

GOLF PENNSYLVANIA GOLF NORTHEAST

Vol. XXVII No. 1

Spring 2015

Golf Springs Eternal

Destination:

Spring Golf Comes to Jersey Shore

Speith Dons Masters Jacket

Myrtle Beach Gone Wild Over Grass

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Spring Golf Comes to Jersey Shore



Atlantic City CC Clubhouse

By *Mike Kern*

Atlantic City Country Club.

There are few places I get more juiced up to play. It's always been one of my ultimate taste treats, going back to the days when it was private and owned by the Fraser family. I mean, what's not to deep like about it? From the setting to the layout to the clubhouse to the views to whatever it is that makes a destination special, AC has it all. That's why it's such an experience. And now that round to savor is only getting better.

When Hilton Hotels assumed ownership in 1998, they made a bunch of changes that took AC to another level. Last April, the Ottinger family took control from Caesars Entertainment Corporation. The same family that owns Scotland Run and Ballamor. And one of the first things they did was announce several major construction and renovation projects that are taking place this spring.

These days, of course, AC is open to the public (call or book online), although annual memberships are available. And, not shockingly, it was rated the No. 1 Public Course in New Jersey by Golfweek. Easy to understand. And I didn't even get a vote.

In case you didn't know, Atlantic City is now 117 years young. It was the birthplace of the term "birdie," for all you trivial pursuers, which was supposedly coined in 1903. Sitting just across the bay from the casinos, it's a par-70 that measures close to 6,600 yards. It's hosted six USGA championships, most recently the 1997 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. It was the site of the 1901 U.S. Amateur and three Women's Opens, including one, its first, that was won by the legendary Babe Zaharias in 1948. So it's certainly got more than enough history going for it. And that doesn't even include the bell that serves as its logo, which was originally used in the early 1900s to remind golfers that the last trolley for Atlantic City was set to leave. They still ring it at the end of each day as a reminder of where you're at and what it continues to mean.

Did we forget to mention that the inaugural PGA Senior Tour event was played there in 1980? Or even that Don January was the winner? Well, how about this: Bob Hope was an AC regular back in the day. So was Arnold Palmer, in the early 1950s, when he was enlisted in the Coast Guard and stationed in Cape May.

As for the facility, improvements include a complete re-do of the entryway and lobby, the John J. McDermott (U.S. Open champion in 1911 and '12) Room, the James "Sonny" Fraser Room, the Leo Fraser Library, the Grand Ballroom, two private dining rooms, an all-new bridal suite overlooking the course and a new exterior facade.

On the course, all greenside bunkers at holes 4, 6, 8, 12, 15 and 17 will be completely made-over and restored. Work is expected to be completed by early May. In addition, a halfway house is being built and should be open for the summer season. There was a time when an older woman operated such a rest stop on I believe the 11th hole, if memory serves. I'm



Atlantic City CC Golf Course - Hole #15

pretty sure it was near one of the short par 3s. Anyway, she served some of the best hot dogs anywhere. Funny the things you remember and miss.

By the way, Scotland Run — which is located in Williamstown — is also undergoing bunker renovations. That project is even larger in scope, since it includes every greenside and fairway bunker on the course.

Both will remain open while the work is being done.

"It is important to the Ottinger family that all of our golf courses are maintained to the highest standard for our members and guests," said Director of Marketing Liz Norton-Scanga.

That would also include the care that goes into Ballamor, in Egg Harbor Township.

In case you've never played Atlantic City, the thing that's always impressed me the most are the immaculate tee-to-green conditions. You might not play well, but you won't be able to blame anything except your swing. So who can't look forward to that?

Hey, I've played there in the media day for Ron Jaworski's annual celebrity tournament, with both him and Mike Quick. So it's never been dull. The best stretch is probably the closing five holes, although there's certainly a lot of real good stuff going on before you reach that point. The 14th is a short par-4 that doglegs right around water. A big-time player can even try to drive the green, but any kind of straight shot or even a slight fade leaves a fairly manageable approach. The 15th is a par-3, again over wetlands, that's pretty stout. Especially if the wind is blowing, which it often is. It's about 180, but you can hit almost anything from a medium iron to a wood depending on Mother Nature. That's followed by a 400-yard dogleg right with water all down the right side. The wind can come very much into play here as well. The 17th is an uphill par-3 of about 155 to a hidden green. It can yield a birdie or a double bogey just as easily. And 18, which once upon a time was a par-5, is a 2-shooter that bends sharply right around the practice range back to the veranda. Which means there's a good chance somebody might be watching you finish while they're sipping a cold one. Or two. Enjoy.

If Atlantic City were the only course down that way, it would be worth the trip. But that's hardly the case. Good for us. Fortunatley I've been able to tee it up on most of them.

In you've got the right connections in the private sector, **Galloway National** is about as good as it gets. I think it's one of Tom Fazio's best. Surely one of his hardest. I haven't been there in awhile. My bad. Have to rectify that, hopefully soon. Personally, I'd put the opening 2-hole stretch and the closing 2-hole stretch right up there with any. And I'm not the only one who feels that way. In 2012 it hosted the USGA Men's State Team Championship. Which was only fitting, since head professional Mike Killian was a member of the victorious 1973 U.S. Walker Cup team.

Hidden Creek is different, maybe a little less severe, but just as entertaining. At either one, you'd better be hitting your ball or you're going to pay the price. The landing areas and

Golf at Jersey Shore continued on page 17

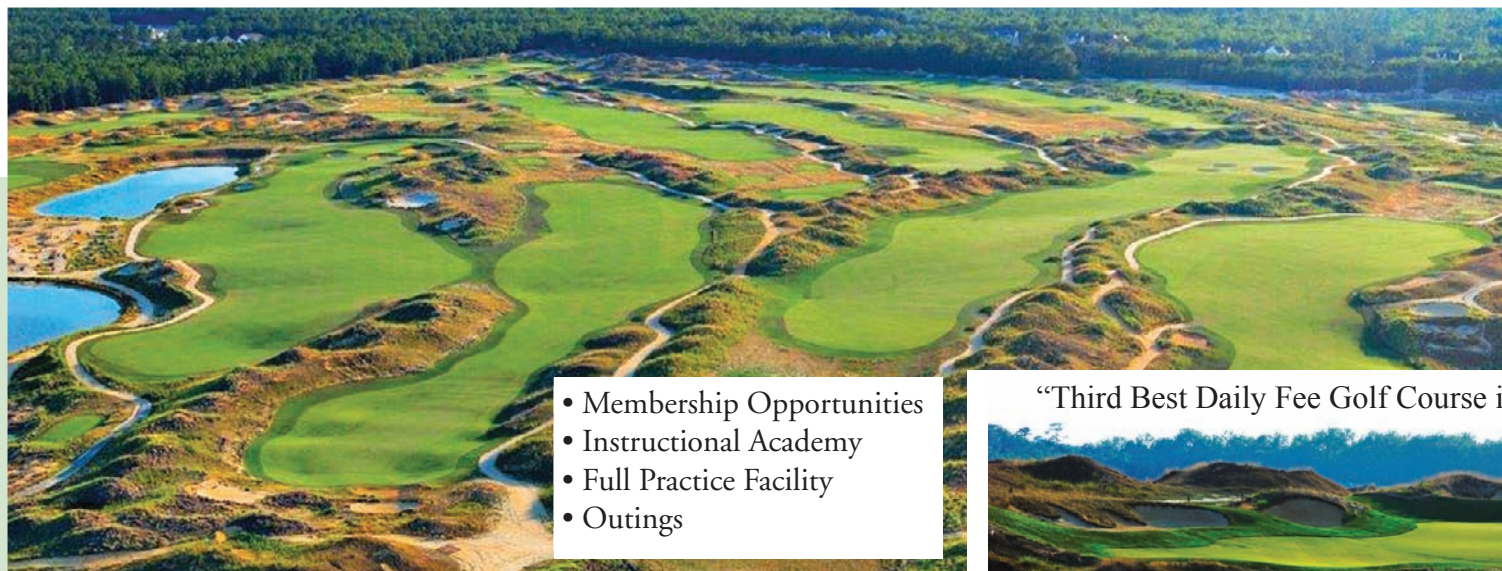
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Spieth Dons Masters Jacket for 2015



Jordan Spieth Earns Masters Green Jacket



Spieth Lines Up putt



Spieth drives off the tee at the Masters Tournament

By Mike Kern

So what does the Masters and the Lehigh Valley have in common?

Well, until the last two Apriils, probably not a whole lot.

But 21-year-old Texan Jordan Spieth has changed that. Forever.

The Dallas native became the second-youngest to ever win a green jacket, one year he nearly became the youngest in his Masters debut. And he did so by going wire-to-wire (no ties), something that hadn't been done at Augusta National since Ray Floyd pulled it off almost four decades earlier. Despite a closing bogey he shot 18-under 270, which equalled Tiger Woods' scoring record from 1997 when he was the same age, to beat 2013 U.S. Open champion and three-time winner Phil Mickelson by four. Which is what he'd led by after Saturday.

Along the way Spieth became the youngest first-round leader (64) and set records for lowest 36-hole (130) and 54-hole (200) totals. He also became the first since fellow Texan Ben Crenshaw -- who was playing in his last Masters -- in 1984 to win the year after coming in second.

It was surely epic stuff.

Last year Spieth was the co-leader going into the final day before finishing runner-up, three behind 2012 champ Bubba Watson. This time it was all his, all the way.

So why was it such a big deal in certain parts of Pennsylvania? Turns out there's no shortage of reasons.

His father Shawn was an athlete at Saucon Valley High School. As was his mother, Chris. Shawn played basketball at Lehigh University, while Chris did the same at Moravian College. They eventually ended up in Dallas, where they had three children. Jordan is the oldest. Steven plays hoops at Brown. His sister Ellie is a special-needs teenager who Jordan credits with providing much of his inspiration as a person and competitor. All except Ellie were waiting to greet him after he walked off the 18th green on Sunday. So was his maternal grandfather, Bob Julius, a retired Bethlehem Steel engineer who lives in North Carolina. His uncle Stow, Shawn's brother who lives in suburban Philadelphia, was there as well. In fact, he caddied for Jordan in Wednesday's par-3 tournament.

His paternal grandfather Donald was watching at home in Bethlehem, with tears in his eyes. A music teacher and orchestra conductor, he attended last year.

So there are local connections. Obviously emotional ones.

"He's just a good kid," Donald said. "It's really interesting. A lot of people feel like they know him, because they know me.

"It's a given I am proud about how he played ... (but also) as a young man and how he's shown himself."

As Crenshaw said during his pre-tournament interview: "He's way more mature than I was at 21. I think the world of him.

You know, when I first met him, I'll tell you I'll never forget it. I looked right at him and he looked at me and I thought I was looking at Wyatt Earp. He just had that look about him."

Golf is of course always looking for the next whatever. Especially since Tiger Woods, who played for the first time in two months and 73-69-68-73 -- to tie for 17th with Sergio Garcia, has been mostly MIA for the past 14 months. Rory McIlroy, who's only four years older than Spieth, would seem to have the inside track on being the most likely successor, since he's got four majors

already. He went 71-71-68-66 to get fourth, after playing with Woods in the last round. But he's never won this major. He was trying to win his third grand-slam event in a row, something only Ben Hogan (1953) and Tiger (2000-01) have done in the modern era. When he was 21, in 2011, he led after 63 holes before pulling his tee shot at No. 10 into the cabins en route to a closing 43. It happens.

A year ago Spieth held a 2-shot lead early on Sunday. This time, his lead on the final day never dipped below three. And that was on the front nine. It looked like there could be a 2-shot swing on the par-3 16th, when Rose had a 15-foot birdie putt and Spieth hit it over the green, that would've cut the margin to a deuce. But Spieth got up and down, saving par by nailing an 8-footer, and Rose's try slid just by on the low side. And that was pretty much it.

About the only thing Spieth didn't do was break Tiger's 72-hole mark, by hitting it into the woods on 18 and missing his par putt, although it didn't seem to matter much to him. Maybe another time.

"I was already hungry from last year, watching it slip away," said Spieth, whose three starts prior to Augusta had produced a win and two seconds. "You get reminded of it all the time. This is a different legacy.

"I took my mind off this moment the last week. But it's very, very special to join the club."

You think? Regardless of where his career takes him, he has a lifetime invitation to the annual Champion's Dinner. As perks go, that might be impossible to trump.

"It's the most incredible week of my life," he went on. "This is as great as it gets in our sport. It's a dream for me ... I'm excited already about coming back. And being the Masters champion. That carries a heavy weight. I hope I'll be ready for it, and what it means. I'm sure I'll figure that out.

"I might not take the jacket off for awhile. To hear the cheoes at this place, it's magical. This has always been my ultimate goal. I may have to change that."

He's the fourth to win in his second appearance. He broke the tourney record for birdies with 28. The high had been 25, by Mickelson in 2001 when he shot 275 to finish third, three in back of Tiger.

Spieth is also the eighth Texan to win at least once, and the first since Crenshaw in 1995. The list includes Jimmy Demaret (with three), Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson (two apiece). It's always about the company you keep.

"It's nice to get your tally up and running at an early age," said McIlroy, who got his first at 21, two months after he lost his chance at the Masters.

Added Rose: "Every time I thought there may be a chink in the armor, he holed (something). It really shouldn't be that easy."

And this, from Mickelson: "I just got outplayed. At the start of the week I would have taken 14-under. I thought that might win. But 18-under is astounding. It's hard not to like (him)."

Some folks already knew. Feel free to spread the word.

"I thought (Sunday) might be easier (than Saturday)," Spieth said. "It wasn't. Very nerve-racking. I didn't get much sleep.

"The hardest part was just managing the situation, the mental side of it. There's a lot of time to think through scenarios."

Going forward, it's hard not to be in awe of those possibilities.

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Tony Leodora Host of GolfTalk Live



Caledonia Course Hole #18

By Tony Leodora

When looking for an expert source on the subject of grass, it was never a good idea to consult former New York Mets and Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Tug McGraw. Asked which he preferred – grass or AstroTurf – he replied, “I don’t know. I never smoked AstroTurf.”

In the world of golf, talking about grass is a much safer subject. And, when expert advice is needed, safe sources always come from the United States Golf Association or the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. They can talk knowledgeably about the subject for hours.

And it would pay for owners and operators of golf courses to listen. They can save a lot of money. Mistakes in the area of agronomy on golf courses can be extremely expensive.

The Myrtle Beach area suffered from one of the most expensive mistakes in terms of agronomy a few years ago. And it was an unfortunate result of unforeseen circumstances.

Advancements in turf research had resulted in a number of new, heat-resistant bent grasses that seemed to be a godsend for warm climates. Not only could the grasses tolerate the heat, but they finally provided the smooth, fast putting surfaces that were not possible on courses that used the old strains of bermuda grass.

In fact, the Surf Club in North Myrtle Beach was one of the test courses slightly more than 10 years ago for the new G2 grass, developed by Greg Norman’s turfgrass company. After favorable results, it was used at Pinehurst No. 2 during the 2005 U.S. Open.

But then the golf gods turned nasty.

After a number of golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area spent thousands of dollars to re-grass their greens with one of the new heat-resistant strains of bent grass, the weather turned foul.

In the summers of 2009 and 2010 heat waves scorched the entire East Coast of the United States. The Greater Myrtle Beach area was not spared, as the extended heat and humidity devastated the golf courses. The young greens, which had been planted with the new strains of bent grass, were particularly affected.

Records were set in each of the summers. It was the perfect storm ... and golf course operators were caught in the middle of it.

“Everybody got hit hard at that time,” explained Bob Seganti, director of golf at Caledonia and True Blue. “It was a shame. They tried an experiment with the new grasses in an attempt to improve the golf experience and it backfired. We might not see summers like that for another 100 years but it made everyone gun-shy.”

Luckily, the turfgrass industry was not finished with its research. Shortly after that tragic summers of ’09 and ’10 new strains of hybrid bermuda grass were developed. These had a higher heat-tolerant quotient than the newly developed bent grass strains, yet they exhibited the smooth and fast rolling capabilities of the grasses used on northern courses.

The two strains that made the greatest impact on southern courses – and on the Myrtle Beach area in particular – were Champion Bermuda and Mini Verde. Both are more resistant to heat than any bentgrass, but do not have the course, bumpy nature of older types of bermuda grass.

One by one, courses along the Grand Strand bit the bullet – again – and converted to the new strains of bermuda grass.

“We’ve made a lot of great strides in the last couple of years with the conversion of all 27 holes to Champion Bermuda,” said Steve Becroft, director of golf at Carolina National – one of the northernmost courses along the Grand Strand, located in Bolivia, North Carolina. “Even though we are farther north, we felt it was something we had to do.”

Wild Over Grass continued on page 19

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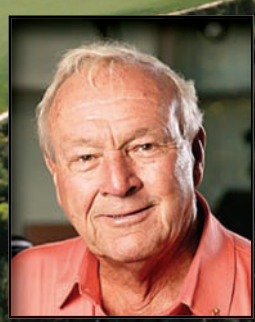
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2015 PGA Show Hot New Products

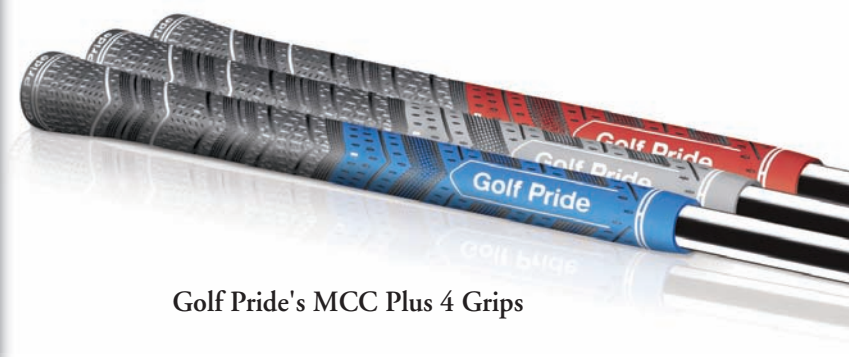


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Golf Pride's MCC Plus 4 Grips

by Leonard Finkel

It was that time of year again, with the golf world coming together at the 2015 PGA show in Orlando. Here are some of the better products you see in the upcoming year.

The Hot Launch line by Tour Edge is headlined by a technologically advanced adjustable driver that is also competitively priced. It features a 460cc titanium four-piece forged club head. The driver's deep face design and variable face thickness technology provide maximum power from more contact points on the face. Loft options from 8.5 to 12.0 degrees in 1 degree increments provide easy-to-use adjustability in choosing the most efficient loft for optimal distance and accuracy. The head shape is very efficient aerodynamically to promote optimal club head speed. A non-adjustable Draw version is also available, offset for proven slice-fighting control. www.touredge.com

The Cure RXi putter features an adjustable weighting system that allows a far greater range of weight than any other putter on the market, allowing the golfer to find the perfect weight to suit their stroke and tempo. The Triangulation Alignment, invented by former PGA Tour Commissioner Deane Beman helps line up a putt like an arrow for accuracy. With a higher center of gravity and lower loft, Cure putters get the ball rolling sooner, helping it stay on the intended line. The RXi has the look and feel of a traditional blade, while offering higher MOI (8,500 - 9,950) than any of the leading mallets on the market and is 100% milled from a solid block of aircraft grade aluminum. In addition to being stable and forgiving, the RXi also has interchangeable face inserts. www.cureputters.com

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2015 Hot New Products continued on page 11



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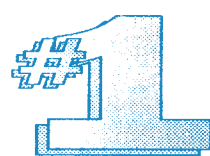


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**2015
Hot New
Products**
from page 9

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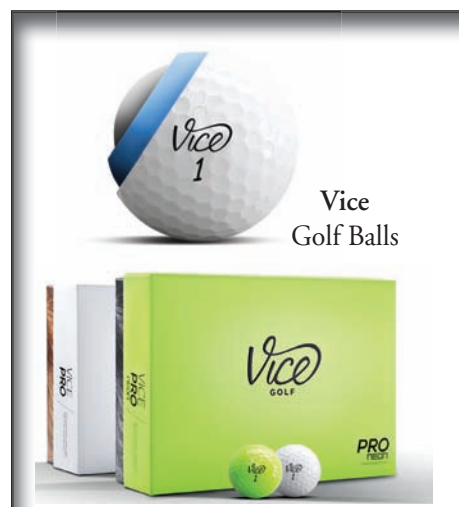
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Traveling Golfer Expands Coverage on Comcast SportsNet and Comcast Network



Tony Leodora Host of GolfTalk Live



For more information about the Traveling Golfer show, contact TL Golf Services at 610-279-9220 or go to the website at www.travelinggolfervideo.com.

By Tony Leodora

weeks of every month. Additional airings will take place on a space available basis.

The Traveling Golfer also will be available through Comcast's Xfinity On Demand feature.

"Obviously, this is a huge step forward for our show," says Tony Leodora, host of the Traveling Golfer. "The show has enjoyed incredible growth since its debut, just a little more than two years ago. The reception we have received across the country and around the world is amazing."

After appearing as a small segment on other shows in the Comcast SportsNet markets for one year, the opportunity presented itself to become a regular feature on Comcast SportsNet and The Comcast Network and the partnership was formed.

"We are happy to partner with the Traveling Golfer and provide our viewers with additional opportunities to learn and experience the wonderful courses from the world of golf," said Bob Selah, Comcast SportsNet Philadelphia Director of Programming.

The Traveling Golfer debuted in February of 2013. Responding to golfers' never-ending demands to learn more about interesting golf courses and golf resorts across the country and around the world, well-traveled host Tony Leodora created the Traveling Golfer so he could take viewers on video golf trips to some of the most exciting golf locations. The show won a first place award for golf television broadcasts in the prestigious International Network of Golf Media Awards, presented at the PGA Merchandise Show in January.

The Traveling Golfer appears as a series of monthly shows hosted by Leodora, who has 15 years of experience in televised golf shows. Previous Traveling Golfer shows are archived for continued viewing on the home website, www.travelinggolfervideo.com.

For more information about the Traveling Golfer, call TL Golf Services at (610) 279-9220.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (April 13, 2015) - The award-winning Traveling Golfer television show has made a momentous leap forward in its reach to the public. Beginning May 1, 2015, the Traveling Golfer will be a regularly scheduled feature show on Comcast SportsNet in the Philadelphia market and The Comcast Network in both the Philadelphia and Mid-Atlantic (Washington) markets. Preview airings of the new show will run throughout April.

Once the regular schedule begins in May, the Traveling Golfer will debut on Comcast SportsNet on Sunday, May 3 at 10:30 a.m. and air every Sunday at 10:30. It also will air on The Comcast Network on the first Monday of every month at 6 p.m., the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. and on a rotating basis during the third and fourth

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Davis Love III Named U.S. Ryder Cup Captain



Captain of the 2016 U.S. Ryder Cup Team, Davis Love III, speaks during Ryder Cup Captain Selection Press Conference

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. – PGA of America President and U.S. Ryder Cup Task Force Co-Chair Derek Sprague announced today that Davis Love III has been named as the Ryder Cup Captain to guide Team USA in the 41st Ryder Cup, Sept. 27– Oct. 2, 2016, at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minnesota. Love was the unanimous recommendation of the Ryder Cup Task Force.

Love, who served as U.S. Captain in 2012, becomes the eighth American to guide multiple Ryder Cup Teams. With recommendations from the Ryder Cup Task Force, the PGA also announced changes to the Captain's selection process, along with the qualifying system for U.S. players and new leadership for future Ryder Cups. The Ryder Cup Task Force has been dissolved, with a newly-designated PGA of America Ryder Cup Committee responsible for identifying future Captains and Vice-Captains and consulting on a wide array of matters related to the Ryder Cup.

"Today marks a new era in U.S. Ryder Cup history, and we could not be more pleased that Davis Love III will be our Captain," said Sprague. "Davis brings a unique perspective and experience of having served as Captain, Vice-Captain and as a key player on six Ryder Cup Teams. Davis, who has the utmost respect of his peers, will bring his vast Ryder Cup knowledge to lead Team USA in 2016.

"Our sincere thanks to the members of the Ryder Cup Task Force for their commitment to drive change that we all believe will result in a better process for Team USA going forward."

Love, 50, is the 28th person to serve as U.S. Captain since the Ryder Cup began in 1927.

"I am thrilled to be the Team USA Captain and represent our country as we work to win back the Ryder Cup," said Love. "It is a great honor to be in the position to help build the Team, but our mission doesn't end there. What



Dustin Johnson of the USA (R) greets captain Davis Love III on first tee for The 39th Ryder Cup at Medinah Country Club on September 30, 2012

we accomplish in 2016 at Hazeltine must serve as the foundation for future USA Ryder Cup Teams. As the son of a PGA Professional and representing all PGA members, I am very proud to accept this responsibility and eager to get started."

In addition, Love named former Ryder Cup Captain Tom Lehman to serve as one of his Vice-Captains. Lehman, the 2006 U.S. Captain, was a member of three Ryder Cup Teams.

"I am very pleased that Tom Lehman has accepted to serve as a Vice-Captain, bringing his outstanding experience and the respect of all players to our next Team," said Love. "Tom has been a trusted friend who I can call upon to provide valuable advice as we go about preparing Team USA."

The members of the U.S. Ryder Cup Task Force were co-chairs Sprague and PGA Chief Executive Officer Pete Bevacqua; PGA Vice President Paul Levy, Raymond Floyd, Tom Lehman, Love, Rickie Fowler, Jim Furyk, Phil Mickelson, Steve Stricker and Tiger Woods.

The newly-designated, six-member PGA of America Ryder Cup Committee includes the current PGA of America President (Sprague), PGA Vice President (Levy) and CEO (Bevacqua); Ryder Cup Captain (Love); and Ryder Cup players Mickelson and Woods.

"I want to congratulate Davis on his selection," Woods said in a statement. "I have great respect for him as a person, player and captain. I know he'll do an outstanding job leading the 2016 US Team. I'm proud of what the Task Force accomplished, making substantive changes in the Captain's selection process and qualifying system. It's also an honor to be on the PGA of America Ryder Cup Committee, helping select future Captain's, Vice Captain's and other duties. We are all fully committed to winning back the Cup in 2016 and beyond."

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The Ballamor Golf Club - Hole # 3



The Vineyards at Renault Winery Hole # 2

Golf at Jersey Shore *from page 3*

greens are generous here. And this fall it's going to host its first USGA Championship, the Senior Amateur from Sept. 26-Oct. 1. If people didn't know as much about it before, they will now. That's a good thing. And probably overdue. Remember it was owner Roger Hansen who got the USGA to bring the 2003 U.S. Amateur Public Links (which was won by Brandt Snedeker) to Blue Heron Pines East, which is no longer there. Shame. I still miss it.

OK, now in no particular order let's go through some of my other favorites. Hope you find as much to like about them as I do every time I go back.

Scotland Run, which you can actually play on your way to the shore, is built in and around an old sand quarry. It features expansive waste areas, links-style holes and even cliffs. So in a sense it's rather unique. And I'm OK with that. There's a few holes that might bring you to your knees, and others that you can attack. I always like to see if I can drive it over the ravine on the par-4 16th. Makes me feel like a real golfer, even if I mess up my approach. Which I often do. Reality stinks. But somebody in the world has to be a bogey kind of guy.

Ballamor, another former private club, is carved out of woods over some gently rolling terrain. Very pleasant, even though there's plenty of fescue, waste areas, water and bunkering to test your skill level. What sticks out most about this course are the greens, which are large. In some cases almost too large. And they all have multiple tiers and a good amount of undulation. If you're on the wrong side of the putting surface you can have serious issues. Trust me, I know. Obviously, there's a premium on placement of your approaches. Which usually means you have to play it a couple of times to really know your way around. Good luck.

One of the reasons I like **Greate Bay** so much is the people. OK, to be honest, that's why I like so many of these places. But at Greate Bay, you might run into Pat Croce or his right-hand man, Mark Benevento, whose son Michael can really play. Or you might be in the group behind Bob Clarke or Steve Coates. It's that kind of a club. Very welcoming. And they've done a lot to keep making it better since they took it over. When the LPGA Shop-Rite Classic was held there, the 18th hole always ranked as the toughest finishing hole on the women's tour. It's almost hard to believe I've actually parred it the last two times I've been there. I must have been playing from the midget tees. But I've never had a bad day there, even when it was chewing me up. They offer just about every kind of membership package you could want, from Summer to Weekday to Associate to Social. And the food and ambiance there are so good you don't even have to be a golfer to make the most of it. It's first-class all the way.

Shore Gate, to me, is one of the toughest courses at the shore. Especially if you play it from the wrong set of tees. And there's five to choose from. So pick wisely. This is a terrific test, from start to finish, with more than a few holes that you won't soon forget. The set of par-3s is strong.

And the closing hole on each side will keep you coming back. Unless maybe they punish you a little too much. The ninth is a par-5 that's got a little Pebble Beach 18 in it. Make a birdie there and it feels almost like an eagle. And 18 is a really good par-4 that demands two keeper shots. And then you still might have a tough time 2-putting if you're not careful. Wonderful stuff, all the way around. And in Harry Bittner they have one of the top pros down there.

There's nothing really like **Twisted Dune**. Unless you go across the pond. There's nothing subtle about it. Just a whole bunch of dramatic and risk-reward. If you've ever played in Scotland or Ireland you'll know what I'm talking about. It's so much fun. And extremely treacherous in spots. I could play the 16th and 17th over and over again and never get tired of it. First you've got a neat par-3 that's all carry over some nasty terrain and bunkers all around the green. It plays some 190 from the back. For reasons I can't fathom, it's the 18th handicap hole. Go figure. Trust me there aren't 17 easier holes to make par on. And 17 is a fairly lengthy par-4 where the second shot has to carry similar gunk. You play those two in par-par and you feel like you've conquered the world. And if you remember, stop by Chester's Bakery in Somers Point and bring head pro Scott Dunn some of their sinful donuts. He's a good man.

I don't know what I like best about **The Vineyards at Renault Winery**: the food or the golf. Or maybe even the wine. Tough choices. The golf is sublimely challenging. The work of Ed Shearon, who also did Raven's Club in the western Philly suburbs. While that one has a little more wow factor, he did a great job here of just letting the layout sort of flow. Nice mix of short and long holes. Some of the shorter ones are really good. And I've always felt that's the toughest thing to create. I got to play there with Ed once, and gained a lot of insight into what he was trying to do. It's the kind of course you could play several times a week and not get tired of, which is about the best compliment I can give. Then you can go eat in the award-winning restaurant, or tour the wine shop, or even stay in the hotel. Not a bad trifecta. If the blueberry cheesecake is on the menu, by all means go for it. Doesn't get any better.

I hadn't been to **Cape May National** in way too long. Then last summer I had a chance to revisit the southernmost option along the coast. And I left wondering why I'd stayed away. It's known as "The Natural" for obvious reasons, since it surrounds a 50-acre bird sanctuary. But that's not what makes it so good. Many of the holes have made it onto best-of lists. Half the holes have some kind of water hazard on them. Many have doglegs. So there's a little bit of everything. It's a shotmaker's course. You can rest assured it won't take me anywhere near as long to play my next round there. Well worth the little extra drive, if only for the last green alone. The pin was cut in the front, I hit my approach to the left fringe and then putted into the front fringe. And there was nothing I could do about it. I want another chance. That kind of thing tends to stay with you.



Shore Gate Golf Course

Hole # 12

Golf at Jersey Shore continued on page 23

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Tidewater Course Hole #18 Green Clubhouse



Barefoot Love Course Hole # 4

Wild Over Grass *from page 7*

“The changeover was so successful that it spearheaded a number of other improvements that we are planning for the next couple of years. When the greens are in great shape, it’s easy to turn your attention to other areas of the course.”

Barefoot Resort, with four golf courses on the property, had a bigger job than most when it came to considering a change in grasses for their putting surfaces. But two years ago, one-by-one, they re-grassed all four courses.

In 2013 the weather turned against the Myrtle Beach area again. The Grand Strand recorded its wettest summer in history. The new strains of bermuda grass were put to the test again. And, again, they proved to be the perfect fix for weather in the Low Country of South Carolina.

“I was at Kings North during that time and the bentgrass greens were always so mushy,” said Ryan Ruddy, now head professional at Myrtlewood. “They changed to Mini Verde and the problem was solved immediately.”

One of the latest courses to convert to the Mini Verde strain was Tidewater. And it was part of a major renovation on the course.

“We really bit the bullet,” said Tidewater head professional Chris Cooper. “We closed the course for a few months. Not only did we re-grass the greens, but we took down a lot of trees, widened the fairways and added a lot of color to the course.”

This major renovation was done under the watchful eye of Superintendent Shaun Donahue. He was not shy in his approach.

“Over the course of the last few years, we actually took down about 1,200 trees,” said Donahue. “We took down 500 in the last wave and that really opened up the course.”

“Then we removed about six inches of contaminated greens mix off the

top of every green and replaced it with a mix of 80 percent sand and 20 percent peat. This was a USGA-recommended action.”

In the 25 years since Tidewater had opened, trees grew prolifically. And, when that happens, grass has trouble growing.

“A tree will grow two feet a year,” explained Donahue. “For most of the first 25 years on this property, they cut the grass but didn’t do anything with the trees.”

Cooper addressed the playability problems at Tidewater when he said, “A tree that was not a problem 25 years ago became a problem. All of these renovations are going to allow us to present a better product for the golfers.”

One of the greatest benefits of the new grasses that have come to most of the courses in the Myrtle Beach area is the conditions during the fall season. No longer is aggressive overseeding needed on the courses. Many courses see no need to overseed the greens that feature these new strains of bermuda grass. Instead they just use a non-toxic chemical to add a bit of color.

That means less interruption of play during the fall and better conditions on the courses throughout the stretch.



True Blue - Hole # 4

And the golfers have noticed. In 2014 Myrtle Beach enjoyed a record year for fall tourism. A marketing campaign touted “60 More Days of Summer” but, in the minds of golfers, that translated into 60 more days of great golf.

“There is a real feeling of confidence throughout the Myrtle Beach area right now,” concluded Steve Mays, director of marketing for National Golf Management, the company that manages a number of courses in the area. “We had a few tough years with the weather down here but now I think we have a better idea of how to handle it. We are poised for a great season.”

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Furyk Wins RBC Heritage Playoff Over Kisner



SCOREBOARD



USA Today Images Jim Furyk pumps his fist after one of his 11 birdies Sunday at Harbour Town.

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HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP) -- Jim Furyk had gone 100 starts without winning, a stretch that gnawed at his psyche and challenged his confidence.

That all disappeared in uncharacteristic fashion Sunday when he won his first PGA Tour title in five years with birdies on both playoff holes to outlast Kevin Kisner at the RBC Heritage. When the winning putt fell on the par-3 17th, the typically reserved Furyk dropped his putter and punched the air.

"I think getting excited on 17 there was a lot of pent-up frustrations," he said.

Furyk led by a stroke when Kisner birdied the 72nd hole to force the playoff, the fourth in the last six tournaments at Harbour Town Golf Links. On the first extra hole, Kisner rolled in a second straight birdie putt on the 18th. But Furyk answered with a birdie to keep the playoff going. After Kisner missed his birdie try on No. 17, Furyk sank a 12-foot putt for his 17th career PGA Tour victory.

Furyk shot a 63 and Kisner a 64, leaving them both at 18-under 266. Third-round leader Troy Merritt was at 16 under after a 69. Defending champion Matt Kuchar (68) was at 14 under and Masters winner Jordan Spieth (70) was eight shots back.

It was an odd tournament for Furyk.

He looked as if he'd get left behind early, making 18 pars in the first round to fall five shots back. Furyk found his game Friday with eight birdies on the way to a 64. He had a 68 Saturday, yet knew he needed to fire himself as he did Friday to have a chance.

Boy, did he ever.

Furyk had six birdies on his first nine holes, including a 48-footer on the par-4 eighth that moved him in front. A bogey on the 11th dropped Furyk into a four-way tie for first, but he responded with birdies on three of the next four holes and seemed set for an easy ride.

When his long putt on No. 8 rolled in, Furyk said he began to think "this may be the day." Kisner, though, chased him down on the back nine. He birdied the 14th and 15th to pull within a stroke and stuck his approach on the signature lighthouse hole at No. 18 within 7 feet for a tying birdie.

Kisner kissed his wife, Brittany, and 10-month old daughter Kathleen on the way to the scoring trailer to prepare for more golf.

Furyk is used to such grinding at Harbour Town. When he won in 2010, Brian Davis tied him on the final hole to force a playoff — won by Furyk when Davis struck a loose impediment on his swing and called a penalty on himself.

Kisner expected Furyk, who made 11 birdies in 20 holes, to tie him after his putt on the first playoff hole.

"You don't expect a guy of Jim's caliber to miss a 6-footer straight up the hill," Kisner said.

Merritt fell to third after a third 69. His other score was a course-record tying 61 in the second round Friday. Merritt couldn't keep up with Furyk's charge and lost his chance after hitting out of bounds on No. 12 and taking double bogey. Merritt made up for it a few holes later with an eagle-2 on No. 16.

Spieth closed an amazing five-tournament stretch. He won the Valspar Championship a month ago and followed that with seconds at the Texas and Houston opens before matching Tigers Woods' record of 18 under at Augusta National. For Spieth, 19 of his past 20 rounds have been under par.

Spieth had a whirlwind media tour in New York on Monday and Tuesday before arriving at Hilton Head. Now the 21-year-old Texan wants to get back to Dallas in time to attend the Academy of Country Music Awards. He'll return to golf in two weeks at the World Golf Championship Match Play event.

Divots: Tom Watson finally played like his age, the 65-year-old finishing with a 5-over 76 after making the cut at Harbour Town with a birdie on the 18th hole Friday. Watson says playing tour courses is taking a toll on "this old body." ... Golfers went off in groups of three on the first and 10th tees starting at 7:30 a.m. to beat expected stormy weather later in the day.

RBC Heritage

Harbour Town Golf Links, Hilton Head Island, SC Par 284

Name	1	2	3	4	P	Total
Jim Furyk - z	71	64	68	63	5	266
Kevin Kisner - y	68	67	67	64	6	266
Troy Merritt	69	61	69	69	-	268
Brendon Todd	73	66	63	67	-	269
Matt Kuchar	68	66	68	68	-	270
Sean O'Hair	70	67	70	64	-	271
Branden Grace	70	67	66	69	-	272
Louis Oosthuizen	69	67	69	67	-	272
Morgan Hoffmann	68	68	69	68	-	273
Bo Van Pelt	69	68	67	69	-	273
Blake Adams	72	65	71	66	-	274
Brice Garnett	72	66	65	71	-	274
Jordan Spieth	74	62	68	70	-	274

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Philly Cricket- Militia -Plymouth Meeting Par 72

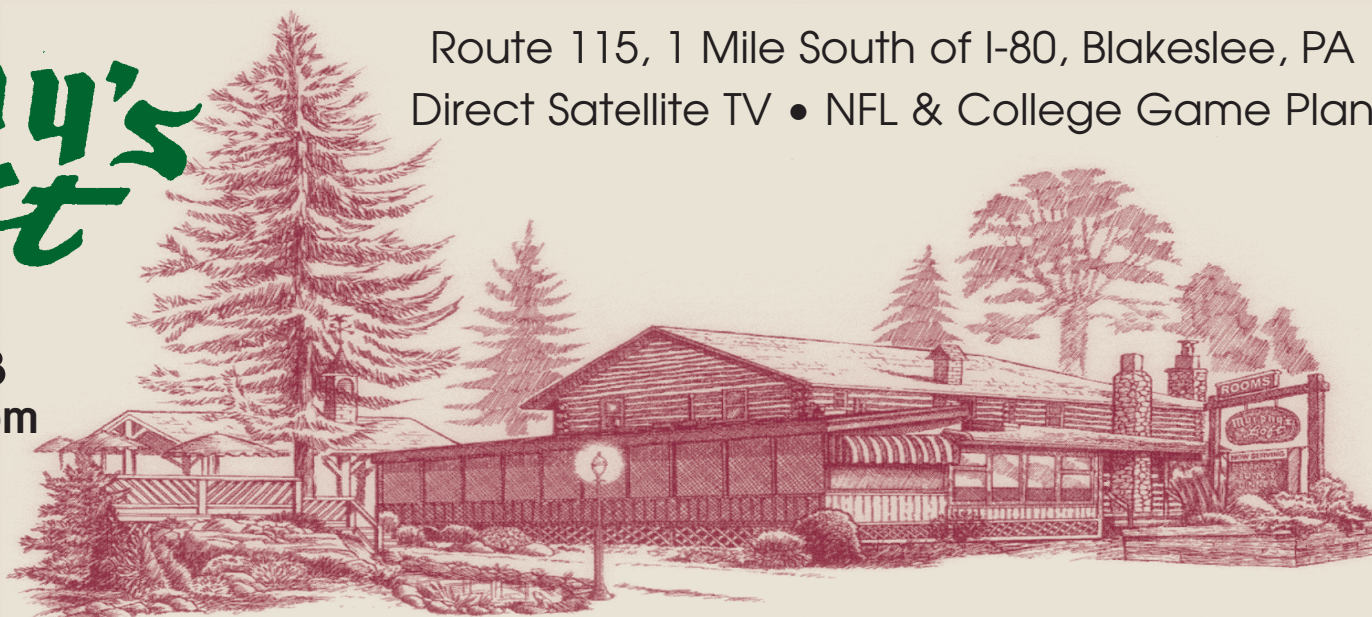
Stableford Points Media Results

	Total Points			
Graham Dendler -Trenton CC	34	33	67	28
Dave Pagett -Whitemarsh Valley CC	32	37	69	26
Dave Fields -Brookside CC	34	35	69	24
Mark Sheftic -Merion GC	35	35	70	22
Mark Miller -Philadelphia Cricket Club	36	34	70	22
Rich Steinmetz -Spring Ford CC	36	35	71	20
Hugo Mazzalupi -Patriots Glen National GC	36	35	71	20
Brian Kelly -Bucknell GC	36	35	71	20
Michael Little -Lookaway GC	35	36	71	20
George Frake -Little Mill CC	35	36	71	20
Trevor Bensel -Huntingdon Valley CC	36	35	71	20
Carson Solien -Aronimink GC	34	37	71	20
Dan Marz -Stonewall	35	37	72	18
Jarod Mills -LedgeRock GC	35	37	72	18
Shawn Hall -Radley Run CC	36	36	72	18
Vince Ramagli -Links GC	36	36	72	18
Steve Swartz -Conestoga CC	36	36	72	18
Eric McNamee -Golf Galaxy - Montgomery	37	35	72	18
Kevin Nicholson -Makefield Highlands GC	35	37	72	18
Justin Riegel -Gulph Mills GC	36	36	72	18
Wayne Phillips -Lehigh CC	38	35	73	16

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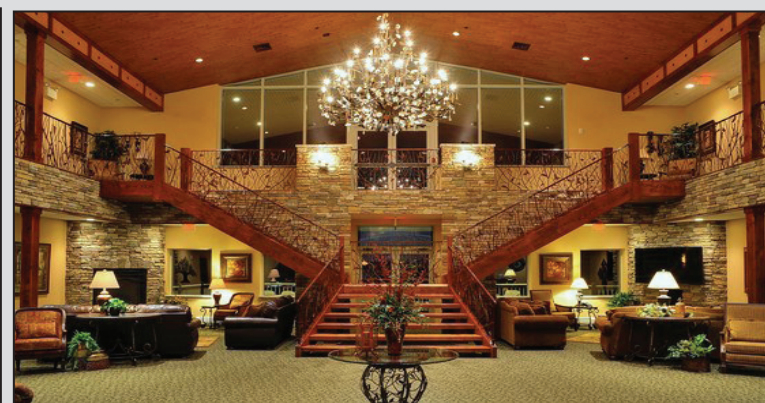


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The Seaview Resort – The Bay Course

Hole #2



Blue Heron Course

Hole #15

Golf at Jersey Shore from page 17

Harbor Pines was another course I hadn't seen in awhile. Then I played it three times in a little over a month. So sue me. Maybe it had something to do with the burger, wings and beer special in the grill room, which was unanimously given a must-do status with every group I went there with. But trust me, the golf is every bit as good. This parkland course winds every which way, with few parallel holes. There's water everywhere, and the conditions were just as pristine as I remembered them. Much to be said for that. The greens are inviting, and the bunkering well done. The ninth is about as stout of a par-4 as you're going to find, long and straightaway with water on the left and woods protecting the opposite side. I think I've parred it once. And I might have been forced to use a mulligan. But I'll keep trying, even if it's an excuse to eat more wings.

The Seaview Resort, which is now operated by Stockton College, is the site of the LPGA's Shop-Rite Classic every late May into early June. It's held on the Bay Course, which might be the more user-friendly of the two tracks there. Unless the wind isn't cooperating. Then you could be hitting a 3-wood into the second green instead of maybe a 6-iron. It happens. The greens are small, so you have to be accurate with your short clubs. Or else. The Harbor Pines Course has lost a good number of trees recently, which really opened things up. It's still a lot tighter, since it's cut through woods. And longer. The back-to-back par-3s at 15 and 16 are ferocious. The wind isn't as much of a factor on that side of Route 9, but you can't spray the ball around as much either. If you do you'll be chipping back onto the fairway with regularity. And who really wants to be doing. They also have fine dining in the hotel, which is a throwback to another era. Overall, it's hard to beat.

And then there's **McCullough Emerald Links**, which I've grown rather fond of in the last few years. Maybe it had something to do with getting to play there with the guy whose idea it was to turn a landfill into 18 holes, James "Sonny" McCullough. Who knew? But it obviously worked. Plus I also get to play there with a friend of mine and his buddies, who spend the entire round busting on each other. Hard to beat that. I don't even mind that some

of them are New York fans. All I know is the 8th and 9th provide a great finish to the front side, a dogleg-right par-4 followed by a 175-yard par-3 that's all carry. Nice. The 18th is neat, too, a par-4 off an elevated tee with water all down the right. But my favorite hole, in fact one of my favorite holes at the shore, is the 14th. Based on the fifth at Scotland's Royal Dornoch, it's only 285 yards. My kind of length. It's a dogleg right, around trees. But if you feel up to it you can go for the green. Folks of my ability try to poke it down the middle, which I usually can pull off, and then hit some kind of wedge onto a 2-tiered putting surface and hope you're on the right tier. I could play it 18 times. That's what happens when you get old and can't hit it as far as you used to. A good man has to know his limitations.

Blue Heron was the course that mostly started the public-golf renaissance in the Greater AC area. And since Ron Jaworski took it over in 2013, most folks seem to feel it's as good or better than it's ever been. That's because Jaws came in and cleaned the place out, a much-needed overhaul. A lot of the growth along the periphery of the layout had simply gotten out of hand. And at a public facility, that's only going to slow down the pace of play. Not to mention take away from the overall look. So now it's a lot more playable, never a bad thing. Hospitality was never a problem here to begin with, and the presence of the one-time Eagles quarterback

has merely enhanced that. There's plenty of holes where you can score, and just as many that are lurking to seriously mess with your card. The fifth, a really strong par-4, fits into the latter category. As does 10, 12 and 15, three more 2-shotters. The 15th might be the signature hole, with a medium-length approach over water to a difficult green. That's assuming you've hit a good drive. On the other hand, the seventh is a neat little par-4 that doesn't even demand a wood off the tee. I like short. The 11th measures 120 or so yards, yet I'm always amazed at how many times people make bogey or worse there. Don't say you weren't warned. And if you see Jaws please tell him that he still owes me for that bet from last year's International Network of Golf conference where he said I couldn't even get my night-golf 9-iron in the air and I hit it to within gimme birdie range. It happens.

Anyway, that's it for now. Hope to see you down there. We can always do burgers and wings. Or donuts. Knowing me, probably both.



McCullough Emerald Links

Hole #7

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Gregg Meyer (Woodstone CC)	62
Dustin McCormick (Glen Brook)	64
Brian Boyle (Skytop GC)	64
Chris Zelenka (CC)	64
Brian Patrick (CC)	64
Bob Fritz (Manufacturers G & Cc)	65
Billy Hallman (GC)	65
Justin Alunni (CC)	65
Bob Sedlak (CC)	65
Terry Hatch (Hidden Valley)	65
Mike Molino (Scranton CC)	65

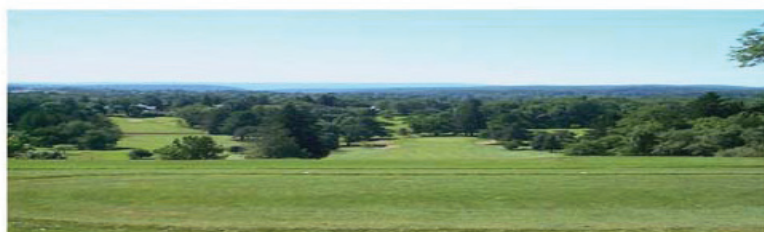


Winners Left to right Jim Muschlitz, John Kuhlhamer, Kevin Edwards and Gregg Meyer take top honors.

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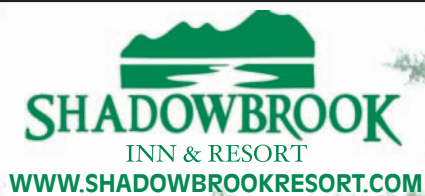
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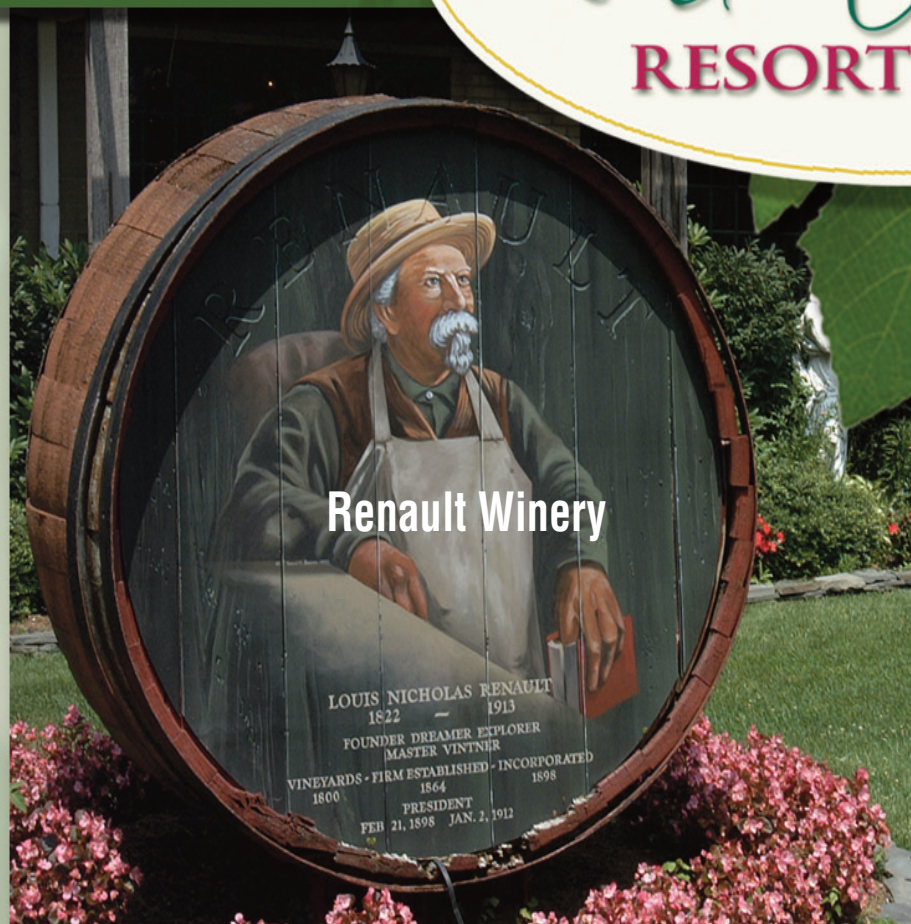


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