country Club. The pair posted five-under for the tournament to edge Aquidneck Club's Mitchell Pozez and Randy Miller by two shots.

Providence's Patrick Welch and his Oklahoma Sooners lost in the National Championship match to Pepperdine. Welch, like he has done for most of the NCAA Tournament, sat out the championship match in favor of Garrett Reband. The former Classical star played only two rounds of golf in the entire NCAA Tournament for Oklahoma. Pepperdine beat the Sooners 3&2 to win the championship. ■

Joe Calabro is the founder of GolfNewsRI.com.



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[U.S. Open Memories]

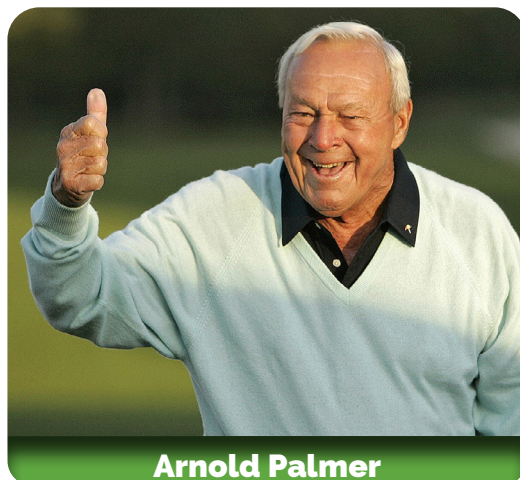
Last issue we focused on Paul Kenyon's memories of playing at Augusta National in preparation for the 2021 Masters Championship that was won by Hideki Matsuyama. This issue we are going to focus on Kenyon's memories of the many U.S. Opens that he covered during his almost 50 years as a sportswriter, mostly at the Providence Journal.

"I only got to cover the Opens when there was a local player who had qualified for the Open," recalled Kenyon from his home in Lincoln, R.I. This reporter has been to only three U.S. Opens in the 31 years this publication has been in existence, and Kenyon (who was really my mentor at those events) vividly recalled two of those years.

1994 was the first Open I attended. Lou Martone and I both taught at Johnston High School. School had just ended for the year, and we drove out to Oakmont C.C. near Pittsburgh to attend the Thursday and Friday rounds with our credentials—he as a photographer and I as a writer. The first person I looked for was Paul Kenyon who was already there.

On Friday (the second day of the event) I was with Kenyon when Arnold Palmer, then 63-years-old, who was given an exemption by the USGA, was just finishing his round. The crowds were enormous and they gave their local hero (he was from Latrobe, Pa.) a rousing salute. Paul suggested we go into the press tent in hopes of listening to Palmer speak after his round that was going to be his last Open ever.

There were about 100 media members present. Palmer came in, exhausted from his round in the temperatures that were approaching 100 degrees. He tried to talk, but kept



Arnold Palmer

breaking down emotionally. He put a towel over his head for a minute, and then tried to continue. He couldn't even speak. I started getting tears in my eyes, and as I looked around, most every writer was wiping away tears. Finally Palmer stood up and said "Sorry" and walked out the back of the tent to large clapping by the 100 media people. Paul turned to me and said, "You will never see anything like this if you cover 50 events!" He was right.

The following year Martone and I took the ferry from New London to Long Island to get to Shinnecock C.C. that was hosting the 1995 event. Again we looked for Kenyon. He said, "Let's go out to the 9th green because Dana Quigley of Rhode Island is finishing there and he is right on the cutline." We saw Quigley's ball in the fairway, and he hit a shot left of the green. He chipped on and two putted and we thought that he made a bogey that would just get him into the weekend. We started to congratulate him and he said, "I made a *#%* 7. His drive had been very errant, and the ball we thought was his drive was really his third.

We looked at the tee sheet and saw that Jack Nicklaus, who was also getting up there in years, was in the next group to finish. We stayed next to the green, and then had a chance to talk to Nicklaus after his round that was not going to make the cut. He was so polite, but also so

tired. Two years in a row seeing two of the greatest players of all time. Lou and I felt very fortunate.

After interviewing Nicklaus we went out to look for Billy Andrade. We were following him for a few holes and I saw this pretty woman following him. I knew that he was married and I asked if she was his wife. She said yes, and that she had her young child in the daycare center set up by the USGA so that she could follow him. She was fun to talk to, and she didn't miss a single shot that her hubby hit.

We decided to stay another evening and went out for a meal and a few libations. As we entered the pub we saw everyone staring at the television. The scene was a white Bronco driving down the highway followed by police cars. What could this be? Finally we heard that it was O.J. Simpson in the Bronco. We'll never forget where we were when OJ made his memorable ride.

At another Open at Oak Hill in Rochester, N.Y. Kenyon recalled that Eddie Kirby, a local pro who had a teaching center in Johnston, was near the lead. Kirby had been the first pro that had ever given me a lesson, and he was on our cover first cover as a golf newspaper in 1994.

Kenyon recalls following Kirby around on Saturday. "Eddie was playing well on Saturday. He was near the top of the second page of the leaderboard, and even made it to the bottom of the first page during the round after making an eagle.

"Kirby was paired with Greg Norman for the last day. He didn't play well. I went into the locker room to get some quotes from Kirby. He was disconsolate." "I let Norman intimidate me. He didn't say a word to me all round. Why was he not talking to me? He'd walk off the green before I had finished putting out, and all the crowd would rush to follow him," said Kirby.

Kirby finished about 11th and Norman finished sixth. I interviewed

Kirby the following week for an article in our, then publication, Ocean State Golf. He was still upset, but he was really proud of qualifying and playing in the U.S. Open that was won that year by Curtis Strange for the second year in a row.

Some of Kenyon's other memories were noteworthy. "My first U.S. Open was in 1983, also at Oakmont, when I covered a Rhode Island amateur golfer, Brad Faxon, who was still at Furman University in So. Carolina and had qualified for the Open. "Faxon needed to make a putt on the 18th green on Friday to make the cut, and he did," remembered Kenyon.

In 2000 Kenyon went out to Pebble Beach for the U.S. Open. He was following Rhode Island's Brett Quigley, who is now doing quite well on the Champions Tour. Quigley was not doing well, and when Kenyon interviewed him, Quigley said, "I'm exhausted!" Kenyon thought it was from the travails around Pebble

Beach, but Quigley said, "No, I haven't had any sleep because I am two doors down from Tiger Woods' room, and the commotion and guards around Wood's room kept me and Amy up all night. I finally saw what Woods has to go through every day."

Kenyon's fondest memory of 2000 was sitting on the hill at the 8th hole and watching all the players go through on the last day. "It was so peaceful and beautiful looking out on Carmel Bay and watching all the golfers go by," recalled Kenyon.

In 1997 Kenyon went to Congressional C.C. outside of D.C. and followed Rhode Island's Rodney Butcher. "Rodney made the cut, it was the best week of his career," recalled Kenyon who also followed Rhode Island's Patrick Sheehan at a U.S. Opens.

Kenyon closed with another strong memory. "I was at Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina in 1999. Phil Mickelson and Payne Stewart were

locked up in a tight battle coming down the stretch. "Everybody loved Payne," recalled Kenyon who remembered the huge first pump when Stewart made the putt on the 18th green and then the big hug that Stewart gave Mickelson afterwards. "You'll win your U.S. Open in the future," said Stewart to Michelson. It was only a few months later that Stewart died in an aircraft accident when the plane lost oxygen and all on board suffocated and then the plane crashed when it ran out of fuel.

"It was truly a pleasure to cover all of Rhode Island's fine golfers in the U.S. Opens. The memories will last a lifetime. We were so fortunate to have so many very good golfers and they were all very nice guys," said Kenyon. ■

Bruce Vittner is the publisher/ editor of snegolfer.com and considers himself very lucky to be able to call Paul Kenyon a friend.



Photo Credit: Jason Vinlove-USA TODAY Sports

Age: 24
Birthplace: Shreveport, La.
Family: Wife, Caroline
College: Louisiana State Univ.
Turned Pro: 2017

Sam Burns

It was easy to pick this issue's Rising Star. Sam Burns won his first tournament on May 9 at the Valspar Championship at Innisbrook C.C. in Florida. He followed that up by finishing second at the ATT Byron Nelson in Texas the following week.

He returned professional after his sophomore year at LSU in 2017 where he was named an All-American. He won a Korn Ferry Tour event in 2018 in Savannah to earn enough to get his PGA Card for the 2019 season. He had five Top 25's in 2019 to keep his card.

He currently has earned \$3,670,374 for the 2020-21 season through May 31 and is in seventh place in Fed Ex points with 1,397 points.

RISING STAR

Hendricken Wins RI State Championship, Max Jackson Claims Individual

The Bishop Hendricken Hawks won the RI high school golf State Championship.

Hendricken beat East Greenwich by six shots on Wednesday afternoon at Cranston Country Club to claim their first golf title since 2017.

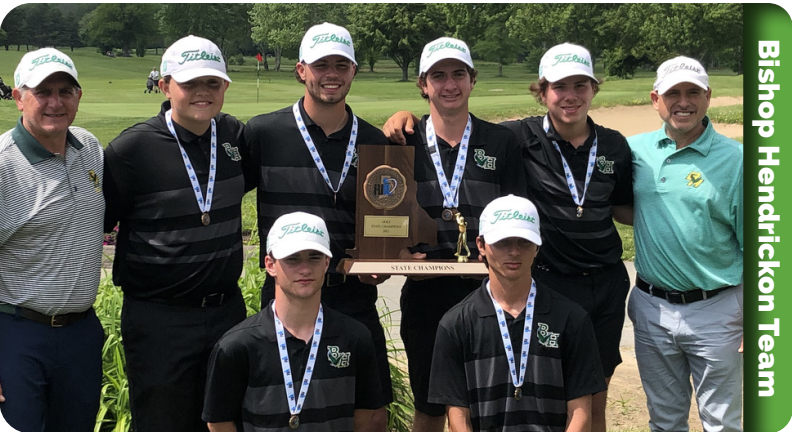
“It’s an amazing feeling. We put the time in starting in April, and even a few weeks ago I wasn’t sure we were ready to get the job done, but these guys trended in the right direction over the last week, week and a half, and it just feels great,” said Hendricken coach Rick Angeli after the tournament.

The Hawks posted a team score of 49-over par for the two days, beating out East Greenwich, who posted 55-over par. “It’s incredible, absolutely incredible. After 2019, we lost by one -tough loss- and then because of Covid we couldn’t play the next year. Words can’t explain how happy I am,” said senior Ricky Angeli, the coach’s son.

For the tournament, the Hawks were led by Angeli, who finished at seven-over for the two days and in fourth place overall. “I’m happy that he led us on Tuesday, played well, was really our anchor guy. Wednesday, being near the lead and chasing the individual title I think got to him a little bit. When he made the turn I got to him and said ‘it’s time to stand up, you have to come through for us’ and he rattled off three birdies,” said coach Angeli.

In the final round, Hendricken was led by Brady Williams and Harry Grimes, both who posted 76. Angeli posted a 77 with three birdies on the back side, while Andrew Chadwick added a 79 to round out the scoring.

Meanwhile, East Greenwich was led by Jack McMullen who posted a 74 and finished in third overall. Cameron Warrener posted a 78 in the final round while Ryan Marcantonio added an 83, playing in the final group. Brendan Fox closed out the scoring for EG by posting an 83.



- Results:**
- 1. Bishop Hendricken - +49
 - 2. East Greenwich - +55
 - 3. La Salle - +60
 - T4. Barrington - +62
 - T4. Moses Brown - +62
 - 6. Wheeler - +72

Max Jackson won the Individual Title. Could this be the start of another legendary run? La Salle freshman phenom Max Jackson ran away with the individual state championship , winning by seven shots over Burrillville’s Jacob Trimble. “I’m so happy; I worked very hard the last couple of weeks before this tournament. I wasn’t playing great coming into this week, but the last ten days have been very stressful in just trying to get ready. But I’m so happy,” said Jackson after the round.

Jackson posted a two-under par 140 for the tournament to claim the title. This is La Salle’s first golf championship of any kind since 2008 when Juliet Vongphoumy won the individual title as a freshman.

In the final round, Jackson birdied the first hole, but than made bogeys at five and eight to make the turn at one-over. However, he played the back nine bogey free and added birdies on 11 and 15 to secure the lead. I made a couple of birdies coming in like I did Tuesday and I was bogey free on the back nine so that really helped. I didn’t really think a lot about the scoreboards or anything I just played my game,” said Jackson.

With the high school season behind him, Jackson will now focus on a summer of amateur golf, including the Rhode Island Amateur at Kirkbrae.

- Individual Standings:**
- 1. Max Jackson, La Salle - -2
 - 2. Jacob Trimble, Burrillville - +5
 - 3. Jack McMullen, East Greenwich - +6
 - 4. Ricky Angeli, Hendricken - +7
 - 5. Harry Dessel, Moses Brown - +10

[Connecticut Has Outstanding Municipal Courses]



Richter Park

This is a tale of three of the best municipal courses in Connecticut; Keney Park, Wintonbury Hills and Richter Park. All three receive high marks for their interesting routings, challenge and playability for golfers of all levels.

Ten years ago no one would have put Keney Park in the mix as a top muni. The course had become run down and was badly in need of some tender loving care. And around five million dollars worth of investment.

Eight years ago, the city of Hartford hired Matt Dusenberry and his Dusenberry Design team to do a complete reconstruction of the routing. The project included rebuilding and reshaping the green complexes, rebuilding and adding teeing grounds, fairway reshaping and overseeding, adding bunkers and a new irrigation system along with drainage improvements. The project also included a new golf range and practice area. The course reopened in 2016.

The renovations and upgrades turned Keney, which is overseen by veteran PGA pro Ralph Salito, into a very good course again. The par-70, 6,711-yard track occupies Hartford's historic 700-acre Keney Park, located in the city's north end. The first nine holes of the course were finished in 1927, and

the remaining nine completed in 1930. Keney was designed by notable early 20th century American architect Devereux Emmet, who has many illustrious courses to his credit, including Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Md., the site of several U.S. Opens.

The Connecticut PGA Section was hired to be a business consultant at Keney Park Golf Course, and the Hartford City Council approved a \$5.8 million comprehensive restoration. The PGA of America served as a vital consultant in the process. The goal was to bring the course back to Emmet's original design of 1927. The routing of the holes was basically kept the same and a brick golf house and restaurant were renovated.

Keney Park, which plays 6,449 yards from the back is now a joy to play, with a fun and varied routing of long and short par-fours, several scenic par-threes that start from elevated tee areas, and reachable-in-two-shots par-fives. There's even Keney's own version of Oakmont Golf Club's famous "church pew bunkers" that guard the right side of the eighth hole.

Now to Bloomfield's Wintonbury Hills which opened in 2005. The course was designed by Pete Dye and is routed over a former dairy farm, which allowed Dye to design what for the most part is an inland links

course, with few trees coming into play except for two uphill par-fives, the fourth and the 13th, the par-four 14th, along with perhaps the toughest hole on the course, the par-four 15th, and the par-four 16th.

Ciaran Carr, a PGA Master professional and General Manager of the course, says one of Wintonbury Hills' strengths is its "playability". It's also affordable, especially if you are a resident of Bloomfield, and is always in top notch condition. The course has won a number of accolades from august publications such as Golfweek and Golf Digest.

This was the legendary Dye's first and only championship design in New England. The course plays 6,711 yards and is a par 70. It has three par-fives, five par-threes and 11 par-fours. The only criticism, and this is nitpicking, is that numbers one through four and 10 through 13 are somewhat similar, a flat par-four, leading to an uphill par-four, a short par-three and then a straight uphill par-five. This duplication is offset by the fact that the holes are very good and challenging, especially numbers two and 11 that demand crisp tee shots and then second shots uphill to putting surfaces that are hidden from view from the fairway.

The most visually pleasing hole is the fifth, a short, downhill par-four that can produce birdie or double bogey. The green is dastardly, typical of a short Dye par-four. The putting surface has severe undulations and falls off to chipping areas where getting up and down can prove problematic.

Before the golf boom of the late 1980's and the "Tiger Years" led to the building of new golf courses in Connecticut, Richter Park Golf Course in Danbury was acknowledged by many to be the best municipal course around and one of the best in the country. It still is regarded as a great test golfing ability and one of the more interesting routings you will find anywhere.

The hilly terrain makes the course play longer than the yardage states. Accuracy off the tee is needed to successfully negotiate several water hazards and find the small fairway landing areas and greens. The oversized putting surfaces are relatively fast. Jonathan Pinto is the head PGA professional at the course.

There are a pleasing mix of holes at Richter Park, both long and short fours where big numbers and birdies await, demanding par-threes and stern par-fives that are classic risk-reward holes for long hitters but fairly benign for those who prefer three well-placed shots to get to the green.

Richter Park, which plays to a par of 71 and is

6,547 yards from the tips, has a slew of great holes, many of them coming on the front side where shots must be hit over a reservoir on several occasions. Two of the best par-threes you will find anywhere are on the outward nine, the 183-yard third and the 171-yard seventh. Both play almost entirely over water and are visually intimidating.

One of the most photographed holes in the state, especially when the foliage turns colors in the autumn, is the 12th, a 527-yard par-five that doglegs to the right off the tee and then progresses downhill to a putting surface that juts out into a reservoir. There's water on three sides of the green, and the wise play here is to not try and hit the green in two and risk landing in the water, but rather a layup second shot followed by a wedge. The course ends in stern fashion, with a 438-yard par-four that lays slightly uphill to the green.

For affordability, interesting layouts and courses that players of all abilities can enjoy, check these three municipal courses out this year. ■

John Torsiello writes a Ct. Notebook column in each issue of snegolfer.com.

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Keiser Qualifies for Travelers Championship

Brian Keiser proved there truly can be justice in the world in the Connecticut PGA Championship. A year ago, Keiser won the tournament that normally earns he or she (remember Suzy Whaley?) a cherished spot in the Travelers Championship. But the PGA Tour had suspended the local exemption once it lost three months due to the COVID-19 pandemic that reduced playing opportunities for its members.

Keiser, the head pro at Longmeadow (Mass.) Country Club, was the victim of the Tour's decision after winning at Wintonbury Hills Golf Course in Bloomfield and ran a two-day member-member instead of playing in Connecticut's premier sporting event against many of the best golfers in the world. But the exemption was returned this year for the low PGA of America member from the Connecticut Section PGA, and Keiser will finally get to head to TPC River Highlands in Cromwell on June 24-27 thanks to a two-stroke victory over William Street at wind-swept Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford.

"In the great scheme of things, it's small that I didn't get the exemption last year, but this is pretty cool," a smiling Keiser said shooting after a hard-earned, 3-over-par 75 for a 36-hole total of 1-under 143 and the \$4,000 first prize in his first career title defense. "I was fighting it all day and swinging too quick. I was out of sync, and when the winds blowing like it was (gusts to 25 mph), it's tough to get back in sync. "My rhythm and tempo were a lot better and most of my (approach) distances were on the number yesterday (in a first-round 68), but when you're trying to manufacture shots and you're under

the gun, it's hard."

Despite some trying times, Keiser became the first repeat winner since Kevin Giancola in 2010-11. He began the day with a four-stroke lead over two-time champion Fran Marrello (PGA Life Member) and offset an opening bogey with birdie putts of 6 and 3 feet on the fourth and seventh holes. But an errant drive at the difficult par-4 eighth, a tee shot into a bunker at the par-3 ninth and a three-putt at No. 10 led to his first bogeys of the day that suddenly opened up the title chase.

Michael Jezierski of Raceway Golf Course in Thompson, who began the final round five strokes back, birdied the eighth and 11th holes to get to 1 under for the tournament and a stroke behind Keiser. But he then bogeyed three of the next four holes and parred Nos. 17 and 18 for 74 and a tie for third at 146 with Marrello (74).

Street, the pro at Whitney Farms GC in Monroe, made the biggest move of the final day in the difficult playing conditions. After shooting even-par 36 on the front nine, he birdied the par-5 11th and 12th holes to get within two strokes of Keiser. But he could do no better than five pars and a bogey at the long par-3 13th hole the rest of the way to close with 71, the second-lowest round of the day to the 70 of Hartford Golf Club's C.J. Konkowski, who finished fifth at 148.

Keiser had started his latest victory in rather inauspicious fashion, as his first shot hit a tree and ricocheted out of bounds into the practice range and led to a double-bogey 6. "It's a little hard to focus for a while when something like that happens, but I knew I still had 35 more holes to play," Keiser said.

Keiser quickly put the early misfortune aside as he birdied four of six holes through the middle of the front nine to turn in 2-under 34 and added four more birdies in a five-hole stretch starting at No. 11 in a back-nine 34 for the four-stroke lead over Marrello. It was only the second time in Keiser's career that he had eight birdies in a round, which was three more than Marrello, and all of them came from 12 feet or less.

Marrello, 66, is a Connecticut Section and Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame member who has won a record 25 Section individual championships and is a 16-time Player and Senior Player of the Year who was recently honored for competing in his 44th Julius Boros Challenge Cup Matches against the Connecticut State Golf Association. He two-putted the par-5 sixth hole for birdie to move within three of the lead but then bogeyed No. 7 while Keiser was making a birdie and never got closer than three the rest of the way. On the back nine, he had eight pars and bogey at No. 18 that cost him a share of second with Street.

Keiser will be in a 156-man Travelers field that includes early commitments from defending champion and No. 1-ranked Dustin Johnson, No. 4 and reigning U.S. Open champion Bryson DeChambeau, No. 7 Brooks Koepka, who tied for second in the PGA Championship, No. 8 Patrick Reed, No. 10 Patrick Cantley, No. 18 Paul Casey, a frequent challenger in Cromwell who tied for fourth in the PGA, No. 19 Abraham Ancer, former No. 1 Jason Day, 2012 titlist Marc Leishman, former U.S. Open and Olympic titlist Justin Rose, Max Homa, Cameron Smith, New-Englander Keegan Bradley, and Bubba Watson, who will try to tie

World Golf Hall of Famer Billy Casper for most tournament wins (four).

After the event didn't have fans last year because of the pandemic, 10,000 will be allowed from the program on June 23 through the four rounds of the tournament. Only 38 people were around the 18th green as Johnson parred the final hole for a one-stroke victory over 2014 champion Kevin Streelman that ended a 16-month drought and extended his PGA Tour-best winning streak to 13 consecutive years.

"Super strange," Johnson said of the end of his victory during a Zoom conference with the media on May 10. "Obviously you're used to winning and having huge crowds there and lots of media and lots of pictures. It was a completely different vibe winning. It felt like junior golf almost, a couple parents standing around clapping for you. But you know it's a big win, you know people are watching at home, and you still want to win because it gives you confidence."

The Travelers victory was Johnson's first of four in five months, capped by the Masters with a record 20-under 268 total, that led to him being named PGA Tour Player of the Year and winning the FedExCup title for the first time. He also captured two playoff events, THE NORTHERN TRUST at TPC Boston in Norton, Mass., with a stunning 30-under 254 total, and the Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta.

And it all started in Connecticut.

"I kind of continued my good play after the Travelers," said Johnson, who got in position to win in Cromwell thanks to a career-best, 9-under 61 in the third round. "Every week I was giving myself a chance to win. I finished second at the PGA, sixth at the U.S. Open, second at the BMW (Classic). I was competing every week, and that kind of confidence just keeps rolling over."

While there won't be crowds resembling the 250,000 to 300,000 that often attended the tournament in a week this year, the 10,000 fans will again add energy to the event. The number of fans was determined in line with other PGA Tour events to create a safe environment for everyone, including, players, caddies, PGA Tour officials, volunteers, tournament staff, media, medical personnel and spectators.

"The health and safety of everyone attending the Travelers Championship and in the Greater Hartford community is what matters most," tournament director Nathan Grube said. "Things might look slightly different come tournament week, but we can't wait to have our fans watching and cheering as another world-class player field competes in Connecticut. It's going to be a lot better than last year, and the players are going to feel the energy from the crowd."

Travelers executive vice president and CEO Andy Bessette said, "It was the weirdest experience that I ever had in my life last year. The only thing a little stranger was there was a trophy ceremony, which is typically on 18 green, being under a tent and socially distanced. So how exciting is it going to be on Sunday to have thousands of fans around the 18th green as our new champion sinks the final putt? It won't just be Nathan and I looking at each other and giving each other high fives about what a great ending it was last year."

There will again be pro-ams on Monday and Wednesday, and the Fan Zone between the first and 18th holes has been turned into a courtyard and main concession area. Trinity Health of New England and Stanley Black & Decker have become sponsors for special seating areas on the 17th and 18th holes. A limited

number of tickets range from \$50 to \$280 and must be purchased by June 16 at www.travelerschampionship.com. After successfully completing an online form, users will be given a coupon code that can be redeemed through Ticketmaster.

Trinity Health of New England will be providing tickets to active, guard, reserve and retired military service members, along with United States veterans. Ticketed adults can access a one-day grounds ticket for a child aged 15 or under thanks to Stanley Black & Decker. First responders and health care industry workers can also receive a one-day grounds ticket.

"We're pleased to be able to offer these unique ticket programs through our partners at Trinity Health of New England and Stanley Black & Decker," Grube said. "Their financial support enables us to generate funds for charity while also recognizing the efforts of so many different individuals who put others before their own needs. We greatly appreciate the commitment from the two organizations who are making this all possible."

The Stanley Black & Decker Courtyard will overlook the 17th green, and fans will enjoy an all-inclusive experience with lunch, afternoon snack, non-alcoholic beverages, beer and wine. The venue will include a shaded seating area with a view of golf, plenty of outdoor table seating with umbrellas for shade, ungraded restrooms and enhanced health and safety measures. Each ticket will be day-specific and include on-site general parking on a first-come-first serve basis.

Tickets cost \$150 for the program on June 23, \$260 for the first and third rounds on June 24 and 26 and \$280 for the second and fourth rounds on June 25 and 27. A Stanley Black & Decker Courtyard ticket

must be purchased to access the courtyard. The Trinity Health of New England tickets will grant access to its courtyard and tournament grounds and overlook the 18th hole. Fans will enjoy similar features as at the Stanley Black & Decker Courtyard, and prices are the same.

Daily grounds tickets include general parking on a first-come, first-served basis and will cost \$50 for pro-am day on June 23, \$65 for the first two rounds June 24 and 25 and \$70 for the final two rounds on June 26 and 27. All tournament tickets are digital and must be redeemed or purchased in advance as no tickets will be available at the gate.

No cash will be accepted on-site, and all concessions and retail locations will accept cashless forms for payment. Masks must be worn at all times unless actively eating or drinking, and spectators must follow social distancing. There may be additional health and safety protocols in place since these guidelines are continuously being updated.

Travelers again demonstrated the depth of its commitment to the tournament when it extended its title sponsorship to 2030. The event began in 1952 as the Insurance City Open at Wethersfield Country Club, and Travelers is the only company to be some form of sponsorship for 69 years. It virtually saved the event in 2006 after Buick ended its three-year title sponsorship, leaving golf fans wondering if the PGA Tour would continue in the Land of Steady Habits. There will be no such concerns until at least the end of the decade.

"I'm really proud of everything that we've done and continue to do to make the tournament as good and successful as possible," Grube said. The success has been immeasurably aided by individuals such as Hall of Fame broadcaster Chris Berman of ESPN and Travelers Vice President of

Corporate Services Jennifer Wislocki, who were named the honorary co-chairs of the tournament.

Berman left NBC-Ch. 30 in New Britain in 1979 to become a fixture at the Bristol-based cable network, where he has been involved mostly with the NFL, baseball and golf and been recognized with several of broadcasting's most prestigious awards, including "National Sportscaster of the Year" six times and 10 Emmy Awards. He also received the Pete Rozelle Radio-Television Award from the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2010 for his longtime contributions, was given the Walter Camp Football Foundation's Distinguished American Award in January 2020 and was inducted into the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 2017.

Wislocki has been with Travelers for 18 years, serving in the Corporate Communications and Corporate Services departments. In addition to her other corporate responsibilities, she has played a lead role in managing Travelers' sponsorship of the tournament and the company's Official Marketing Partnership with the PGA Tour, which involves marketing, communications, event management, player relations, sponsor hospitality and employee engagement. She also has been instrumental in the growth and success of the event since Travelers became title sponsor in 2007, and her work was recognized by the Public Relations Society of America the same year with its Silver Anvil Award, which honors outstanding strategic public relations programs. She also regularly engages with organizations in the community, serves on the Campus Leadership Team at Vox Church in Hartford and has previously been a board member of Hartford's Camp Courant and the Hartford Marathon Foundation. This

will be her final tournament while working at Travelers, as she will be retiring from the company at the end of the event.

"We wouldn't be where we are today without the support and dedication of both Chris and Jennifer," Grube said. "Chris brought a national voice to our tournament, and having him in our corner since day one has meant so much to us. Jennifer has been our close partner at Travelers since we came together, and her involvement has helped ensure that our teams work seamlessly to deliver a bigger and better event year after year. To say thank you for their invaluable contributions, we are pleased to recognize them as our 2021 honorary co-chairs." ■

Bruce Berlet is a member of the Golf Writers of America and the retired sports writer for the Hartford Courant.



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My Best Memories from the Travelers Championship

Bruce Berlet, who writes a Connecticut Notebook Column in each issue of snegolfer.com has been covering the Travelers Championship for 50 years. He has written a story about his top 9 memories from his years of covering the event for the Hartford Courant and then our publication.

This year's Travelers Championship is the 50th time that I will cover Connecticut's biggest sporting event, which began in 1952 as the Insurance City Open at Wethersfield Country Club. The tournament also has been known as the Greater Hartford Open, Sammy Davis Jr.-Greater Hartford Open, Canon SDJ-GHO, Canon GHO, GHO, Buick Championship and now Travelers Championship since the insurance magnate elevated the tournament to new heights when it became the title sponsor in 2007.

In 1984, the tournament moved to the former Edgewood Golf Club, which had been renovated by legendary architect Pete Dye, a close friend of the Pierson brothers who owned the public course in Cromwell. The TPC Connecticut became TPC River Highlands in 1991 after the purchase of 55 acres of land adjacent to the course, which was extensively renovated, including the construction of 41/2 new holes, three of which were along the Connecticut River.

Davis was involved with the tournament from 1973 to 1988 in an era when several celebrities lent their names to PGA Tour events. After Canon ended its 14-year association in 2002, tournament officials and local businesses put together a one-time, \$4 million "bridge plan" to keep the event on the PGA Tour schedule. Buick became the title sponsor of a fourth PGA Tour tournament in 2004 but ended all of its sponsorships in 2006 when the car industry was drastically affected by a poor economy. Travelers, which has had some form of sponsorship with the tournament since its inception, then saved the event when it became title sponsor in the suburb of its hometown of Hartford.

The tournament has raised more than \$42 million for 150 local charities, including nearly \$20 million since Travelers became title sponsor, and has provided countless memories for the more than 200,000 fans who attend every year. But this year, the tournament is a TV-only event because of the COVID-19 pandemic, so the thousands of fans who annually show up have to watch

on CBS and the Golf Channel. That includes myself, as I'm unfortunately not among the limited number of media that the PGA Tour will allow on the grounds.

But that doesn't deter me from offering my Top 18 favorite tournament moments/memories, plus a few before I began covering the event for The Hartford Courant, Southern New England Golfer Magazine and New England Golf blog.

1

Jordan Spieth made PGA Tour history in 2017 when he holed a 61-foot bunker shot for birdie on the first playoff hole, the par-4 18th, to beat Daniel Berger and become the second-youngest player to Tiger Woods to notch 10 PGA Tour wins before the age of 24 in the modern era. Spieth was the first player to capture his tournament debut and only the third to hole a bunker shot to win, the others being on the final hole of regulation by Bob Tway in the 1986 PGA Championship and David Frost in the 1990 UFS&G Classic. Snake-bitten Hall of Famer Greg Norman was the victim both times.

After Spieth's shot disappeared, he fired his sand wedge into the rough and caddie Michael Geller sent the rake that he was holding airborne. Spieth then leaped backwards into Geller's chest in the best celebration in tournament history and perhaps in the history of the PGA Tour, which has shown the shot and aftermath in numerous ensuing promotions. Spieth had a similar shot on the final hole of regulation and got up-and-down to save par.

"That was one for the ages, and I just went nuts," Spieth said in one of the all-time understatement in golf history. "I felt comfortable in the bunker and knew it was actually one of the easier bunker shots you could have out here, as I saw in regulation. But you never think those are necessarily going in. You try to make the right contact to get it somewhere with a five-foot circle, which was my expectation, and then wait and see what Daniel does and try to force another hole."

"When the shot went in, it was a tremendous bonus, and I lost my mind. I don't know how many shots or if I'll ever have a moment equivalent to that again. Something like that to win a tournament is very memorable, and I certainly soaked it in. It was really fun."

Spieth also got a major kick out of his caddie's response.

"I'm left-handed, but I think I tossed my wedge not even like a tomahawk, but the shaft tossed it," a smiling Spieth said. "I didn't know if (the sand wedge) went in the bunker or the rough or where it went. And I was actually a little surprised by the jubilation of Michael. I looked over and he kind of turned around and screamed. Normally, he'd just kind of have his hands up or something. He's more reserved, but he was screaming and it made me want to scream louder, and then he jumped. Fortunately, he didn't like high-five jump. We both kind of went for the little side bump, but it was cool."

"I mean the ground was shaking it was so loud, as loud as anything that I've ever created. What an amphitheater and tremendous last four holes where you can get the crowd super involved with the setting. If I were a fan, I would pick this tournament and Phoenix as the two tournaments that stick out for the excitement of the closing holes. To win a golf tournament on a shot that's not a putt is something that not many people get to experience."

Spieth made a prophet of Justin Thomas, who tweeted that he wouldn't be surprised if his close friend holed the decisive shot.

Berger, who made the classy move of giving Spieth a "low five" as he went to look over a 45-foot birdie putt to tie, was philosophical about the spectacular finish.

"Jordan does Jordan things, so there's not really much you can say," Berger said. "I'm obviously disappointed but happy to be in the position I was in."

After Spieth finished the trophy presentation on the 18th green and numerous post-win interviews, he and Geller returned to the bunker and had pictures taken with the sand wedge and rake that they let fly. They then climbed a steep hill alongside the green to a celebration for the ages.

2

Bubba Watson notched the most emotional victory in tournament history in 2010 when he parred the second playoff hole, the par-3 16th, to defeat Scott Verplank and Corey Pavin for his first of 12 PGA Tour victories. After shaking hands with Verplank (Pavin had been eliminated on the first extra hole), Watson hugged caddie Ted Scott, kissed wife Angie, buried his head in

her shoulder and sobbed for about 30 seconds before composing himself enough to talk with CBS analyst Peter Kostis.

During the interview, Watson revealed his father, Gerry, a former Green Beret who taught Bubba how to play golf while growing up in Bagdad, Fla., was battling throat cancer. Gerry died less than months later and only weeks before Bubba played in his first Ryder Cup matches.

"That win has always meant so much to me because it was only one that my dad got to see before he died," said Watson, a two-time Masters champion. "He taught me everything I know. I've never had a lesson, and he took me to the golf course when I was 6 years old and told me he was going to be in the woods looking for his ball. He just told me to take his 9-iron and beat it down the fairway. And now look at me, after beating a 9-iron on the fairway, coming from Bagdad, Fla., I never dreamed this could happen."

On the eve of the Ryder Cup, Watson said, "I'm playing this for him and representing the United States. More than likely I am never going to be in the military, so this is the chance to be like my dad."

In 2016, Watson donated \$100,000 as more than \$1 million was raised at a dinner in honor of Wethersfield native Bruce Edwards, a Hall of Fame caddie on the PGA Tour and PGA Tour Champions for 30 years for Tom Watson and Greg Norman before he died in 2004 at 49 because of ALS. More than 30 players and caddies were among 1,000 people who attended the dinner for the Bruce Edwards Foundation that was held in downtown Hartford after the second round.

"I promised him before he passed that I will continue my life's goal to raise funds for research until this disease is toast and that's what I'm doing here tonight," Tom Watson said in one of several emotional speeches.

Jay Fishman, an executive at Travelers and chairman for the dinner, also gave a stirring speech while sitting in a wheelchair two weeks before he died of ALS.

"The disease is coming out of the shadows," Fishman said. "It's OK to have ALS. It's OK to talk about it. I think we are more into the science than we've ever been. There is work going on now that you couldn't have imagined 10 years ago, five years ago. With genetic analysis these is cause for hope."

In 2018, Bubba continued to show his love for the tournament when he donated \$200,000 of his \$1,260,000 winnings to give the event a record \$2 million for charity after rallying for a third Travelers victory, one shy of Hall of Famer Billy Casper's record for tournament wins. "1.8 million was nice, but \$2 million sure sounds a lot better,"

Watson said after informing tournament officials of his decision. The record for charity was broken last year, when \$2.1 million was raised.

3

When the tournament reached its golden anniversary in 2001, officials invited back all of the living past champions for a special celebration and to play in a pro-am. Returnees included Casper, fellow Hall of Famers Arnold Palmer, Sam Snead and Lee Trevino, as well as Charlie Sifford, the first African-American to win a PGA Tour event in 1967, Tommy Bolt, Bill Kratzert, Wayne Levi, Tim Norris, Billy Maxwell, Bob Goalby, Don Bies, Bob Lunn, Rik Massengale, Kenny Perry, Bob Toski and Ted Kroll, who was the inaugural event. Fittingly, future Hall of Famer Phil Mickelson shot a career-best, 9-under-par 61 in the third round and then closed with 68 to beat Rhode Island native and longtime tournament supporter Billy Andrade by a stroke. Record crowds of more than 310,000 fans celebrated the event's historic anniversary.

"It has been certainly a special week for me starting with seeing all the past champions and what this tournament has meant to the PGA Tour and the history that it has created," Mickelson said. "To see the names that have been a part of this leaderboard and past champions, to be part of that and be included in that is something very special."

A year later, Mickelson became the only player to win back-to-back tournament titles, shooting 66-64 on the weekend to rally from five strokes back in the final round. He hit a Vokey sand wedge shot to 3 feet for a birdie 3 on the final hole to beat Davis Love III and Jonathan Kaye by a shot. He has used the same club to hole a 105-yard shot for eagle 2 at No. 7. A record 323,000 fans watched what was until then the best field in tournament history that included Mickelson, Love, Greg Norman, Ernie Els, Sergio Garcia and Vijay Singh.

4

Two days after winning the 1991 British Open at Royal Birkdale in England, Ian Baker-Finch demonstrated what a classy person that he is by showing up in Cromwell for the first tournament played at the new TPC River Highlands when he could have begged off because of fatigue. His agent informed me when Baker-Finch was arriving at the course, and I interviewed him in the parking lot as he held the claret jug, which he allowed to be on display in the clubhouse under a glass cover protected by security guards throughout the tournament.

A rain delay forced Baker-Finch to have to return to the course early Saturday morning to finish his second

round, and it would have been easy for him to excuse himself. Instead, Baker-Finch birdied the last hole to make the cut, and though he tied for last with Kirk Triplett, it hardly mattered after what the personable Australian had done earlier in the week.

After his game deserted him, Baker-Finch turned his interests to careers in broadcasting and golf course design and management, starting with ESPN and ABC in 1998. The man known as "Finchy" has been an ABC announcer since 2007, and when he was in Cromwell in 2015, he was the featured speaker for the annual First Tee of Connecticut breakfast on Saturday morning. During his introduction, then-First Tee executive director David Polk reminded the crowd how much Baker-Finch's appearance had meant to tournament organizers and fans in 1991. Then as Baker-Finch took the podium to speak about his experiences in Hartford, first as a player and then as an announcer, tournament patriarch Ted May, whose father Ed helped start the event, came in with a surprise token of appreciation, the claret jug.

Baker-Finch looked down at the trophy, and then just as he began to talk about the event making him feel like part of a family, he choked up, momentarily lost his focus and gave way to tears welling up in his eyes. It was touching to watch, and the audience suddenly quieted and gave Baker-Finch a few moments to gather himself. When it became obvious that he needed more time, the crowd stood and applauded in appreciation of how sincere and revealing a gesture they had witnessed. I immediately became even more of an Ian Baker-Finch fan.

5

Lee Trevino was the most popular player in tournament history, birdying the first playoff hole to beat Lee Elder in 1972 and later marrying Claudia Bove of Wethersfield whom he had bought lemonade from in front of her house adjacent the 16th tee at Wethersfield Country Club. After the couple wed, they spent summers at Claudia's former home, befriending many of the club's members as Trevino had a cart and club repair setup in the garage during off-time from playing on the PGA Tour Champions.

I was fortunate to meet with Trevino and longtime caddie Herman Mitchell during a practice session in the far corner of the Wethersfield CC range every summer to get insight into one of the game's most famous player-caddie combos that they jokingly called "like an old married couple." Within minutes, friends and fans would migrate to the duo, ending what privacy that they had. But Trevino rarely seemed to care as his constant one-liners

suddenly had an appreciative audience. His game face occasionally appeared, but for the most part, laughter dominated and autographs followed.

Trevino also is remembered for the comedy routine that he did on the first tee after a 51/2-hour rain delay early in the second round in 1985. He had playing partner Ben Crenshaw howling as he entertained the fans for several minutes before their 6 p.m. starting time. As he prepared to hit his first shot, Trevino turned and quipped, "I'm teeing off so late I'm going to miss the Johnny Carson Show." As it turned out, he played only six holes and was home in plenty of time to see Johnny. Two days later, there was a 36-hole windup that Phil Blackmar won when he birdied the first playoff hole to beat Jodie Mudd and Dan Pohl for his first of three PGA Tour victories, all of which came in sudden death. It was the start of Canon USA's 17-year involvement with the tournament.

6 Norman holed a 50-foot chip shot for eagle 2 on the 15th hole on the way to a closing 71 that enabled him to overtake playing partner and close friend Fuzzy Zoeller and win by three over Dave Stockton Jr., Kirk Triplett and Grant Waite in 1995. Norman received overly kind treatment from the tournament, which gave 12-year-old daughter Morgan a personal security guard so she could walk inside the ropes to watch her father play. Morgan also was allowed in the press room to watch dad's post-round news conferences, and she and I discussed soccer that she played and I coached for my daughter Brooke's team.

A year later in his title defense, Norman was disqualified after the second round when he learned the golf ball that he had been using were physically identical to one approved by the U.S. Golf Association but mislabeled with a stamp that designated it as one that was not on the USGA's list of conforming balls. The No. 1 ranked player in the world was in fourth place, two shots out of the year, and this reporter was the only writer who was able to be present for his press conference to discuss the situation at 9 a.m. on Saturday. As we left the press building, Associated Press photographer Bob Childs took a picture of us that was circulated around the world because of Norman's lofty status in the game. I received correspondence from dozens of people, including University of Miami women's basketball coach Fern Labati, whom I had met while covering the University of Connecticut team that won its first national title two months before Norman prevailed in Cromwell.

"You live by the rules of the game," Norman said of his DQ.

D.A. Weibring gave the week an inspiring finish when he notched a four-stroke victory over Tom Kite after taking three weeks off to regain strength sapped by the Bell's palsy that he was diagnosed with earlier in the year.

7 Fairfield native J.J. Henry became the only player from Connecticut to win his hometown tournament in 2006, shooting a final-round 67 for a three-stroke victory over Ryan Moore and Hunter Mahan, who prevailed the next year with a birdie on the first playoff hole with Trinity College grad Jay Williamson. Henry's father, Ron, taught him how to play golf, and he started hitting shots on sand dunes near his home. He was a standout at Fairfield High School before attending Texas Christian University, where he was runner-up in the 1988 Division I Men's Golf Championship. After winning his third Connecticut Golf Association Amateur Championship and the New England Amateur that summer, he turned pro and joined the then-Nationwide Tour, winning the 2000 [Buy.com Knoxville Open](#). But his victory in Cromwell, which led to his only appearance on the U.S. Ryder Cup team, is the highlight of his three PGA Tour titles.

"I'm kind of lost for words," Henry said after the Buick Championship win. "To grow up in the State of Connecticut and to come here as the young guy who was wet behind the ears, so to speak, and watching the guys hit balls on the range and following some groups around, I thought how cool that would be some day if I could be one of those guys and play against the best players in the world. So I couldn't think of any place where I would want to win my first Tour event than in Hartford.

"I'm proud of the way I hung in there in really difficult conditions with the wind up. I was pretty anxious and pretty nervous, but I had a lot of emotions going, and luckily I was really able to show that I could get over that hump. To be out here six years and learn your way about how to put yourself in a position to win a tournament and then to finally get the job done just makes it that much sweeter. It's always a highlight of my schedule, and it's truly unbelievable to win, especially after James Blake won the Pilot Pen (tennis tournament) last year. James is a good friend of mine and my younger brother, who grew up together. We're both from the same hometown, so it's pretty cool."

In 2006, Henry founded the Henry House Foundation, a non-profit organization with a mission to generate public awareness and support community-based programs that focus on the healthcare and well-being of children in the community. The foundation funds specific, tangible projects initiated by children's medical and support

services and organizations where he now lives in Ft. Worth, Texas, and The First Tee of Connecticut, where he is an honorary member of the board of directors.

In 2019, the Henry clan came full circle when 14-year-old Connor caddied for dad in the pro-am. Ron Henry, a standout player himself, had caddied for son J.J. when he first played in Cromwell 21 years earlier.

8

Jim Furyk is the only player in history to gain more notoriety on the final day than the winner. After teeing off in the third group, Furyk gained the lofty status when he shot a 12-under-par 58, the lowest score in PGA Tour history, to tie for fifth at 269, three strokes behind winner Russell Knox, who made a 12-foot par putt on the final hole to edge University of Hartford grad Jerry Kelly. Furyk missed a 27-foot birdie try that would have given him a 57 but tapped in a 2-footer for par, raised his arms in celebration and then hugged caddie Fluff Cowan. Furyk had shot a course-record, 8-under 27 on the front nine, including holing a 135-yard shot for eagle 2 at No. 3.

"There's a lot of rounds by a lot of great players ahead of me that have never reached 58, so to hold that record alone right now, on the PGA Tour at least is phenomenal," said Furyk, who had previously been one of six players to shoot 59, in the second round of the 2013 BMW Championship. "To have a little, small place in history is something you dream of."

Furyk, the 2003 U.S. Open champion with an unorthodox swing, nearly didn't have a shot at history after an opening 73, but a second-round 66 enabled him to make the cut on the number. A third-round 72 put him in 70th place among the 73 players to advance to the weekend and 16 strokes behind leader Daniel Berger. But Furyk had the eagle and six birdies in the outgoing 27, one off the PGA Tour record set by Corey Pavin in 2006, and finally got television coverage on the 10th hole, where he made his fifth of seven consecutive birdies on the way to 11-under for 12 holes. He had only one more birdie, at the par-3 16th hole, but was soon in the record book, though the round nearly didn't count. Playing partner Miguel Angel Carballo incorrectly marked Furyk for a birdie 3 at the 14th hole but fortunately found the mistake before Furyk submitted his scorecard. If Carballo hadn't corrected the score and Furyk hadn't noticed the discrepancy, Furyk would have signed for a 57 and been disqualified.

9

Brad Faxon shot a final-round, 9-under-par 61 that tied the course record at the time and then hit a

7-iron shot from a fairway bunker to 3 feet on the first playoff hole, setting up a birdie to defeat Tjaart Van der Wald for his eighth and final PGA Tour victory in the 2005 Buick Championship. Faxon, a Rhode Island native and one of the tournament's all-time favorites who played a record 29 times, thought he might be headed home after two uneventful rounds. He was in his hotel packing Friday afternoon while waiting to hear if he made the cut, which he did on the number, 140. But he had weekend rounds of 65-61 and finally drove off with the champion's trophy in a new Buick.

"This was really kind of out of the blue," Faxon said. "The first two days I played OK, then something happened in the third round where all the putts started going in. People get excited about this tournament and I love playing close to home. Nobody on Tour would ever tell you anything differently. My father came today, my aunt, my uncle, my cousins are here. Great friends are here. It's just awesome."

Faxon's design company constructed the four-hole Karl Krapek Family Learning Links short course at The First Tee of Connecticut, located north of the course adjacent the practice facility. He also was involved with TPC Boston in Norton, Mass., which has hosted two PGA Tour events, and has been a well-respected television commentator. ■

9

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There are discounts when purchasing three or more of the passports, if you want to buy it with your golfing buddies. Please call the number below for information. The Golf Season Passport includes discounts at many of the best public courses in New England including Blackstone National, Country View, Cranston, Crystal Lake, Gardner Municipal, Fenner Hill, Hazelton, Laurel Lane, Manchester CC, Maplegate, No. Kingstown, Portland, Quarry Ridge, Rehoboth, Southhampton, Tekoa CC, Triggs, Waubeeka, Winnepaug and dozens more. There are also some nine-hole courses for those that would rather just play nine including Kings Crossing, Louisquisset, Midville and Pinecrest in Rhode Island. The Golf Season Passport can be used through December 31, 2021. You can see the entire list of deals at snegolfer.com.

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Ron Joseph who has a large group of golfers that play every Wednesday had this to say about the Season Passport; "We save hundreds of dollars each year on our golfing fees with the Season Passport. Each week we look at books and decide where we are going to play the following week. Since some of the courses have more than one coupon, we often go back to the courses we like the most."

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AMATEURS WIN CHALLENGE CUP AGAIN

The Connecticut State Golf Association team reached new heights in the 50th Julius Boros Challenge Cup Matches at New Haven Country Club. The 14-man amateur team routed the Connecticut Section PGA 47.5-24.5 for a record fourth consecutive victory in the Nassau-style four-ball and singles matches. It was the amateurs' second largest margin of victory to their 48.5-23.5 romp in last year's event that was twice postponed due to the pandemic.

"We are really excited about the whole thing," fifth-year captain Roger Everin said. "I am really excited for the players. I never really talked to them about [winning four in a row] or pushed that, but they all knew about it and it is just a great feeling to know that the CSGA as a group has won four in a row. I can't say enough about the players, and I am ecstatic that they came through."

Cody Paladino, the 2020 CSGA Player of the Year from Wampanoag CC in West Hartford, Richard Dowling (EClub of Connecticut), Daniel Murphy (H. Smith Richardson GC-Fairfield) and Mike Kennedy of the host club each swept their matches to pace the amateur side. Dowling and Murphy combined to shoot an 8-under-par 62 in four-ball while also sweeping their singles matches against Jordan Gosler (Manchester CC) and Marc Bayram (Timberlin GC-Berlin).

Reinstated amateur and two-time Connecticut Open champion Nick Cook (Tashua Knolls GC-Trumbull), Nick Waddington (Manchester CC), Richard Stevens (Western Hills GC-Waterbury) and Ben Day of the host club each earned eight of nine points. Michael Jezierski (Raceway GC-Thompson) led the pros with nine

points, and partner Donny Kirkpatrick (Wampanoag CC) had eight.

Despite the CSGA's recent domination, the pros have a 34-16 lead in the series that began in 1972 at Tumble Brook CC in Bloomfield after Boros, a Fairfield native and World Golf Hall of Fame member who won 1952 and 1963 U.S. Open and 1968 PGA Championship, lent his name to the competition. After three years at Tumble Brook, it has been played at New Haven CC ever since except for 2010.

At a post-tournament gathering, the CSGA honored Dave Szewczul (TPC River Highlands-Cromwell), a 12-time Player and Senior Player of the Year, for competing in a record 46th Challenge Cup. Fran Marrello (PGA Life Member), winner of a record 25 Section individual championships and a 16-time Player and Senior Player of the Year, was recognized for playing in his 44th Challenge Cup.

Ironically, Szewczul and Marrello played each other. Szewczul and partner Dave Jones (Mohegan Sun GC-Baltic) tied Marrello and Bob Mucha (Edgewood GC-Southwick, Mass.) in their four-ball match, while Marrello earned 21/2 of three points against Szewczul in singles.

"New Haven has been my favorite course since the days of the local U.S. Open qualifying there in the 1970s, 80s and 90s," Marrello said. "So to have the Challenge Cup there is even more special, and knowing the Boros family and having worked for Julius is the coup de grace."

FOSDICK WINS CSGA'S PALMER CUP

Chris Fosdick just keeps adding to an impressive early resume as he rallied from a four-stroke deficit

entering the final round of a 36-hole windup to win the Russell C. Palmer Cup at the wind-swept Country Club of Waterbury.

Fosdick, who recently completed his freshman year at the University of Virginia, appeared as if he would have to settle for a decent finish behind Dowling, the defending champion and final-round co-leader who opened a five-stroke advantage after shooting a 2-under-par 33 on the front nine of the final round. But Fosdick shot a 2-under 34 on the back side for a closing, 2-under 67 and a 54-hole total of 1-over 208, one better than Austin Cilley (Lake of Isles Golf Course-North Stonington). Dowling hit his drive out of bounds on the 18th hole and made a double-bogey 6 for 73 and third place at 210.

"Last week I had the (NCAA) Regional Championship in Nashville (Tenn.) for Virginia and my iron game wasn't there at all," Fosdick said, "and now to have this final round, I felt like I put my game together and it feels really good."

After shooting even par the first eight holes of the final round, Fosdick began his rally with a birdie on the short ninth, the only par-5 on the course, to get to 2-over for the tournament. He then got hot with his putter, making birdie putts of 20 and 40 feet on the 12th and 14th holes to get within a shot of Dowling.

"I went out and hit a confident drive on the first hole of the final round, hit a decent wedge shot and made a good putt for birdie, and at that point my game felt better than the previous two rounds," said Fosdick, who plays out of Wallingford Country Club. "I knew if I kept playing like that, I could maybe win this thing."

Dowling began the final round tied for the lead with Cilley at 1-under

but shot a 2-under 33 on the front nine for the five-stroke lead. But on the back nine, the co-leader after each of the first two rounds began to struggle. One year after blitzing the back nine with a 4-under 30 in the final round, Dowling stumbled with bogeys on the 10th and 11th to open the door to Cilley and Fosdick, who was playing in the group ahead.

When Dowling bogeyed the 15th hole, he fell into a tie with Fosdick. Meanwhile, Cilley moved back into contention after a 3-over 38 on the front nine dropped him six strokes back. After four pars, he hit his tee shot on the 225-yard 14th hole to a foot for a tap-in birdie. Cilley briefly moved into a tie for the lead with Fosdick and Dowling but bogeyed the 17th hole and closed with 72 for 209.

Fosdick's charge slowed with a bogey on the 16th hole, but two closing pars gave him the low score of the double-round windup. After bogeys on the 15th and 16th holes, Dowling parred No. 17, but his drive on the 18th ended his hopes when he hit it right out of bounds.

As Dowling made his way up the final hole, Fosdick stood watching above the green, and when Dowling's approach shot didn't fall, Fosdick had added the Palmer Cup, the state's medal play championship, to the CSGA Amateur and Tournament of Champions in 2020 after he was medalist in the 2019 CSGA Junior Amateur and a member of the state junior team.

Brian Ahern (Wampanoag CC-West Hartford), the 2018 champion, finished fourth at 211, three ahead of Thomas McCarthy (EClub of Connecticut). In the second round in the morning, Cilley made a hole-in-one on the 146-yard eighth hole on the way to a 71. One hour later, Ahernaced the 14th hole in shooting 70.

The tournament is named in honor of Russell C. Palmer, the former CSGA executive director (1986-1995) and an inductee into the Connecticut

Golf Hall of Fame (1997). Palmer's numerous accomplishments included establishing the use of GHIN throughout CSGA member clubs and initiating the purchase of the "Connecticut Golf House" that has served as the CSGA's home. Palmer moved the association's office from New Haven to Rocky Hill in 1988.

DOWLING, TAYLOR TRIUMPH AGAIN

Dowling and Nick Taylor (Golf Performance Center-Ridgefield) shot 1-over 143 for 36 holes in windy, cold conditions to win the CSGA Two Man Team Championship at the Black Hall Club in Old Lyme for the third time in four years. Dowling, a two-time State Amateur champion and 2019 CSGA Player of the Year, and Taylor finished one stroke ahead of Paladino and Kevin Josephson (Stanley GC-New Britain).

Ben (CC of Waterbury) and Ed (Wampanoag) Day had the first-round lead at 69 but shot a closing 76 to finish in a tie for third with Matt Fuller (Great Neck CC-Waterford) and Brett Shulick (Oronoque CC-Stratford). The tournament is played in honor of Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame member Bill Hermanson, a 25-time club champion at Black Hall who also won the CSGA Mid-Amateur at his home course.

STATE PLAYERS MISS CUT IN PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

None of the five qualifiers with Connecticut connections made the 5-over 149 cut in the PGA Championship at the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island (S.C.) Golf Resort.

Danny Balin, a frequent Connecticut Open challenger who played in the 2020 U.S. Open at Winged Foot GC in Mamaroneck, N.Y., came closest when he shot 152 for 36 holes. He was followed by Stamford resident Peter Ballo, the head pro at Silvermine GC in Norwalk who finished second in the 2020

Connecticut Open (155), Hartford native and Central Connecticut State University grad Rob Labritz (157), former Bridgeport resident Alex Beach, a Korn Ferry Tour member and teaching pro at Westchester (N.Y.) CC who has won two PGA national championship and an assistant national title (171), and three-time Connecticut Open champion Frank Benschel, a teaching pro at Century CC in Purchase, N.Y. (165). Beach will use his two remaining sponsors' exemptions on the PGA Tour in the Travelers Championship on June 24-27 at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell and the Barracuda Championship in August.

Defending Travelers Championship winner Dustin Johnson (150) missed the cut in two majors in the same season for the first time and became the first No. 1 to miss consecutive major cuts since 1995 Greater Hartford Open winner Greg Norman in 1997. It was especially disappointing for the South Carolina native, but he wasn't the only marquee name to leave early. He was joined by 2012 Travelers champion Marc Leishman, who finished double bogey-bogey in the second round, Xander Schauffele and major champion winners Sergio Garcia, Adam Scott and No. 2-ranked Justin Thomas, who lipped out a 12-foot birdie putt on his final hole after making a 37-foot bomb on the treacherous par-3 17th.

But Phil Mickelson, the only repeat winner in the Travelers Championship (2001-02), made it a magical week when he shot 6-under 282 for a two-stroke victory over Brooks Koepka and Louis Oosthuizen to become the oldest winner of a major championship in history (50 years, 11 months, 7 days), surpassing the record of Boros, who was 48 when he captured the 1968 PGA Championship at Pecan Valley Golf Club in San Antonio, Texas.

SAVED UCONN GOLF WINS BIG EAST TITLE

From near oblivion to a Big East Conference title. That's the inspiring resurgence of the University of Connecticut men's golf program, which was among those considered for elimination less than a year ago and then won the Big East title in April to earn the conference's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. The Huskies faced elimination when the department of athletics needed to cut its budget by 25 percent, a situation made more dire by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It had nothing to do with me keeping my job," coach Dave Pezzino told The Hartford Courant. "I knew I would be fine. My responsibility was to the young men who played for me and were going to play for me. I had 80 years of college golf on my shoulders. Our alumni and players' parents, everyone was so amazing and loving to our kids and our program. I don't know if I'll be able to catch up and thank everybody properly for what we just did."

A group of former UConn golfers conferred with Pezzino and organized a campaign to raise funds to save the program. Leaders of the group included John Bierkan, the Director of Instruction at the famed Aronimink Golf Club in Newtown Square, Pa., and Old Marsh Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., in the winter. Bierkan is the son of Dick Bierkan, the former pro at Lyman Orchards Golf Club in Middlefield for 48 years, who was rated one of America's Best Young Teachers from 2010-17 by Golf Digest. He also has been recognized by U.S. Kids Golf as one of the top 50 Kids Coaches in America and named the Philadelphia PGA Teacher of the Year in 2014 and 2018.

"We started getting an alumni list together and started reaching out to our immediate teammates," said John Bierkan, who played at UConn

in 1997-2000. "Then branching out to others we knew and ask them to branch out, and we ended up going back four or five decades, all the way to some guys who just graduated in the last four or five years. We just kept spreading that web."

The group grew to 126 individuals, who donated what they could, some as little as \$50 a year for five years. They set a goal of about \$200,000 but "blew that out of the water," Bierkan said. They surpassed \$700,000, and pledges approached \$1 million when they were finished.

"I never wanted it to be adversarial, where it was the coach against the Board of Trustees," Pezzino said. "This thing wasn't personal; it was real-world stuff that many people had to try to figure out. I wanted to be a positive part of the solution. It was never us against UConn."

Last June, UConn did cut men's cross country, men's swimming and diving, men's tennis and women's rowing, which is fighting the decision in the courts. Men's golf survived, though the program lost its assistant coach and one scholarship.

There was no fall season due to the pandemic, but the Huskies won twice and finished second once in nine events before prevailing in the conference championship. They were led by freshman Jimmy Paradise of Tampa, Fla., who had six birdies in a closing 4-under-par 68 that matched his collegiate best and enabled him to leap from 12th to third at 2-under 214 for 54 holes at Streamsong Resort in Bowling Green, Fla. Caleb Manuel finished fourth at 215 and Jaren Nelson was ninth at 217 as all five UConn golfers in the top 30 while shooting a team score of 5-over 869, six lower than defending champion Marquette.

UConn finished 12th in the regionals and failed to advance to the NCAA National Championships at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale, Ariz.

FROM AUGUSTA NATIONAL TO YALE

Jeffrey Austin, the former golf course superintendent at Augusta National Golf Club, has been named to a similar position at The Course at Yale in New Haven. He comes from Quail Hollow CC in Painesville, Ohio, where he was serving as the director of agronomy. His more than 16 years in the business includes nearly four years as the assistant superintendent at Augusta National in Augusta, Ga., home of the Masters.

"To become the next steward of such a historically important course like the one at Yale is exactly what I have worked for throughout my career," Austin said in a statement. "The lessons that I have learned will ensure that I provide the best available conditions on a daily basis to our golfers. I am looking forward to joining (general manager) Peter (Palacios) and the entire Bulldog family."

Austin went from Augusta National GC to Quail Hollow in 2014. His other stops as first superintendent include the Stonewater Golf Club in Highland Heights, Ohio, and the Garden City Golf Club in Garden City, N.Y. He replaces Scott Ramsay, who left in March of 2020 for the same position at the CC of Farmington after 17 years.

Yale Golf Club spent much of 2020 closed due to the pandemic before reopening on September 28. Despite the course being closed for months, it remained the top collegiate course in the country, according to Golfweek. ■

Bruce Berlet is long-time member of the Golf Writers of America, the retired golf writer for the Hartford Courant and writes a Connecticut Notebook in each issue of snagolfer.com.

Playing by the Rules

I was playing with good friends the other day and I got "The Question." Susie P pushed her tee into the turf, swung, hit the ball but bad luck. Her ball barely dribbled off the tee deep into the rough just in front. "Can I take it over," asked Susie?

"Yes and no," I said. It wasn't like she was new to the game. She had been playing golf in our weekly league for several seasons. Perhaps she knew the answer, but was hoping for a reprieve.

"If we were just playing for fun, you could take it over several times as far as I am concerned, as long as we weren't holding anyone up," I replied. "However this is league day. We are playing against others for pro shop credit. So, no. Unfortunately you have to keep playing from where it landed. But yes, you could take it over as long as you declare it lost and count stroke and distance. In other words, you would now be hitting 3."

It's called protecting the field.... playing by the rules. That's what you do when you are officially competing against others. That's why many decide not to join a league and just go out and have fun—kick the ball out of a divot, toss it out of the bunker and all those good things. Mulligans included. And BTW you can't enter this score into the handicap GHIN system.

Still it really is a good idea to know the rules, especially the latest rules recently introduced by the R&A AND USGA designed to make the game move faster and more user-friendly. If you don't know the rules, you really will be at a great disadvantage if you should decide to play in any kind of competition such as a Member/Guest. Or you will look really stupid if you keep having to ask your playing partners, "Can I do this or that; do I have to play off the cart path; where do I take a drop?" These questions can be not only annoying, they can slow down play. And hey, knowing the rules is not rocket science; it just takes a little time getting to understand what's inside the book, "Rules of Golf."

So to get you started, what are some of rules and changes?

Q. Your beautiful perfectly shaped shot lands in a nasty divot in the fairway. Can you move it out?
A. No. It's called "rub of the green." Bad luck. You have to play it where it lies.

Q. You have used a crappy ball to hit over a pond to the green. Once you get to the green can you swap out your ball for a better one?
A. No. Sorry. You have to continue play with the ball in play unless you find it cut or otherwise damaged. (That also means you also can't swap out your new Titleist with a retread when facing a shot over a hazard.) However you can change balls when taking free or penalty relief such as off a cart path.

Q. Your ball goes soaring out of bounds or you think it went out but can't find it. What's the new rule?
A. You have choices. You can hit again from same spot and be penalized stroke and distance as in the old rule, or a new local rule if you have not taken a provisional ball. You have the option to drop between the point where the ball is estimated to have come to rest or gone out of bounds and the edge of the fairway within two club lengths not nearer the hole with a two-stroke penalty. This Local Rule cannot be used for an unplayable ball, or for a ball that is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area (see Rule 14.3). Also a player can stand out of bounds to hit a ball that is still in bounds, but cannot move the stake if it is in the way. A ball is OB only if the entire ball is OB.

Q. You are searching for your ball in a scruffy area and therefore accidentally move it. Do you have to take a penalty?
A. Not any more. You need to replace it as close as possible to where it landed (including if it was nested near a root or under grass) and hit away.

Q. Your ball accidentally moves slightly on the putting green through no apparent fault of anyone. What happens?
A. No penalty.

Q. You hit your favorite pink ball into an area covered by leaves. You want to find it but how long can you look?

A. Only three minutes. (The old rule allowed you to hunt for five minutes)

Q. You're in a penalty area like the area formerly defined by red lines, stakes, water hazards etc. Can you ground your club now or move loose impediments out of the way?

A. Yes.

Q. Oh no. Your ball is imbedded right under the lip in a bunker. No way can you hit it on green. Are there any options?

A. Sure. You can try to hit it; you can take an unplayable lie and drop inside the bunker with a one-stroke penalty; or you can drop in line with the pin outside the bunker for a two-stroke penalty.

Q. You tried to dig your ball out of the rough but it refused to budge and only buried itself deeper in the turf. You, ahem, lost it (temporarily of course) and hit the ground with your five-iron like a torpedo. Unfortunately your five-iron is bent. Can you replace it at the turn?

A. Sorry, no. Actions have consequences and in this case you are not allowed to replace a damaged club in a round (unless caused by outside or natural forces). The good news? You can continue to play with it.

And yes, when you swing and miss the ball, it counts as a stroke.

So there's the start for understanding rules. I advise you to get the "Rules of Golf" and check it out. Great reading to help you get to sleep.

Katharine Dyson is a member of the Golf Writers Assn. of America and the Golf Travel Writers of America.

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And besides fantastic beaches, fishing, boating and restaurants, the Cape offers the greatest concentration of quality municipal golf courses in Southern New England.

Here are nine municipal courses you can play this summer on your Cape Cod vacation, starting just over the canal bridges all the way to dunes at the tip of the peninsula:

Falmouth Country Club

You'll get a real feel for the Cape at Falmouth CC, which features many natural wetlands like those at nearby cranberry bogs. The Falmouth-owned course is, in fact, certified as a Cooperative Sanctuary by Audubon International. Falmouth features the 18-hole, 6,665-yard Osprey Course, named for a pair of magnificent birds who patrol the water at the 10th hole. A memorable hole is the short par-3 12th, where sprays of beach grass garnish the bunkers. Falmouth also offers a 9-hole, par-37 Talon Course.

Hyannis Golf Club

Just off Route 6 is the 18-hole, par-71 Hyannis Golf Club, owned by the Town of Barnstable. Pine tree-lined fairways and elevation changes make a round fun but challenging. The closing two holes will test anyone's game.

Olde Barnstable Fairgrounds

Built on the grounds of the former Barnstable County Fair, this 18-hole, par-71 gem was designed by Mark Mungeam and opened in 1992. The nearly 6,500-yard layout (from the tips) is very walkable, for those who like their

golf the old-fashioned way, and features four sets of tees and three par-3s on the back nine, making it a pleasure for all skill levels.

Bass River Golf Course

Further down Route 28 is one of the Cape's oldest and most beloved courses, owned by the Town of Yarmouth. Opened in 1900, it was redesigned in 1914 by famed architect Donald Ross. The 18-hole layout features wide fairways, small greens and views of the Bass River. With multiple sets of tees and length of 6,138 yards from the tips Bass River is fun for all levels. The signature hole is the 9th, a 169-yard par 3, which plays across marshland to an elevated green.

Bayberry Hills Golf Course

Another Yarmouth-owned club, Bayberry Hills offers a much different golfing experience. The tree-lined layout includes 27 holes (Red, White, and Blue courses) with championship tees allowing the course to be played at up to 7,200 yards.

Dennis Pines Golf Course

One of two courses owned by the Town of Dennis, Dennis Pine is an 18-hole layout that stretches to nearly 7,000 yards but has five sets of tees to make it playable for anyone. Tight, tree-lined fairways and tricky water hazards are some of the challenges golfers will face. They'll also remember the par-5 12th hole, which wraps around water.

Dennis Highlands Golf Course

The town's other muni, Dennis Highlands, is marked by an impressive entranceway among wild flowers and trees, leading to a beautiful clubhouse. Designed by Jack Kidwell and Mike Hurdzan and opened for play in 1984, the Highlands offers wider, more rolling fairways than its sister course. Four sets of tees offer layouts starting under 4,900 to over 6,500 yards spread out across 175 acres of pine and oak.

Cranberry Valley Golf

Owned by the Town of Harwich, Cranberry Valley is a little further down Route 6. This 18-hole layout was co-designed by Geoffrey Cornish, one of the region's most prolific golf course architects, and features his signatures tree-lined fairways and sloping greens. The course includes natural marshes and cranberry bogs and features water hazards on three holes of the back nine. All players will be challenged by the par-4 12th hole, which demands a second shot over water to a steeply-sloped green.

Highland Links Golf Course

A golf trip across the Cape must end at Highland Links, a short, 9-hole layout in Truro that is long on beauty. The original Highland House of Golf Links was part of an ocean and cottage resort operated for years by the Small family of Truro, who promoted the course as "2,000 yards around ... in attractiveness not equaled in the New England coast." When the Cape Cod National Seashore was conceived in the 1960s, Highland Links became federal property. The Truro Highlands Historic District is part of the Cape Cod National Seashore, and the district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2011.

One of Cape Cod's oldest golf courses and perhaps its most scenic, Highland Links is perched high along windswept bluffs overlooking the Atlantic next to the vintage Highland Light. Founded circa 1892-1898, Highland keeps to the Scottish tradition of golf, with deep natural rough, Scotch broom, heath and spectacular ocean views. It's the closest thing to original golf you will find on your Cape vacation. ■

Mike Kirby, former editor of The Sun Chronicle of Attleboro, can be reached at mkirbygolf18@gmail.com.

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Me and My Muni— Great Memories



18th Hole at Gardner Municipal G.C.

Gardner Municipal, established in 1936, is celebrating its 85th birthday in 2021. I will celebrate my 70th birthday later this year. I was born and raised in Gardner, Massachusetts and have always lived and worked here. Now, at this stage in my life, I cherish-- perhaps more than ever-- our local municipal course located only a few miles from my home.

I began playing at GMGC, as we call it, when I was 10 years old, a quarter of a century after the birth of the course, which was originally built as a 9-hole layout with funds from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA). Full season memberships in the 1930s and 1940s cost around \$25 and attracted hundreds of factory workers especially from the biggest employer in the city, the Heywood Wakefield Company.

All these years later, GMGC still stands as an impressive legacy of a successful government relief program, one which gave work and hope to millions of unemployed people across the country. That local WPA project here in Gardner from long ago has given and continues to give so much sporting pleasure at an affordable price to so many golfers in the Gardner area.

For me and a multitude of post World War II baby boomers, GMGC, with its hilly nine holes, was the place where we would take our first swings, sink our first long

putts, and where we would fall in love with this glorious game. It was where, in the 1960s, we tried to imitate the swings of perhaps one of the Big Three: Arnie, Jack and Gary, after watching those golf stars on TV compete on Shell's Wonderful World of Golf and the major tournaments.

It was where I would play with my beloved father beginning at age 10 through my early teenage years, and where I would seek refuge from my grief after his sudden death shortly before my high school graduation. It was where Gardner native Bob Menne learned the game, won club titles as a teen, and later, when he was 32 and on the PGA Tour, won the 1974 Kemper Open.

It was where, in 1967, to celebrate the opening of nine additional holes to make a full 18 at GMGC, golfing legend Paul Harney travelled north from Worcester and made a guest appearance, smashing a drive nearly 300 yards down the middle of the fifth fairway with a persimmon driver.

It was where I would marvel at the dedicated work of the GMGC head professionals over the years including Dan Donovan, Ivan Bourque, Mike and Ben Egan and Dan Berry, along with superb superintendents Laurie Blacquiere, Steve Zoldak, Mike Hermanson and Bill Frank.

It was where future PGA star Anthony Kim fired a 4-under-par 67 and qualified for the U.S. Amateur Public

Links in 2005. A few years later, when I interviewed Kim at the Deutsche Bank Championship at TPC Boston, I asked him if he remembered Gardner's 18th hole. Kim thought for a few seconds and replied: "Uphill, slight dogleg right to left, a par 4."

It was where I would watch my two sons, Jack and Mike, play competitive junior golf and later compete in high school matches, and where I proudly watched Mike win the club championship two years ago. It was where now LPGA star Brittany Altomare fired a 75 as a high school senior and the only girl on the team helping the Shrewsbury High boys' squad win the Central Mass. Division 1 title.

It was where Wellesley's Michael Thorbjornsen, when he was only 11 years old in 2013 fired a round of 66 in a US Kids Tour event from the front markers. He would win the U.S. Junior Amateur at Baltusrol five years later. It was where I made my two career holes-in-one, the first on the sixth hole in 2005, the second on the 14th in 2018.

It was where I would cover hundreds of tournaments for the local newspapers—The Gardner News and The Worcester Telegram & Gazette, reporting on the championship victories of such Gardner golf greats as Vic Tiihonen, Jeff Ambrose, Dan Flanagan, Pete Gamache, Steve Graham, Bill Wilson, Tom Sylwestrzak, Joanne Catlin, Ellen Courtemanche, Patty Owen and many, many others.

And, sadly, it was where, in 1998, I had a four-hole lead with five holes to play in the semifinals of an important GMGC match-play tournament and lost all five holes, a humiliating choking performance made worse because my son, Jack, was my caddy.

Still, it was where I rebounded a bit with a few victories in the aughts decade, but always with a playing partner, never winning a tournament outright, by myself, with no handicap strokes.

But here's my wonderful news. GMGC was the place where, just a year ago at age 68, I carded, under pressure, my two best back-to-back competitive rounds— a 75 and a 77— and won the Senior Club Championship by six shots. That Sunday, after the final round of the local championship, and, after close to 60 seasons playing Gardner Municipal, I headed home as the happiest golfer on the planet. ■

Jay Gearan writes a Central Mass. column in each issue of snegolfer.com.



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September 26**

Green Hill Muni Has Great Philosophy

Green Hill Municipal Golf Course head pro Matt Moison doesn't hesitate to answer when he's asked to name the main difference between municipal golf courses, which are owned by cities or towns, and other public golf courses.

"This is going to sound silly, but we try not to make a profit," Moison said. "We try to charge rates that will just help us balance our books. Whereas generally a privately owned public golf course is in the business of making money, we're not. We're in the business of providing recreation and they're not the same." Greens fees at the 18-hole, par-72 course in Worcester, Massachusetts, cost \$35 weekdays and \$45 weekends for residents. Non-residents pay \$5 more. Carts cost \$20.

Green Hill helps develop new golfers by offering junior memberships for only \$150 for Worcester residents, holding the annual Danny Rossetti Junior Golf Camp for 125 boys and girls aged 8-13 for three days each summer at no charge, and allowing the city's high school boys' and girls' golf teams to practice and play matches for free. The camp was postponed by the pandemic last year, but Moison hopes to stage one this summer if he can safely do so.

Moison won the NEPGA Junior Golf Leader Award in

2001, but he said his desire to attract more people to Green Hill isn't limited to juniors. The Monday night ladies league is geared to beginners. There will be eight weeks of free lessons for veterans this summer as part of the PGA Hope program.

"Our role and our mission here is to provide high quality golf to anybody who wants to play," he said. "We try to keep it affordable in a fun, friendly environment to take the intimidation out of golf and have a recreational place for people."

Moison said Green Hill made more money last year than usual even though the course was closed by the pandemic for eight weeks in the spring, and then operated for a while at only 50 percent capacity to maintain social distancing. From when the course became fully operational in mid-June until the end of the season, Green Hill was the busiest Moison has seen in his 25 years as head pro.

"The world was shut down," Moison said. "There weren't activities for everybody to do. Everybody wanted to be outside. The weather was fantastic from June on."

In addition to the regulars, Green Hill attracted new golfers and those who hadn't played in a while, and Moison said the course remains "abnormally busy" this year.

Moison worked as an assistant golf pro at Gardner Municipal Golf Course before becoming the head pro at Green Hill. He's only the third head pro since Green Hill opened in 1929. "I'm 28 years now into municipal golf and there's no better place to be," Moison said.

Revenue also skyrocketed last year at Pakachoag Golf Course in Auburn, Massachusetts, and that's fitting because Dr. Robert Goddard launched the first successful liquid-fueled rocket on March 16, 1926, along what later became the ninth hole. The site was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1966 and is memorialized by a stone monument.

In 1939, the Ward family converted their farm into a golf course. The town purchased the 54-hole property in 1981 with a federally funded grant.

Last year, Pakachoag generated the most revenue in the five years that Kristen Pappas has managed the course for the town. "We had our best year last year," she said, "and I feel like this year is going even better than last year."

Pappas credits the boost in income to golf being one of the few safe activities for people during the pandemic. "The restrictions with social distancing have allowed golf to thrive right now," Pappas said.

Pakachoag, a forgiving

nine-hole course with few trees, is known as a great course for beginners, but at 3,255 yards it's long enough to challenge most golfers. "The mission is to have a great outdoors experience," Pappas said, "at an economical rate. We really strive to have good prices, good customer service and just a great overall experience. We want you to enjoy yourself so you come back."

At Pakachoag, a golf ball, 10 tees or a bottle of water costs only \$1. Nine-hole greens fees cost \$13 for juniors, seniors and veterans and \$14 for adults on weekdays, and \$16 for everyone on weekends. Junior memberships cost \$150 and more than 20 youths have signed up this year, the most since Pappas has been manager.

"We have drinks and snacks in the clubhouse and we really keep an eye on the kids when their parents drop them off," Pappas said. "They have great golf etiquette and they appreciate coming up

and having a little freedom and getting better at the game."

Pappas added that because of the pandemic, Pakachoag won't run golf clinics on Saturdays as it has in the past.

Westborough Country Club changed its name to Westborough Golf Club in 2018 to stress that the club was open to the public. "I think it helped because people always assumed country club meant private," head pro Jack Negoshian said, "and they never even contacted us. Now that we have 'golf club' in our name, more people think we're open to the public. That definitely helped."

Westborough is not only open to the public, it's a municipal golf course that was founded in 1921 as a recreational option for the town of Westborough. Greens keeper Bill Spence expanded the course from seven holes to nine in 1935.

Negoshian has been head pro since 1988. He planned to retire after last season,

but agreed to return this year because a replacement hadn't been hired yet. He's scheduled to leave by July 31.

Nine-hole greens fees for residents cost \$24 weekdays and \$31 weekends and holidays. Juniors pay \$20 weekdays and after noon on weekends and holidays. Negoshian said the club needs to make enough money to pay its bills so no tax dollars will have to be used.

Negoshian said the club wants to improve the junior golf and family golf experiences as much as possible. "So they continue to grow with the club," he said.

Even though Westborough GC was closed for six weeks by the pandemic last spring, Negoshian said the club collected about \$350,000 in greens fees last year, roughly \$100,000 more than the year before.

"So many people were at home," Negoshian said. "Even if they were working at home, they had plenty of time to play golf before or after work. They didn't have to travel into Boston and golf was the only thing you could really do outdoors with people." Westboro GC is busier this year than last even though many people have returned to work, Negoshian said. ■



6th Hole & Clubhouse at Green Hill

Bill Doyle is a member of the Golf Writers of America, a long-time sportswriter in Worcester and writes a column in each issue of snegolfer.com.

Boston Area Has Many Municipal Courses

If you prefer to play golf at public courses rather than private, here's a tidbit of information you may find interesting.

Of the 63 municipal golf courses throughout the Commonwealth, 53 operate by leases or vendor contracts for management, maintenance, food and beverage service and pro shop, leaving 10 solely run by city or town employees. Tee times are in big demand these prime days of Spring, so you probably don't care who runs the place, just as long as you get a decent time, it doesn't cost you an arm-or-leg to pay for it, and is in good shape.

Boston is the capital of Massachusetts and also the most populous city in New England. The large metropolitan area known as greater Boston is home to about 5 million people, ranking as the tenth-largest in the country. Today, Boston is a thriving center of scientific research with its many colleges and universities making it a world leader in higher education. And, although "Beantown" has one of the highest cost of living rates in the United States, it's probably most noted for its avid (outsiders would call obnoxious) sports fans for the four major sports.

When in the Boston area, there are five choices to play golf, including two popular City of Boston-owned-and-managed - George Wright & William Devine - and three others on the border.

George Wright Golf Course
420 West St.
Hyde Park, MA 02136
(617) 364-2300
[VIEW WEBSITE](#)

It's taken a great deal of attention and commitment from former City of Boston Mayor Tom Menino (1993-2014), but George Wright Golf Course has evolved into one of the Bay State's shining golf treasures.

The par 70, 6400-yard layout was designed by Donald Ross in 1938, has gained notoriety by being selected in 2012, 2013, 2014 & 2015 as one of Golfweek's "Best Courses You Can Play." In 2009, Golf Digest voted George

Wright "Best Municipal Golf Course in Massachusetts" and Golfweek named it the 14th "Best Municipal in the United States."

With 18-hole rates in the \$60 range, the experience is affordable, fulfilling and enjoyable. "George Wright offers 18 holes that manages to challenge even experienced players with its hills and often narrow playing areas," said head pro Scott Allen. "We've earned a great reputation as a place to play and we strive every day to live up to it."

William J. Devine Golf Course
1 Circuit Drive
Dorchester, MA 02121
(617) 265-4084
[VIEW WEBSITE](#)

A day playing William J. Devine Memorial Golf Course is a day unlike any other.

The relatively flat 110-acre 18-hole property, also known as Franklin Park, is short at 6,000 yards, with nines of 35-35-70, is steeped in golf history.

The Donald Ross-redesign was established as 9 holes in October 1896, and is the second oldest public golf course in the nation behind Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx borough of New York City.

Among the historical notes:

» Georgian Campbell, the first woman to play golf professionally in the U.S., taught other women to play the game here.

» Willie Campbell, the player who won America's first professional match became the first head professional here.

» Francis Ouimet, 1913 winner of the U.S. Open at The Country Club in Brookline honed his game here, as did Bobby Jones, the amateur who ushered the American game to the forefront of the world stage.

» Tiger Woods and Chi Chi Rodriguez have presented youth golf clinics onsite.

» In 2018, the course hosted the Massachusetts Amateur Championship.

» In recent years, course renovations have been done by Mark Mungeam of Mungeam Cornish Golf Design.

» The course is named after William J. Devine, former Commissioner of Boston's Parks and Recreation Department.

Brookline Golf Course

1281 W. Roxbury Parkway
Brookline, MA 02467
(617) 730-2078
[VIEW WEBSITE](#)

Not all municipal golf courses are created equal, and that applies to Brookline Golf Club, an 18-hole, 6,200-yard par 70 facility once-known as Putterham Meadows, and later called the Robert T. Lynch Municipal Golf Course, named after a long-time employee.

If Bethpage Golf Course in New York is considered the Mercedes of muni's, then this place rates no higher than a Volkswagen Beetle, because a recent visit showed neglect in maintenance of fairways and greens.

However, this place is memorable for two reasons: No. 1 is the property is located across the street from The Country Club in Brookline -- the famed private course to the legendary Francis Ouimet, who as an amateur won the 1913 U.S. Open, and host of the 1999 Ryder Cup. No. 2 it is just five miles from historic Fenway Park.

Set your expectations low here and it won't disappoint. Designed by Wayne Stiles and John Van Kleeck in 1933, Brookline Golf Course stretches out to 6300-yards over sometimes rough terrain, lots of hardpan dirt areas with par of 70. Rates are reasonable at about \$50 with \$20 for cart.

Newton Commonwealth G.C.

212 Kenrick St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617) 630-1971
[VIEW WEBSITE](#)

Depending on your expectations, you'll find Newton Commonwealth Golf Course either likeable, but quirky and a good value for the money; or, nasty, with too many tight, blind shots, over-crowded conditions and rangers pushing you to try to play in an unrealistic four hours.

The 35-35-70 18-hole course only measures 5,300 yards, opened in 1897 and Donald Ross recreated it in 1920. It's a bargain with rates under \$50 but this course has a number of difficulties, so beginners may find the sand, water and narrow fairways to be a bit of a challenge.

Presidents Golf Club

357 West Squantum Street
Quincy, MA 02171
617-328-3444
[VIEW WEBSITE](#)

Presidents Golf Course is located eight miles south of Boston, minutes off the Southeast Expressway. The entire course is situated on 93 hilly acres and offers dramatic views of the Boston skyline, Neponset River, and the Blue Hills Reservation.

This is another course with wonderful history dating back to 1895 when it was founded as the original Wollaston Golf Club, which relocated to Milton in 1977. Presidents, owned and managed by Norfolk County government, got its name because four presidents were born in Norfolk County - John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John F. Kennedy, and George Herbert Walker Bush. Francis Ouimet used the course for his practice rounds prior to competing in the British Opens and Amateurs. He found the wind conditions and the wide variety of topography well suited for the preparation needed to compete overseas.

In the early 1970's Tom Fazio was retained to redesign the course. The goal was to modernize it and accommodate public play. The course re-opened as the Presidents Golf Course at the Wollaston Recreational Facility in July 1977 and rates are fair at about \$50.

The sloping 5300-yard par 70 course features six par threes, eight testy par fours and four par 5s including the signature 15th double-dog leg. The wind, hilly terrain, and the influence of the Atlantic Ocean give the course a unique character that provides an excellent golfing experience. ■

Tom Gorman is the owner of NewEngland.Golf, a member of the Golf Writers of America and the Golf Travel Writers of America and writes a column in most issues of [snegolfer.com](#).



Unique Clubhouse at George Wright G.C.

Western Mass. Has Fine Munis

Western Massachusetts offers some of the finest municipal golf courses around, offering a fair test of golf at fair and reasonable prices. First on the list, golfers can trek to Feeding Hills, Mass. to play a round at **Agawam Municipal Golf Course**. The facility provides a great venue with a well-maintained par-71 golf course. A short ten-minute drive from Springfield and a thirty-minute drive from Hartford provides easy access for golfers looking for a new playing venue.

"We have a player friendly course which is a great layout for the average player and a good test for top players, and it is moderately priced," Director of Golf Tom DiRico said. "The golf course is busy and in good condition."

Recently, new drainage has been added to three holes to further improve playing conditions, according to DiRico. Superintendent Dan Shay is a graduate of the renowned University of Massachusetts Turf Program with previous stints at Wampanoag Country Club, Crestview Country Club, Gillette Ridge Country Club and Wilbraham Country Club.

Rates on the weekend are \$40 with a cart; after noon time going down to \$36. On the weekend, seniors pay \$36 and \$32. Weekday rates are \$36 for 18 holes with cart, \$32 for seniors. Special before 8 a.m. is \$24 for cart and greens fee. "I think the service provided by the pro shop and the restaurant is above average. We make it a point to make an enjoyable day for every golfer," DiRico said.

Across the Connecticut River lies **Chicopee Country Club** with its rolling terrain, tree-lined fairways and fast, sloping greens and is generally regarded as a top championship course by area golfers. Through the years, Chicopee C.C. has received



accolades from publications such as Golf Digest, USA Today, and the New England Journal of Golf magazines. It has been touted as being among the best public courses in Massachusetts or being named as one of New England's top 100 golf courses, or being among those courses that provide the best value in Massachusetts.

Next on the Western Mass golf travel bucket list could be Springfield's Municipal Golf Courses--Veterans Memorial Golf Course and Franconia Golf Course. The 18-hole Veterans Memorial Golf Course in Springfield, Massachusetts features 6,350 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par 72. The course rating is 69.3 and it has a slope rating of 121 on Bent grass. Designed by Geoffrey S. Cornish, ASGCA, the Veteran's Memorial Golf Course opened in 1964.

The 18-hole Franconia Golf Course is a public golf course that opened in 1929. Designed by John Van Kleeck, Wayne Stiles and Geoffrey Cornish, Franconia Golf Course

measures 6,213 yards from the longest tees and has a slope rating of 118 and a 69.7 USGA rating. The course features 3 sets of tees for different skill levels.

The City of Springfield recently invested \$1 million in its two municipal golf courses, implementing the 'Better Billy Bunker Method' across both courses. The bunker project is underway and both courses should be opened for all 18 holes by the end of June. The front nine at both courses are complete and work on the back nine is proceeding as planned.

On the weekends 18 holes with a cart is \$41, and \$26 to walk. During the week, 18 holes with a cart is \$40, \$25 to walk. Seniors pay \$32 for 18 holes with cart, \$25 for nine holes with a cart, and only \$17 to walk the course. ■

Chris Miracle writes a Western Mass column in each issue of snegolfer.com.

Cape Cod Has So Much to Offer Golfers



New Seabury Clubhouse

We recently had the opportunity to visit Cape Cod and play three different golf courses. Cape Cod is a mecca for golfing in New England with their many courses and climate that often offers golf all twelve months.

On the first day we played Hyannis Golf Course located in Barnstable. We were surprised that Hyannis is just one of seven villages in the town of Barnstable. We were greeted by Bruce McIntyre, general manager of both Hyannis G.C. and its sister course, Olde Barnstable G.C., that we had written about last summer. You have probably driven by this course many times as it sits right next to the mid-cape highway.

The course was designed by Geoffrey Cornish in 1975. It sits on the highest point in all of Cape Cod (almost 100 feet above sea level—Colorado take notice) and the course plays up and down many hills. Many of the shots that you will have will require you to consider the degree of elevation either up or down.

The course was privately owned

for many years and then it was going to be sold for house lots. Since the course sits on the largest aquifer on the Cape, the town did not want to have more homes possibly polluting the area, so they purchased the property to keep it forever as a golf course. McIntyre added that the course is undergoing a very expensive plan to do away with all pesticides and other possible pollutants while maintaining the course. “We really are being very environmentally conscious about what we use to maintain the course. It will be a process where the grasses will be much better overall, but it will take years to accomplish.”

The course is in good shape. The greens are average size, fun to putt and quite sloping in places. There are many choices for choosing the right distance from which to play. You will really remember your last hole as the par 4 18th plays downhill from the tee and then uphill to the green. A par on this hole that has a small hidden pond sitting on the right side will make your day. McIntyre wanted us to tell our readers that they are offering a \$59 special for golf and

cart on Mondays thru Thursday throughout the year.

After our round we drove to a newly remodeled hotel called the Aiden by Best Western in West Yarmouth right on Route 128. Aiden is the upscale brand of Best Western, and they have really done this right. They put almost \$20 million into the renovation of this property that has 116 completely remodeled rooms, a full-service café, a restaurant, bar and indoor heated swimming pool. There is also a Tiki Bar next to an outdoor pool towards the rear of the property.

“We are in the process of setting up golfing packages,” said Director of Sales, Brenda Smith, who showed us the meeting and wedding facilities for up to 100 guests (perfect for your golf league trip), and the modern fitness center on the second floor and hosted us for breakfast both mornings with catering by Ardeo Café & Catering in West Dennis that will be running the full service restaurant on property. You can reach Ms. Smith at the hotel by calling 508-778-1500 or visit their website at www.aidenbybestwestern.com.

bestwestern.com.

The second day started with a very cool (both fun and a little chilly-dress warmly) Hy-Line Harbor Cruise in Hyannis. The narrated tour took us out to the open ocean and around Hyannis Harbor with live commentary and views of the Kennedy Memorial and the Kennedy Compound and much more. You can make reservations by visiting hylineharborcruise.com or calling 508-790-0696.

That afternoon we traveled to New Seabury to play the Ocean Course. They have two championship 18's on the property (the other is called The Dunes), and you will be awed by the views and the beauty of the courses. Watch out for the wind as it blows off the ocean, and enjoy the views of Martha's Vineyard in the distance.

The ocean course really is two different nines. The front heads out to the ocean from the majestic clubhouse and then heads back for the next two holes, a pretty par 3 over water and a par 5 with yawning bunkers right in front of the large green. Hole six heads back towards the ocean, but then 7-9 head back towards the clubhouse.

The back 9 is completely different. It meanders up and down hills, but usually it is not nearly as windy. The holes are fair and the greens are fast and rolling. You will be tired after your round, but you really have something to look forward to if you are dining at the Popponesset Inn or any of New Seabury's fine dining establishments.

We ate at the Popponesset Inn that sits right on the water. It is a huge restaurant with both indoor and outdoor bars and a few different dining rooms. The food was truly first-class.

New Seabury is a private property with over 1,200 homes, but they are building hundreds more. They have over 20 units that are rented out with a three day minimum. When we spoke with Jim Clay, Director of Golf, he said that you could visit www.newseabury.com or call 508-539-8322 for information about purchasing a home or possibly renting. It is an amazing property.

Our last round was at Blue Rock Golf Club in So. Yarmouth. One of the features of the Cape is the rolling hills. Another is the sandy soil that makes golf courses easier to build and quick to recover after a rain storm. The fact that Cape Cod is surrounded by water that makes the climate much more temperate allowing for playing golf all year round.

Blue Rock is one of the prettiest and testing par 3 courses you will play. It was also designed by legendary architect Geoffrey Cornish of Western Massachusetts. There is a reason that it is rated one of the top 10 par 3 courses in the country. That rolling hill mentioned above comes into play on four holes. There is huge depression with water that sits below the clubhouse and bisects part of the property. Holes one and two go along the southern half of the property, but the third requires an uphill shot over the pond.

Holes 4 thru 8 play on the level northwestern side as do holes 11 thru 17. It is holes 9, 10 and 18 that will make you remember Blue Rock for a long time. The ninth hole plays over the pond and chasm and measures 169 yards from the back tee. You then turn around and hit over that same chasm to the 10th green that has a huge bunker in front.

As you proceed up the cart path/walking path, you'll notice the tee box for 18 that is the reverse of the shot

you just made. Something to think about as you play 11-17.

The course is truly pristine. The greens look like they could be placed on a championship course. The holes measure from 255 yards down to 103 from the back tees. There are five sets of tees, but the blues are a fine test at 2,868 yards. We saw many couples, families as well as very good golfers playing the course. It is really a challenge and a great chance to work on all the clubs in your bag.

Blue Rock Resort is owned by Red Jacket Resorts, a family-owned company that have been servicing guests on Cape Cod and in North Conway, N.H. for six decades. The boutique hotel includes a beautiful outdoor pool and overlooks the first hole of the golf course. The resort is family-friendly and provides a true resort experience. Red Jacket Resorts operates four other ocean-front properties on Cape Cod, including Green Harbor Resort, Red Jacket Beach Resort, Blue Water Resort and Riviera Beach Resort. "Guests at Blue Rock get to use the amenities at all our other Caper properties," said Matt Pitta who is the general manager of the properties. To get more information or book a stay or play call 508-398-9295 or online at www.bluerockgolfcourse.com

This publication would like to thank the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, especially Patti Lloyd, for setting up this fine trip. Cape Cod is a fun destination for families, golf groups and individual golfers, and the best part is that it is open pretty much all year. ■

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editor of snegolfer.com, email:
bruce@snegolfer.com.**

2,700 Players Already Registered For 38th Annual PlayGolfMyrtleBeach.com World Amateur Handicap Championship

Golf rounds have surged over the last 14 months and it appears that players, having worked on their game at home, are ready to return to the competitive arena. Two thousand seven hundred and twenty players have already registered for the 38th annual PlayGolfMyrtleBeach.com World Amateur Handicap Championship, which will be played August 30 - September 3 on 60 Myrtle Beach area courses. Players from all 50 states and 10 countries have signed up for the 72-hole, net stroke play event.

"We are delighted with registration numbers and can't wait for the return of the complete World Am experience in 2021," Tournament Director Scott Tomasello said. "Last year was a difficult one, but people are eager for a return to normal and for thousands of golfers, that means the opportunity to compete in the World Am. We look forward to welcoming players to Myrtle Beach in a safe, fun environment."

In addition to the opportunity to claim the mantle of World Champion, the reopening of the World's Largest 19th Hole has certainly driven interest in this year's event. The 19th Hole, which takes up all 120,000 square feet of the Myrtle Beach Convention Center, is the heartbeat of the event, providing players free food and drink, live entertainment, a golf expo and more. Entry into the tournament, which includes at least four rounds of golf, nightly admission to the World's Largest 19th Hole is \$679. Players will also receive a gift bag that includes a polo, a pullover, a golf towel, a logo'd hat, a PGA Tour Superstore gift card and an assortment of other goodies valued cumulatively at \$250.

While much of the 2021 tournament will look familiar to players, there will be two new women's divisions this year. For the first time, there will be a women's gross division, and the ladies, who previously had just one age group, will be split into two groups -

59 and under and 60 and older. The World Am, which flights players based on age, gender and handicap, is open to all golfers 17 years of age and older.

The World Am flights players into 11 divisions – men 49 and under, senior men (50-59), mid-senior men (60-69), super senior men (70-79), seasoned seniors (80+), women (59 and under), senior women (60+), the gross division, senior (50+) gross division, mid-senior (60+) gross division, and women's gross division. There is also a "Just For Fun" flight, created for players who want to enjoy the World Am experience without the pressure of competition. After four days of competition, all flight winners and ties advance to the World Championship Playoff at Grande Dunes Resort Course for an 18-hole shootout that crowns the event's winner.

While the competition is initially what lures players to the tournament, it's only part of what keeps them coming back. At the heart of the World Am's appeal is the camaraderie among its participants and much of that kinship is fostered at the World's Largest 19th Hole. Among the big names that have appeared at the 19th Hole in recent years are David Feherty, Brandel Chamblee, Charlie Rymer and John Daly. For more information, please visit www.MyrtleBeachWorldAmateur.com. ■

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Pine Lakes Country Club

Myrtle Beach's First Course, Undergoing Greens, Bunker Restoration Project

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. -- Myrtle Beach's "Granddaddy" is getting a facelift this summer.

Pine Lakes Country Club closed on April 26 for a greens and bunker restoration project that will have Myrtle Beach's first golf course in prime condition well ahead of the area's peak fall season. The historic course is scheduled to reopen in early July.

At the heart of the effort will be the installation of new Sunday bermudagrass greens, which will be a significant upgrade over the paspalum grass it is replacing. Sunday bermuda has proven to be a particularly hearty grass in the Myrtle Beach environment and will provide a much faster, smoother year-round putting surface.

The greens will also be restored to their original size, expanding the total putting surface area at Pine Lakes from 103,000 square feet to 124,000 square feet, an increase of 20 percent. The additional size will create more pinnable areas on numerous greens, providing even more room for creativity on an already enjoyable design.

They are also restoring every bunker on the course with an eye on improving drainage, playability and returning Pine Lakes to the more natural look architect Robert White intended. Pine Lakes is installing a sophisticated new drainage system that will ensure the course's 26 bunkers don't hold water.

"Pine Lakes holds a special place in the Myrtle Beach market, and this project, highlighted by the new Sunday bermudagrass greens and the bunker restoration, will ensure the Granddaddy continues to deliver the type of experience golfers have enjoyed for more than 90 years," said Founders Group International (FGI) President Steve Mays. "This is the first step as we begin looking forward to the 100-year anniversary of Pine Lakes' opening and the birth of Myrtle Beach as a golf destination."

Pine Lakes was originally designed by White, a native of St. Andrews, Scotland and the first president of the PGA of America, and the course, along with its famed clubhouse, is part of the National Registry of Historic Places.

Built along natural dunes less than a mile from the Atlantic Ocean, Pine Lakes features natural elevation change and a classic design that has long made it one of the Myrtle Beach area's most popular courses.

Pine Lakes is one of 21 FGI courses and more information is available at PineLakes.com. ■

About Founders Group International

Founders Group International (FGI) is the foremost golf course owner-operator company in the Southeastern United States. Formed in 2014 through various purchases and the 2015 acquisition of National Golf Management, FGI owns and operates 21 golf courses (405 holes) in and around Myrtle Beach, S.C., America's seaside golf capital.

Those courses include Pine Lakes Country Club, the "granddaddy" of Myrtle Beach area courses; TPC Myrtle Beach, host site of the 2019 NCAA Division I men's golf regional and Dustin Johnson World Junior Golf Championship; and Grande Dunes Resort Club, home of the Grande Dunes Golf Performance Center.

FGI administers www.MBN.com, a leader in online tee time bookings, as well as package outlet Myrtle Beach Golf Trips. With the help of Golf Insider's 100 percent player-generated course ranking system, thousands of golfers plan and assemble their ideal golf itineraries through FGI's assets, including "top-100 caliber" courses Pawleys Plantation Golf & Country Club, King's North at Myrtle Beach National Golf Club, and more than 80 other Myrtle Beach area courses. More information about Founders Group International is available at www.foundersgroupinternational.com, www.mbn.com or MyrtleBeachGolfTrips.com. ■

McCabe to Start New Online Column

Jim McCabe, former golf columnist for the Boston Globe and more recently the publicist for the PGA Tour has started a new online golf newsletter entitled PowerFades.com.

In a recent interview McCabe said, "Yes, COVID wiped out a few jobs with the PGA Tour, mine being one of them. Understandable, given the dynamics of what the pandemic did to them, and no regrets. I'm getting some freelance work with the Tour (actually, going to cover the Travelers for them) and getting other assignments, so that's keeping me busy."

"I have thought about doing a golf newsletter for a few years, struck by how little attention the papers pay attention to golf – both locally and even the pro game. Basically, I envision it being what the Globe used to do with a weekly "golf section."

I've been trained to maneuver my way around the logistics of a digital newsletter so I can write, edit, and produce most of it on my own – just have to put in the time and stay on top of photos and stuff like that.

It's definitely a work in progress. I have some other elements that I hope to incorporate into the newsletter and I'm obviously hoping to generate some advertising down the road. But for right now, getting word out, attracting subscribers, and touching base with as many constituencies as possible is my goal." For those who remember the Globe's column, and those who don't, if you enjoy golf news, you will like this new newsletter. ■

Drive, Chip and Putt Registration Ends June 7 at Button Hole in Providence

Boys and Girls between the ages of 7-15 years can participate for free. They must register at www.drivechipandputt.com by June 7th at 4 Pm EST. Qualifying at Button Hole is on Saturday, June 12th. Kids hit 3 drives, 3 chips and 3 putts and scoring is based on these shots. The top 3 kids in each age group advance to the next round. There are four qualifying stages to earn a spot to Augusta National in April 2022. ■

STEPHANIE MARTINEAU-LOURA

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MAP KEY

- () = Holes
P = Public
SP = Semi-Private
X = Executive
CR = Cart Rental
DR = Driving Range
PS = Pro Shop
CH = Clubhouse
O = Outings
SB = Snack Bar
CL = Club Rental

NAME THAT HOLE



No one guessed the hole in last month's Spring issue

That was our fault. It was a picture of **Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland**. We had played there in 2007 while covering the Walker Cup at Royal County Down just a short distance away. We tried to make it a little easier with this one.

First person that Names That Hole wins a 2021 Season Passport valued at \$64.95!

Entries are to be sent via E-Mail at bruce@snegolfer.com.