

# Chicago and the Championships of the USGA

*December 22, 1894. The USGA was founded at the Calumet Club in New York, establishing forever the bond to the Chicagoland area as one of the five founding clubs was Chicago Golf Club.*

The other four were Shinnecock Hills, The Country Club, St. Andrew's and Newport. The organization's original name was the Amateur Golf Association of the United States. Charles B. Macdonald and Arthur Ryerson represented the Chicago Golf Club, and Macdonald took a very active role in the association. In fact, Macdonald became the first United States Amateur champion at Newport Golf Club over the other 32 players in the field.

In September of 1897, the United States Amateur and United States Open championships came to the Chicago area for the first of 32 major USGA championships to be held here. The grander of the two events, the U.S. Amateur Championship, had grown to 58 players and was a match-play event preceded by two rounds of qualifying stroke play. Macdonald was medalist through the 36 holes with a two-round total, at his home track, of 174. Ultimate victory, though, would belong to another Chicagoan playing out of Onwentsia Club, H.J. Whigham. This was Whigham's second consecutive Amateur championship, a feat that would be topped only by Tiger Woods when he won his third in 1996. Macdonald believed it was the duty of Chicago Golf Club to play a very active role in hosting the championships of the USGA and over the next 15 years it would host three U.S. Opens, one U.S. Women's Amateur and four U.S. Amateur Championships.



*Original bunkering at Chicago Golf Club, one of the USGA's five founding clubs and host of multiple championships.*

**MAJOR USGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS  
IN THE CHICAGO AREA  
1897-PRESENT**

- 1897 U.S. OPEN & U.S. AMATEUR: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1899 U.S. AMATEUR: ONWENTSIA CLUB
- 1900 U.S. OPEN: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1902 U.S. AMATEUR: GLEN VIEW CLUB
- 1903 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1904 U.S. OPEN: GLEN VIEW CLUB
- 1905 U.S. AMATEUR: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1906 U.S. OPEN: ONWENTSIA CLUB
- 1907 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: MIDLOTHIAN C.C.
- 1909 U.S. AMATEUR: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1910 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: HOMEWOOD C.C.
- 1911 U.S. OPEN: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1912 U.S. AMATEUR: CHICAGO GOLF CLUB
- 1914 U.S. OPEN: MIDLOTHIAN C.C.
- 1922 U.S. OPEN: SKOKIE C.C.
- 1923 U.S. AMATEUR: FLOSSMOOR C.C.
- 1928 U.S. OPEN: OLYMPIA FIELDS C.C.
- 1931 U.S. AMATEUR: BEVERLY C.C.
- 1933 U.S. OPEN: NORTH SHORE C.C.
- 1933 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: EXMOOR C.C.
- 1938 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: WESTMORELAND C.C.
- 1939 U.S. AMATEUR: NORTH SHORE C.C.
- 1949 U.S. OPEN: MEDINAH C.C.
- 1956 U.S. AMATEUR: KNOLLWOOD CLUB
- 1974 U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN: LAGRANGE C.C.
- 1975 U.S. OPEN: MEDINAH C.C.
- 1981 U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN: LAGRANGE C.C.
- 1983 U.S. AMATEUR: NORTH SHORE C.C.
- 1992 U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR: KEMPER LAKES G.C.
- 1997 U.S. AMATEUR: COG HILL G. & C.C.
- 2000 U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN: THE MERIT CLUB
- 2003 U.S. OPEN: OLYMPIA FIELDS C.C.

Next for the USGA was a stop at another top Chicago club as the 1899 U.S. Amateur came to Onwentsia Club. H.M. Harriman defeated Findlay S. Douglas, 3 & 2, to take home his only championship. Macdonald was medalist once again with a two-day total of 168. Onwentsia Club would return to the championship arena again in 1906, playing host to the U.S. Open. The pro at the time, Willie Anderson, was highly favored after winning the last three championships. Through the first

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three rounds, Anderson held up to his labeling, but fell apart coming down the stretch on the final day. The day and the tournament would belong to Alex Smith, who was the first player to shoot under 300 over 72 holes on the 6,100-yard seaside course. The entire Smith family got into the action as brother Willie placed second, brother-in-law James Maiden third, and brother George Smith finished 18th.



*Onwentsia Club in 1906, when the club hosted the U.S. Open.*

In 1900, the U.S. Open again came back to Chicago Golf Club. Harry Vardon, the British champion, made his U.S. Open debut by capturing the victory. Vardon played a fine game with scores of 79-78-76-80 for a four-day total of 313. The score would have been even better had he not dubbed a putt at the 18th that was well inside the leather. Tom Bendelow, who designed more than 400 courses around the country including Medinah No. 3 and Skokie Country Club, was on Vardon's bag for the championship. Of note was that Harry Vardon became the first player in history to back a product. He used the "Vardon Flyer" as he made his exhibition tour across the United States.

The U.S. Open would not return to Chicago Golf until 1911, but in the meantime the club hosted the 1905 and 1909 U.S. Amateurs. The 1905 championship went to H. Chandler Egan, who defeated D.E. Sawyer, 6 & 5, while the tournament continued to grow to 146 entries. The 1909 Amateur Championship saw Robert A. Gardner defeat Egan, 4 & 3, with medalist honors going to Charles "Chick" Evans, Jr. with a score of 151.

The Glen View Club got into the championship mix in 1902 by hosting the U.S. Amateur Championship. Glen View Club had been



*W.J. Travis competes at the 1905 U.S. Amateur held at Chicago Golf.*

founded in 1897 by Northwestern University professor and Scotsman William Caldwell. The initiation fee was set at \$100 and the annual dues at \$50. The original course, which was designed by the club's professional and groundskeeper Richard Leslie, played to 6,051 yards and par 83. The 1902 Amateur was won by Louis N. James, while W.J. Travis was medalist with 79. In 1904, the club would host the biggest event in its young history with the arrival on property of the U.S. Open. Willie Anderson was the defending champion and very highly favored. Anderson started the tournament with an opening-round 75 and then shot a 78 later that afternoon. The following day, he opened with 78 but came roaring back in the final round. Willie Anderson brought Glen View Club to its knees with a final-round 72, at that time the lowest round ever posted in an Open. Anderson finished five shots ahead and took the \$200 first prize to the bank.

As a side note, Glen View Club from the beginning has been known as one of the finest clubs anywhere. In 1922, Glen View Club hired William Flynn to remodel the course and he brought the yardage to 6,362 and par



*The Glen View Club hosted the 1904 U.S. Open. Here, a look at the club's caddies, circa 1912.*

to 72. Joseph E. Ryan wrote in a 1903 book, "From a picturesque standpoint, Glen View is without peer in the Western golfing world."

While Ryan was waxing rhapsodic about Glen View Club, 1903 also brought the first USGA women's championship to the Chicagoland area. The U.S. Women's Amateur Championship was held at Chicago Golf Club and Miss Bessie Anthony of the Glen View Club defeated Miss J.A. Carpenter, 7 & 6, in the final. A Mrs. Fox set the lowest qualifying score of 94; she was joined by four other scores under 100. A score of 120 would have placed a player in the field of 32 qualifiers. 1903 also brought the first World Series to Boston and Ford sold its first automobile.

The Women's Amateur would return to the Chicago area in 1907. Midlothian Country Club was host to the championship and soon gained a reputation for excellent conditions and accommodations. The founders of Midlothian left nothing to chance and even imported the sod for the fairways directly from Scotland. The Women's Amateur was won by Miss Margaret Curtis, who defeated her sister, Miss Harriot Curtis, 7 & 6. Midlothian C.C. would act as host to another large event in 1914 when the U.S. Open came to the club. In the 66-player field was 21-year-old Walter Hagen, who was suffering from food poisoning he incurred the night before the first round. Hagen had a hard time walking and claimed he felt every swing but somehow opened with a 68.



*The 1914 U.S. Open came to Midlothian C.C.*

That afternoon he posted 74 and ended the first day with a one-shot advantage over Tom McNamara. In the final round, Hagen held off a charging Chick Evans to win his first

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major. Walter Hagen went on to win the 1919 U.S. Open, five PGA Championships and four British Opens.



Walter Hagen won his first major at the 1914 Open.

Chicago Golf Club hosted its final two major USGA championships in 1911 and 1912. The U.S. Open in 1911 was won by Johnny McDermott. The end of 72 holes saw three players tied at 307; they were slated to play it off the following day. McDermott fired an 80 and beat Mike Brady and George Simpson to become the first native-born U.S. Open champion. The year 1912 marked the last time a U.S. Amateur would be played at Chicago Golf.

Jerome D. Travers won his third of four championship titles. The only player to win more times at the U.S. Amateur was Robert T. Jones, Jr.

After more than a decade away, the U.S. Open came back to the Chicago area in 1922 at Skokie Country Club. The action was as exciting as it gets. Walter Hagen led after the first round with a score of 68 but fell to 77 in the second. At the close of the third round, Bobby Jones had the hot hand with a 70 and shared the third-round lead. The final 18 belonged to 20-year-old Gene Sarazen, who started the day four shots back. Sarazen shot 33 on the front nine and played the first eight holes on the back to even par. He had calculated that he needed only par at the 18th to win, but upon reaching his ball and having a good lie, Sarazen reached for driver again and fired a shot 15 feet from the pin for eagle. Sarazen would have two putts for his birdie. The driver off of the deck proved beneficial, as Sarazen had figured wrong and the birdie won him the championship by one over Bobby Jones and John Black.



Scenes from the 1922 U.S. Open at Skokie C.C.

Flossmoor Country Club would get in on the action in 1923 when it hosted the U.S. Amateur Championship. Max R. Marston defeated Jess W. Sweetser 1-up after 38 holes. Two players, Bobby Jones and Chick Evans, tied for medalist honors with 149. A small drop in entries to 143 was experienced. The U.S. Amateur had not been played in the Chicago area for its longest stretch, 11 years, a trend that revealed the growing number of fine, capable facilities elsewhere nationwide.

Olympia Fields put its first stamp on major championship golf in 1928 by hosting the U.S. Open. Olympia Fields originally sat on more than 750

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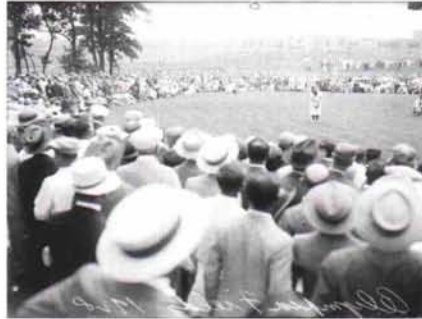
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acres and provided its members with four fine courses to play. The first course, then known as No. 1, was laid out and put together by Tom Bendelow; the second course was designed by Will Watson and the third by Watson and Bendelow; the fourth course, which became the championship course, was built by Willie Park, Jr. The course Park designed became home to five Western Opens, two PGA Championships and two U.S. Opens. In 1928, Bobby Jones was the player to watch as he had won two of the last four championships. Through two rounds, Jones had shot 144 and held the lead midway through the tournament. The end of the third round found Jones still ahead of the pack after firing 73, but the final 18 saw him fall back with a 77 into a tie with Johnny Farrell. The next day the two would meet in a 36-hole playoff. After the morning 18, Farrell led by three but was down a shot after the first 12 holes in the afternoon. Farrell birdied the 13th to tie and Jones missed a short putt at the 16th to give Farrell the lead. Both players birdied the final two holes, securing Farrell's

win by a shot. Bobby Jones' troubles winning USGA events in the Chicago area had continued.



*Johnny Farrell edged Bobby Jones by one shot at the 1928 U.S. Open at Olympia Fields C.C.*

The Great Depression hit Olympia Fields hard in the Thirties, forcing development of the land that both No. 2 and No. 3 courses sat on. Today Olympia Fields has just two courses: No. 4, now known as the North Course, and No. 1, now the South.

In 1931, when the U.S. Amateur came to Beverly Country Club, it marked eight years since the event's last rendition in Chicago. The largest field to date, with 583 entries,

began the quest for the national amateur championship. Francis Ouimet defeated Jack Westland, 6 & 5, to capture his second amateur title, a nice complement to his 1913 U.S. Open crown. 1931 also marked the year that the USGA decided to mandate the size and weight of the golf ball. The resulting ball was dubbed the "balloon ball," and after just a year the association reversed the ruling.

In 1933, North Shore Country Club began its long and storied link to the championships of the USGA as it played host to that year's U.S. Open. The club had moved from nearby Kenilworth in 1923, when they hired Charles Hugh Alison and Harry Shapland Colt to design a new course on 170 acres of land in Glenview. Tommy Armour finished as the 1933 tourney's first-round leader, but soon fell as Omaha, Nebraska native Johnny Goodman fired an impressive 66, tying Gene Sarazen's 18-hole record to claim the lead by two shots. Goodman needed only 25 putts during the second round and continued his silky smooth stroke in the third with a score of 70 to take a six-shot lead. Goodman

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began the final round with scores of par, eagle, birdie but soon felt the heat and stumbled to go out in 39. Goodman held on coming in and won by a shot to become the fifth and last amateur to win the U.S. Open. While this would be North Shore's only U.S. Open, the club did hold the 1939 and 1983 U.S. Amateurs.



*Johnny Goodman became the fifth and last amateur to win the U.S. Open in 1933 at North Shore C.C.*

The 1939 Amateur at North Shore was won by Marvin H. Ward as he beat Raymond E. Billows, 7 & 6. The tournament continued its rapid growth with 826 entries. The 1983 U.S. Amateur was won by another fine player when Jay Sigel captured his second consecutive title over Chris Perry, 8 & 7. Sigel's two U.S. Amateur titles in '82 and '83 went well with his British Amateur title in 1979. The medalist for the event was Clark Burroughs with a two-day total of 139. That event attracted 3,533 entries.

After the 1933 Open at North Shore, the tournament would not come back to the area for 16 years. During those 16 years, the USGA brought the largest tournament in the women's golfing world to the area not once but twice. In 1933, the U.S. Women's Amateur was played at Exmoor Country Club. The title for the second year in a row belonged to a Miss Van Wie as she defeated a Miss Hicks, 4 & 3. Miss Wilson, the current British champion, won the medal with a 76 but lost in the semis to Miss Van Wie. A score of 87 would have qualified for match play; five players broke the 80 mark. 1938 also brought the U.S. Women's Amateur here for a rendition at Westmoreland Country Club. Miss Patty Berg would win the championship over a Mrs. Page, 6 & 5. This marked the third year that Mrs. Page, with a score of 80, would win or share medalist honors.

Medinah Country Club took advantage of the Roaring Twenties when they began constructing one of the finest facilities in the land. When finished, the club had 60,000 square feet of clubhouse and ballroom space, a swimming pool, a skating rink, skeet and trap fields, a ski jump, polo field, archery range and three golf courses. Course No. 3, designed by fellow Shriner Tom Bendelow, originated as a track for the wives and daughters of the club members. The course was then thought too difficult for the female members and closed down a few months after opening. The club decided to embrace the difficult design and make some changes that would allow No. 3 to be used for championship events. The finished product was too easy for the professionals, so the club hired Harry Collis to create seven new holes and renovate two others. The USGA liked the renovations so much that in 1949 the association brought its signature event to Medinah.



*The clubhouse at legendary Medinah C.C., which hosted its first U.S. Open in 1949.*

With Ben Hogan not able to participate due to his near-fatal car accident, the odds-on favorite would be Sam Snead. After three rounds, Snead trailed Cary Middlecoff by six shots and it looked to be yet another Open disappointment for the Virginian. Middlecoff stumbled brutally down the stretch on the final round just as Snead was catching fire, but Snead's unfortunate bogey at 17 led to yet another Open loss. The U.S. Open would not return to the Chicago area for 26 years and when it did, it was back to Medinah in 1975. Another gap, this one 15 years, would elapse before the U.S. Open and Chicago area combined forces again.

For the Amateur, though, there was no 26-year interval. In 1956, the

U.S. Amateur came to another North Side venue as Knollwood Club hosted the championship. The number of entries for the Amateur continued to rise, reaching an astronomical 1,600 participants. The championship that September was won by E. Harvie Ward, Jr. as he defeated Charles Kocsis, 5 & 4. This was Ward's second consecutive Amateur title to go along with his 1952 British Amateur title. Ward also won an NCAA championship while attending North Carolina.

LaGrange Country Club hosted its first of two U.S. Women's Opens in 1974. Sandra Haynie won the tournament by one shot over Carol Mann and Beth Stone. Haynie played consistent golf with scores of 73-73-74-75 for a four-day total of 295. A field of 155 players competed for prize money that totaled \$40,000. LaGrange again hosted the U.S. Women's Open in 1981; this time, 30-year-old Pat Bradley would win the championship. Bradley beat the score set by Haynie in 1974 by 16 shots, tallying 269 over the 72 holes. Bradley was one of five players to finish below par and the tournament carded the most under-par rounds in U.S. Women's Open history. The event drew 434 entries and 37,900 spectators.

As noted above, the U.S. Open Championship came back to Medinah C.C. in 1975. Since the Open's debut at Medinah, Course No. 3 had undergone significant changes that raised the yardage to 7,032 and par to 71. One of the finest fields ever assembled gathered to compete for the national championship. Most played poorly, and after 72 holes Lou Graham and John Mahaffey were tied and slated to meet the next day for an 18-hole playoff. Graham won that round by two shots when he fired a 71 to win his only major.

Many theorized that the 1975 Open would be the last for Medinah, opining that the course had several flaws. Most of the trouble centered around the 18th hole as officials felt the dogleg bent too soon. The membership at Medinah quickly hired Roger Packard to work on the championship course; the end result was a par-72, 7,667-yard track that the USGA found to its liking enough to return in 1990 for its premier event.



*Hale Irwin, 45 when he won the U.S. Open at Medinah in 1990, is still the oldest player to win the championship.*

At 45 years of age, Hale Irwin drained a 45-foot putt on the 72nd hole of competition to force a playoff the next day; he eventually became the oldest player to win a U.S. Open Championship. "I'll never forget that putt," says Irwin. "It didn't win the Open, but it certainly put me into a position to do so. I also remember

how well I hit the ball that afternoon, playing the last eight holes five-under par." The playoff was tight all day and Irwin finished with birdies at the 16th and 17th. When Hale parred 18 and Donald bogeyed, the two went into sudden death. Irwin birdied the first playoff hole to capture his third and final U.S. Open title.

The 92nd U.S. Women's Amateur would come to the area in 1992 at Kemper Lakes Golf Club in Long Grove. Vicki Goetze of Georgia won the tournament by defeating Sweden's Annika Sorenstam, 1-up. Goetze was 3-up with six to play, but Sorenstam came storming back by winning the 16th with a bogey and then the 17th with a birdie to pull the match all square. At the 18th, both players found the fairway off the tee and Goetze's 5-wood second landed on the front of the green. Sorenstam proceeded to knock her 6-iron in the water, all but giving the championship to the 19-year-old. Goetze was only the fourth player to hold both the NCAA title and the U.S. Amateur title, and was the first teenager to do so.

The longest course in U.S. Amateur history held the 1997 tournament when Cog Hill, at 7,195 yards, played host to the fine young field. Matt Kuchar, in his first time qualifying for the event, went on to defeat Joel Kribel, 2 & 1. Roger Tamellini earned medalist honors with a two-day total of 136. The field had continued to grow to 6,666 entries. Kuchar continued his solid play the next year as an invited participant at the Masters in Augusta. In fact, he continues to play well, and in 2004 earned more than \$500,000 on the PGA Tour.

It had been 19 years since the USGA last brought the U.S. Women's Open to an area club when the Merit Club broke the drought, hosting the 2000 championship. Karrie Webb at 25 years old took home the \$500,000 first prize when she defeated Meg Mallon and Cristie Kerr by five shots. Webb didn't have the tournament won until the back nine on Sunday, and in fact after the front nine was in a dead heat with Mallon. Webb's birdie at the 10th to Mallon's bogey

*(continued on page 18)*

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at the same gave Karrie the edge she needed to finish the tournament off. "When Karrie smells blood, she's an animal," said Mallon. "She knew I was going to three-putt that hole and she made a birdie. I think that developed a lot of confidence."

Most recently, the USGA chose Olympia Fields C.C. to host the 2003 U.S. Open Championship. It had been 13 years since the tournament was played in the area and the event had grown dramatically. The purse was \$6,000,000 and the winner's share of that was \$1,080,000. Jim Furyk became the 2003 champion, firing eight-under par on the par-70, 7,188-yard North Course. The 2003 Open will be remembered for many things, from the flashing incident in the final round to Tom Watson giving a generation 54 holes worth of hope. Jim Furyk established a new 54-hole scoring record of 200 en route to his three-shot victory. Furyk's total of 272 tied the low Open mark set by Jack Nicklaus, Lee Janzen and Tiger Woods.



Jim Furyk scored 272 over four rounds to tie the best-ever U.S. Open total and win the 2003 championship.

The USGA and its national championships had and always will have a place in Chicago. It is unfortunate that technology has forced many of our area clubs out of contention for a large-scale USGA event. In my opinion, it is not only because of the distance players are hitting the ball today, but also because I believe the teeth of a good golf course lie in the difficulty of the putting surfaces. The technology of equipment, combined with requirements for corporate hospitality tents, 40,000 daily spectators, merchandising tents and parking, make it nearly impossible for many of our clubs to find the space. From

1897 to 1950, the USGA's first 53 years, our area played host to 23 events; in the USGA's second 53 years, from 1951 to 2004, the area has hosted only nine events. Rest assured, however, the tournaments will return to Chicagoland in the future and our clubs will once again set a glowing example of the conditions and hospitality that the country has come to expect.



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