

# A Tribute to Gary Adams

*On June 24, 2001, the McHenry C.C. and Taylor Made/Adidas Golf came together to celebrate the life of Gary Adams.*

For those of you that didn't know Gary Adams, you are still probably connected to him in some way, just by the clubs that you carry in your own golf bag. In 1979, by manufacturing and successfully marketing woods made of stainless steel, Adams initiated a transformation in golf equipment that spanned the world of golf. "He was a visionary," said Don Hojnacki, a lifelong friend and golfing partner. "No one was using metal woods, now no one uses wood woods anymore."

Although metal woods have been around since the late 19th century, Adams revised the woods with a perimeter-weighted design, and they became the club of choice for both young and old.

In 1984, Adams was named "Man of the Year" by the National Golf Foundation. He left Taylor Made in 1988 and started the Founders Golf Club Company, featuring more sophisticated metal wood designs, moving more weight to the center of the club face. Soon after, in 1991, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; he sold the company in 1992.

Though he fought and beat the disease, Adams lost most of his intestines due to the intense radiation treatments. Unable to eat solid food for nearly two years, his weight dropped nearly 60 pounds. Terribly gaunt but continually interested in golf, Adams founded McHenry Metals in 1997, naming his new business after his hometown. In 1999, he developed severe pneumo-



nia, resulting in the removal of his left lung. At the age of 56, on the first Sunday of the new millennium, Gary Adams died in his home.

"He had such a short life and so much to dream about and accomplish," Hojnacki said. "He never tooted his own horn." A lot of people in McHenry had no idea how prominent Gary was in the world of golf, and how very dedicated he was to his hometown.

Taylor Made Golf Company approached Hojnacki (a McHenry C.C. member) with plans for a memorial for Gary Adams a few months after Adams' death. Hojnacki brainstormed with Adams' family and friends, and came up with an idea for a bridge over the creek on McHenry C.C.'s signature no. 8 hole, where Gary learned to play the game. A memorial plaque, to be mounted on one of the bridge's endcaps, will mark a permanent place for Adams in the history of McHenry.

Adams' family members were the first to cross the Memorial Bridge at the dedication ceremony.

"This bridge is symbolic of Gary's pioneering spirit, one that brought technology and the core golfer together," said John Stienbach, marketing and PR director for Taylor Made/Adidas Golf. "And it'll be a reminder for everyone that plays this course that a small-town boy with dreams made a difference in the lives of millions worldwide."

"Gary is an international figure, known all over the world in golf circles," said his father, Vale Adams (former McHenry C.C. golf pro). "He could see things other people couldn't see. He had a terrific understanding of the golf business and could see concepts that few others could understand." 