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SPRING 2026

2026 Tour Guide

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people who bring the best
conditions in the world to
the best players in the world

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GCSAA Conference Photo Gallery

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VOL. 82 // NO. 2

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A celebration of the people who bring the best conditions to the best players in the world

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Jones touches on the future of the golf business, the GCSAA Conference and the fourth edition of the Tour Guide.

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Complete list of every American and Canadian tournament

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Dubai Invitational	Jan. 15-18
The Players Championship	March 12-15
Texas Children's Houston Open	March 26-29
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Ford Championship	March 26-29
JM Eagle LA Championship	April 16-19
Myrtle Beach Classic	May 8-11
Colonial Life Charity Classic	May 14-17
UNC Health Championship	May 28-31
PGA Championship	May 14-17
RBC Canadian Open	June 11-14
U.S. Adaptive Open	July 6-8
BMW Championship	Aug. 20-23
Sanford International	Sept. 11-13
Biltmore Championship Asheville	Sept. 17-20
PURE Insurance Championship	Sept. 18-20
Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic	Oct. 2-4



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EDITORIAL

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & BRAND MANAGER Seth Jones
785-542-2627 / sjones@northcoastmedia.net

EDITOR Scott Hollister
216-675-6013 / shollister@northcoastmedia.net

SENIOR MANAGING EDITOR Tracey Walker
216-706-3771 / twalker@northcoastmedia.net

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Nathan Mader
216-675-6012 / nmader@northcoastmedia.net

DIGITAL MEDIA SPECIALIST Will Coughlin
216-706-3764 / wcoughlin@northcoastmedia.net

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Courtney Townsend
216-363-7931 / ctownsend@northcoastmedia.net

JR. GRAPHIC DESIGNER Amelia Joliat
216-706-3780 / ajoliat@northcoastmedia.net

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Karl Danneberger (*Science*), Alan FitzGerald,
Benton Hodges, Mike Kenna (*Research*)

BUSINESS

CLEVELAND HEADQUARTERS

1360 EAST 9TH ST, 10TH FLOOR, CLEVELAND, OH 44114

NATIONAL ACCOUNT MANAGER Jim Cummins
785-865-8348 / jcummins@northcoastmedia.net

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS MANAGER Jake Goodman
216-533-6942 / jgoodman@northcoastmedia.net

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Nader Hassen
216-363-7932 / nhassen@northcoastmedia.net

CUSTOM MEDIA SALES DIRECTOR Tod McCloskey
216-363-7921 / tmccloskey@northcoastmedia.net

EVENT MANAGER Rachel Rosen
216-363-7936 / rrosen@northcoastmedia.net

MANAGER, PRODUCTION SERVICES Chris Anderson
216-978-5341 / canderson@northcoastmedia.net

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DATA Tabatha Jeter
216-973-4395 / tjeter@northcoastmedia.net

SR. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Antoinette Sanchez-Perkins
216-706-3750 / asanchez-perkins@northcoastmedia.net

AUDIENCE MARKETING MANAGER Hillary Blaser
216-440-0411 / hblaser@northcoastmedia.net

MARKETING/MAGAZINE SERVICES

SUBSCRIBER, CUSTOMER SERVICE
847-513-6030 / golfdom@omedia.com

LIST RENTAL Brahm Schenkman
800-529-9020 / bschenkman@infofinery.com

REPRINTS & PERMISSIONS Wright's Reprints
northcoastmedia@wrightsmedia.com

CORPORATE

PRESIDENT & CEO Kevin Stoltman

VP OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS Steve Galperin

VP OF CONTENT Marty Whitford

VP OF MARKETING Michelle Mitchell

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Kevin Yanik

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POSTMASTER: Please send address change to GOLFDOM, PO Box 20, Lincolnshire, IL 60069.

Subscription rates: For US, Canada and Mexico, 1 year \$34.95 print and digital, 2 years \$59.95. All other countries 1 year print and digital, \$49.95; 2 years, \$79.95. For air-expedited service, include an additional \$75 per order annually. Single copies (prepaid only) \$10 plus postage and handling. For current single copy or back issues, call 847-513-6030. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical including by photocopy, recording, or information storage and retrieval without permission in writing from the publisher. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients is granted by North Coast Media, LLC for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr, Danvers, MA 01923, phone 978-750-8400, fax 978-750-4470. Call for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law.



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"As I was reading through this Tour Guide issue, I found it fun and interesting to learn the various origin stories of the superintendents who are hosting these professional golf events."

SETH JONES, Editor-in-Chief & Brand Manager

Where everybody knows your name

I have a meeting this afternoon at the next town over, a town called Baldwin City, Kan. They have a university there, Baker University, as well as a nine-hole golf course with sand greens. They also have my favorite Mexican restaurant outside of Casa Rio in San Antonio: El Patron.

My meeting is at Baldwin City Beer Co. to meet with a Baker University student. I got a call from my old real estate agent, Scott — I still run into him once in a while — and he asked if I could meet with Jake, who is dating his granddaughter. He's a golf nut, getting a degree in sports management. His dream is to work in the game. "And you're the only person I know who works in golf," Scott told me.

That's funny, I thought, because *most* of the people I know work in the game.

Check out our two-page *Golfdom* Gallery spread in this issue ... every one of those people works in the game. And the 17 tournaments we spotlight in this

issue ... every one of those people found their way into the game and are now among some of the most successful superintendents in the U.S. and abroad.

As I was reading through this Tour Guide issue (our fourth year and running), I found it fun and interesting to learn the various origin stories of the superintendents who are hosting these professional golf events. Many of them found their jobs by accident. They had a passion for golf and learned along the way that becoming a superintendent is an actual career.

I think that narrative will be a thing of the past soon. This industry is rapidly getting more and more

exposure. The various golf organizations — especially the GCSAA and the USGA — have really been beating the drum for the industry. It's not such a behind-the-scenes, secretive profession anymore. And that's a good thing, because golf's popularity has gone crazy over the last handful of years — the industry needs young people with a passion for the game.

I don't know what advice I'll share with this young man, but I will tell him that if he wants to work in the game, the opportunities are there. Even if I'm the only person he knows in golf, there are so many of us eager to get the younger generation into the game. All you have to do is be kind, show

up on time and make your passion for the game known.

On a different topic, I want to congratulate the GCSAA and its staff for hosting an incredible GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando. The 100th anniversary of GCSAA was celebrated with class and style. I wrote an essay about the show on **Golfdom.com** that I invite you to check out, but basically my message was this: The industry really showed up and made it a valuable conference for everyone involved. I know the conference was a huge success for my team and me.

Next year, the show travels to New Orleans. It bothers me when I see people wince a little or roll their eyes when they hear the show is returning to New Orleans.

I'm telling you this: Any city can be a party city, and any city can be a place where you get serious business done. It's up to the individual to make any event a success or, conversely, a waste of time and money.

Don't sleep on New Orleans as a conference destination. New Orleans is much more than Bourbon Street. It has some incredible restaurants and so much culture. And oh, yeah — we'll be celebrating *Golfdom's* 100-year anniversary there next year. You wouldn't want to miss that, right?

After all, isn't it more fun to go where everybody knows your name? **©**

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Golfdom Gallery

1



1 A handshake deal The team at *Golfdom* has enjoyed the work of Andy Staples, ASGCA (second from left), over the years — that includes his golf course designs as well as his e-newsletter. And this photo is the official announcement that Staples will soon be writing a column for *Golfdom*. With Staples are *Golfdom*'s Kevin Stoltman, CEO; Seth Jones, editor-in-chief; and Scott Hollister, editor.

2



2 A Kansas City party in Orlando! (From left to right) Tim Nielsen, superintendent, The GC at Creekmoor, Raymore, Mo.; Callie Zevecke, marketing communications project manager, PBI-Gordon; Jackie Applegate, president and CEO, PBI-Gordon; Jones; outgoing GCSAA President, T.A. Barker, CGCS, Fore Lakes GC, Taylorsville, Utah; and Hollister smile for a photo at GCSAA's 100th anniversary party at ICON Park.

3 Brother Jimmy's BBQ with brother Jimmy At the GCSAA show, the team at Envu served it up right with some barbecue at Brother Jimmy's BBQ. Feeling right at home is (left to right) Brother Jimmy Cummins, *Golfdom*; J. Nolfo, Brittany Bailey, Larissa Wolfe, Jessica Rasmussen and Bill Roddy, all with Envu; and Jones and Stoltman.



4 What time do the Cyclones play? The Iowa GCSA board of directors made their way to Lawrence, Kan., and were kind enough to invite Jones out for a couple cold Busch Lights, the official beer of Iowa. Pictured left to right are Colton Mihalovich, Spirit Hollow GC, Burlington, Iowa; Brent Parizek, West Liberty (Iowa) CC; Tommy Feller, CGCS, Cedar Rapids (Iowa) CC; Mitch Meyers, Thunder Hills CC, Peosta, Iowa; Alex Perrizo, Terrace Hills GC, Altoona, Iowa; and Jones.

3



5 Show closers Before it was time to fly home, Jones stopped by the Toro party at Cuba Libre, where he nabbed this photo with Toro CEO Rick Olson (center) and Darren Davis, CGCS, Olde Florida GC, Naples, Fla.

5



4

PHOTOS BY: GOLFDOM STAFF (1-3, 10), SANDRA O'ROURKE, TOCA (9)

6



7



8



9

10



6 As the world turns Jones has been working with industry legend Jim Turner (far right) on a longform Q&A that started at his home club, Sara Bay CC, Sarasota, Fla., and continued at the GCSAA Conference in Orlando. Look for the story later this year. With Seth and Jim are Taylor Turner-Weaver, Numerator Technologies CEO; Nate Stoltman; Nader Hassen; and Will Coughlin.

7 Next time, HOJ then Rick's place The Iowa GCSA now has a VIP invite next time they're in Lawrence — Seth's garage, then Rick's. Nick Kray, Elmcrest CC, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Matt Hall, Burlington (Iowa) GC; Caleb Swanson, Van Diest Supply Co.; Tom Meier, Veenker Memorial GC, Ames, Iowa; Jones; Matt Beatty, Iowa Turfgrass Institute; Tim Gravert, Crow Valley GC, Davenport, Iowa; Randy Robinson, GCSAA; and Chad Shafer, Geneva G&CC, Muscatine, Iowa, are all in.

8 South Dakota guys What does it take to convince Seth Jones to come to your chapter conference and be a guest speaker? Approximately one round of beers, as the South Dakota GCSA learned in Orlando. From left to right are Mark Clark, The Bluffs GC, Vermillion, S.D.; Cummins; Rick Wit, CGCS, GC at Red Rock, Rapid City, S.D.; Kelly Eilers, Brandon (S.D.) GC; Jones; and Tyler Danke, Zimco Supply.

9 Not quite the Beastie Boys... But maybe the *Golfdom* Guys? After working together for years at GCSAA, the band — Jones, Hollister and Cummins — is back together at *Golfdom*. The world tour is underway!

10 The *Golfdom* gang It's a tradition to take a selfie of the team during the GCSAA show... we barely got this one in on time — after the show closed! Team *Golfdom* in Orlando was an all-star cast of hustlers who were busy from sunup to well past sundown, including (from left to right) Jones; Jake Goodman; Hassen; Hollister; Nate Stoltman; Rachel Rosen; Coughlin; and Brother Jimmy Cummins.

The Golfdom

FILES

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Major golf returns to Newtown Square, Pa., when Aronimink Golf Club plays host the 2026 PGA Championship, May 14-17. This is the course's first men's major in 60-plus years, honoring Gary Player's 1962 win. Here, *Golfdom* heads back to 1962 with a look at the layout and history of Aronimink Golf Club. To read the full article visit golfdom.com.

'Tough but not treacherous,' describes Aronimink layout

BY GOLFDOM STAFF

Aronimink Golf Club, Newton Square, Pa., the site of this year's PGA Championship (July 19-22), is not treacherous, isn't beset with cliffs and doesn't have unreadable greens, but according to those familiar with the course, it isn't a setup — even for the country's finest pros. The course extends 7,045 yards from the back tees and has a par of 70. Some changes were made in tee positions last fall, traps have been slightly revised and there, of course, will be the usual narrowing of the fairways.

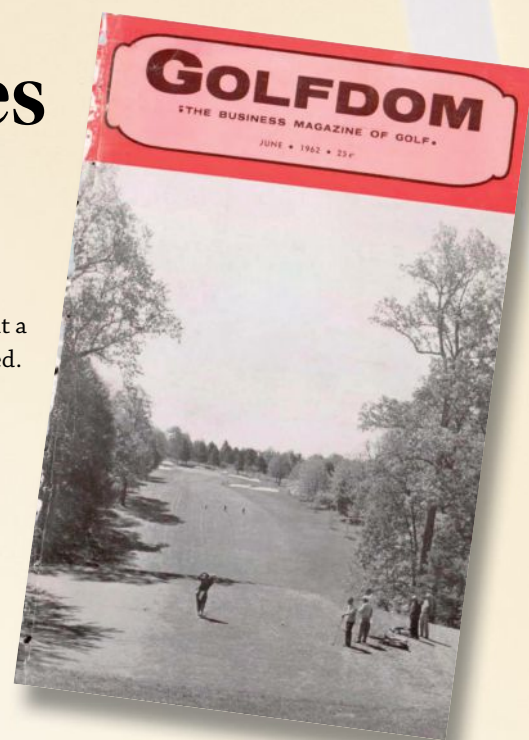
General chairman of the event is Jack A. MacInnes, who is in the bleacher seat manufacturing business, so there will be plenty of seats for the spectators. In fact, there will be 10,000 of them, located in the strategic spots, and all will be free. More than nine miles of rope and about 3,000 metal stakes will be used in cordoning off the fairways and greens.

BUILT IN 1926

The name, Aronimink, is of Indian origin, of course, and means "by the bea-

ver dam." There is no evidence that a tribe of the same name ever existed. The club, one of the country's oldest, is located 15 miles southwest of Philadelphia and covers about 300 acres. Residential properties and highways are rather remote and persons who play or view the course get a feeling of being in the unspoiled open spaces. The club is in its fourth location since being founded in 1895. It moved to its present site in 1926. The course was designed by Donald J. Ross.

Each of the holes bears an Indian name ranging from Apache (No. 1) to Aronimink (No. 18) and including Comanche, Sitting Bull, Cherokee and others. The No. 1 hole has a spectacular elevated tee; No. 2 is one of the tougher ones, requiring smart trap playing to match par; No. 6 and No. 7, both par 4s, can work to the disadvantage of those who over-drive; No. 8, fronted by a lake, is a scenic beauty; No. 9 extends to 610 yards; No. 10 may be the most formidable hole on the course, being a 449-yard copy that



demands the best possible shots for a par 4; No. 12 which crosses a gulley, also is a tough par 4; No. 13 probably will turn out to be the birdie hole; No. 15 is well trapped and calls for a good degree of sharpshooting; No. 16, also well trapped, is 541 yards long and eagles are almost impossible to make on this hole; No. 18 is something of a sleeper, presenting a long, uphill haul to the green.

Joe Capello is Aronimink's professional and George Baskin is the superintendent. **G**

2018 U.S. Open

By Seth Jones

Editor's note: The following article is pulled from the archives, a shortened version of Golfdom's 2018 U.S. Open preview story on Jon Jennings and Shinnecock. Look for new content from the 2026 U.S. Open — sponsored by PBI-Gordon — online in June.



A key to Shinnecock's success is Jennings' extreme attention to detail and willingness to correct anything that looks out of place.

the golfing grounds as possible.

The result is a course with epic views that can be deceptive at times in how far the eye can see.

"It's getting back to how the course looked if you would have come out here in the late 1800s when people first started playing golf here, that open look where you have scruffy native areas and sand," Jennings says. "The vision of the course is to be able to look across and have vast expanses of these open vistas that you can just see from anywhere."

Attention to detail

Those who know Jennings well say two attributes have led to his success: his attention to detail and his organizational skills.

"It's almost a curse, but it's helped me be successful in what I do," Jennings says. "I'm looking for something that's wrong, all the time, everywhere I go. And by doing that, I'm going through the golf course and looking for something that's out of place, or not right, and I'm bringing people in to correct it."

"He's about the most organized guy I know, and he's always been motivated," Sisk says. "He's the type of guy, when he gets his mind put to something, he goes at it with blinders on. His success in the industry is proof that if you really dedicate yourself, good things happen."

Jennings says he is proud of his career, and he clearly wants to be right here, counting down the days to the 2018 U.S. Open.

"Being in metropolitan New York, the pace and the tension and, I'll call it the stress of the area, really suits my personality," Jennings says. "I like that kind of wound-up, anxious feeling all the time. These things fit together — my personality, the area and the level that we're requested to keep the golf course." 📍

The day Jon Jennings accepted the job at Shinnecock, he achieved a golf historian's dream: He left a job at one of the five founding member clubs of the United States Golf Association (Chicago Golf Club, founded in 1893, the oldest 18-hole golf club in America) for another of the five founding clubs (Shinnecock Hills' original 12 holes date back to 1892; its clubhouse, the oldest in America, was built the same year).

"It still gives me chills when I'm out there on the golf course thinking that I'm actually at Shinnecock," Jennings says. "I knew it would be an amazing place to work ... I never thought that I'd actually be here."

His lifelong friend Pat Sisk, CGCS at Milwaukee CC, wasn't at all surprised by Jennings' success.

"Agronomic skills are one thing, many of us possess agronomic skills," Sisk says. "It's his organizational skills, the ability to plan and communicate among 10,000 different avenues ... that's what separates guys who can handle these majors and the also-rans."

Restoring a classic

Jennings and his crew took meticulous steps to narrow some fairways with the beautiful wispy fescue grasses for which Shinnecock is famous. Another delicate project coincided with the long-term tree removal project — a tree addition project to the north side of the property, using trees from the course to create a natural fence between the course and houses. Lastly, perimeter areas of the course that were scattered with woods, new growth over the last few decades, were removed to recapture as much of



Jon Jennings, CGCS

FAST FACTS

DATES: June 18-21

SUPERINTENDENT: Jon Jennings, CGCS

CLUB: Shinnecock Hills GC

LOCATION: Southampton, N.Y.

TOUR: PGA Tour

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Dubai Invitational

By Seth Jones

Played in January 2026, former Texas A&M All-American Nacho Elvira shot a 10-under 274 at Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club to win the 2026 Dubai Invitational. The field included Rory McIlroy, Shane Lowry and Tommy Fleetwood. The win moved Elvira to fourth place on the DP World Tour and was his third win on the DP World Tour.

Behind the scenes, it's a well-traveled Ohio State Buckeye who maintains the course, and he's armed with a new Rain Bird irrigation system that's dialing up conditions beyond what viewers saw on TV in 2024.

"I can water the whole course in half the time as I (previously) could, and I've got a lot more accuracy," says Harry Wells, golf course superintendent at Dubai Creek. "Before, our bunkers used to sit soaking wet. We'd get sandy waste edges. We had a lot of sprinklers that were just inside the turf lines. They were doing a 360 — throwing into lakes or sand areas.

"Now, all the sprinklers are in correct positions," Wells continues. "You're using less water, and it's going in the correct places."

Dubai Creek's journey to the new irrigation system is an interesting one, and so is Wells' journey as a superintendent.

Meet Harry

Wells got his start in golf at a young age — his dad worked in the industry. At age 16, he fell in love with being on the course and started working at Bocket Hall Estate in England. His father asked him to come work alongside him at South Herts Golf Course



Wells says tournament golf is why he's a greenkeeper, and he's learned a lot since the last Dubai Invitational.

near London as an assistant greenkeeper, and his on-the-job education continued.

Then, Australia came calling. An opportunity arose at Royal Sydney Golf Club.

"I did six months at Royal Sydney, and they completely changed my life," Wells says. "It was the best six months of my life working. It was the first time I worked on a high-end course with the highest standards. Obviously, in the U.K. I worked with some good teams, but the guys in Australia were all a *really* good team. I emailed the guys back in the U.K., and I said, 'Thanks for the opportunity and training me up and sending me to Australia ... but I'm not coming back.'"

It was then that Wells knew he wanted to pursue high-end golf course maintenance as a career, and it was suggested to him to reach out to Mike O'Keefe at Ohio State University. He spent 18 months studying agronomy at OSU and then took a seven-month internship at Liberty National, Jersey City, N.J., under the tutelage of Greg James. The course was being prepped for the 2019 Northern Trust, won that year by Patrick Reed.

"Greg James is an absolute legend, I learned so much from him," Wells says. "He's such a great guy — I picked up a lot of



Harry Wells

FAST FACTS

DATES: Jan. 15-18

SUPERINTENDENT: Harry Wells

CLUB: Dubai Creek Resort

LOCATION: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

TOUR: DP World Tour

managerial skills from him. He treated everyone like a friend. I looked up to him — we worked long hours, but he made it enjoyable at the same time.”

It was another star-studded stop for Wells following his time at Liberty National, as he traveled to Los Angeles Country Club for his next internship. He lived on-site as the course underwent a regrassing of the greens and an irrigation upgrade.

“It was a completely different style of golf course, different grasses,” Wells says. “I learned an awful lot there and had a great time living on-site.”

Following his time in Los Angeles, he made the move to Dubai for another internship, this one at Jumeirah Golf Estates. A full-time assistant position opened at Dubai Creek, and he jumped at the opportunity. He worked as the assistant for 18 months, and when his superintendent was promoted to manager, he was promoted to superintendent.

A major improvement

Dubai Creek’s course opened for play in 1993. It is probably most famous for its unique clubhouse, designed by Godwin Austen Johnson and inspired by a traditional dhow (a sailing vessel) in full sail. The clubhouse is featured on the United Arab Emirates 20 dirham banknote, the only clubhouse in the world featured on a banknote, Wells says.

While the clubhouse is money, the irrigation was broke. The original irrigation system was outdated and hindering what Wells and his team wanted to accomplish on the course.

“Our old system, it was just physically impossible to water the golf course from dark until daylight — the pipes were so small, we couldn’t get water around the golf course,” Wells says. “The water we needed to keep the golf course to the standard we wanted to produce; it was physically impossible.”

The irrigation heads were also outdated, and the spacing was poor. On windy nights, the coverage was erratic at best. It pained Wells to see such a valuable asset to the course getting wasted regularly.

That old system was finally put to rest, and to the rescue came a new Rain Bird ICM system. The course went from 1,500 irrigation heads to just under 3,000.

“Our moisture levels around the course are a lot more uniform than they were before,” Wells says. “It’s been a huge upgrade.”



The clubhouse is designed after a traditional dhow and is also featured on the UAE's 20 dirham banknote.

Wells is most appreciative of how high-tech the new irrigation system is. The previous system was an old satellite system, and he struggled getting replacement parts for it. Repairs to the system were a constant challenge.

Now, with the ICM system, every sprinkler has its own computer that communicates to the control system in the office.

“I’ve got a computer in the office, which is the main hub, but then all the smartphones, tablets, can also run it,” he says. “In the morning time when I’m driving around, if I see a dry area, I can straight away log into the system. I can do a diagnostic test to see if there is an issue with that sprinkler straight away.”

The course is in better condition, and he’s also happy to be more responsible with water.

“That’s how we’re saving water, because we’re only putting out more water in areas that actually need it,” Wells says. “We’re still in the desert. Water is hard to come by. We’re all on recycled water. Now we have water going where we want it to go, instead of just sort of going out there.”

Ready to roll

The course made a few adjustments in terms of mowing lines and rough height in hopes of giving the field a proper challenge. Water comes into play on the last few holes, and when the wind picks up, the course really shows its teeth.

Wells was excited to be the host superintendent at such a highly regarded course and use the skills he’s amassed from his many mentors along the way.

“Tournament golf, for me as a greenkeeper, it’s what I do it for,” he says. “I love being around the buzz of the tournament. Obviously, the first one was great, but we learned a lot since then. We’re super excited to have the guys in and see where we get to.” 



The Players Championship

By Seth Jones

There's been a changing of the guard at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra, Fla. Jeff Plotts, after 10 years as the director of golf course maintenance operations and host superintendent of the Players Championship, retired last October.

Now stepping into the leadership role is his longtime assistant director of operations, Lucas Andrews. Born in England, the Brit has two main golf courses on his resume that will stand out to golf fans: a year at St. Andrews Links followed by 15 years at TPC Sawgrass — first as an assistant-in-training for almost nine years, then six years as assistant director of golf course operations, followed by his promotion to director of golf course maintenance operations last October.

Not bad for a kid who got his start raking bunkers in high school because he wanted to play free golf.

Andrews goes to St. Andrews

Andrews and his family moved from England to British Columbia, Canada, while he was in high school. He felt like he “hit the jackpot” because he could work the golf season on the crew at Predator Ridge Resort in Vernon, B.C., then work the ski season as a ski instructor.

Andrews didn't know a career in golf course maintenance was something people could pursue until some of his mentors at Predator Ridge told him he should go to the University of Guelph in Ontario to get an education in turfgrass. He graduated with honors from Guelph with a degree in turfgrass management.



Andrews hails TPC Sawgrass as an awesome opportunity despite the challenges that come with tournament and course preparations.

Perhaps even more important while he was there, he was offered the opportunity to intern at St. Andrews. That's when, as Ron Burgundy from “Anchorman” might say, “Things escalated quickly.”

It was an opportunity Andrews didn't take lightly. He took a year off school to make the most of it. One day while he was at St. Andrews, he learned a senior member of the Sawgrass grounds crew was playing the course. It proved to be a fateful day.

“I tracked him down (Jim Abate, now a PGA Tour agronomist) on the golf course and begged him for an opportunity at an internship,” Andrews recalls. “Jim's such a good dude. He was like,



Lucas Andrews

FAST FACTS

DATES: March 12-15

SUPERINTENDENT: Lucas Andrews

CLUB: TPC Sawgrass
(Stadium Course)

LOCATION: Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

TOUR: PGA Tour

'If you can get your J-1 visa set, give me a call.' I was pretty on it from that point and probably called him back quicker than he thought. To him, it was an off-the-cuff conversation. To me, it was a career-defining opportunity."

Building the foundation

Andrews is excited for the upcoming Players Championship, his first as the director of golf course maintenance operations. At the same time, he adds that not much has changed for him and the way he does his job.

"It's not as earth-shattering as you would have thought," Andrews says about serving in the lead position. "I talk a lot more than I ever thought I would in this role. I'm extremely fortunate all the other pieces on the team are the same as they were last year at the tournament, if not in more expanded roles. The support is the same, the expectations are the same, the end goal is the same. This is the foundation Jeff left for us, and we're just picking up and moving forward from there."

Andrews calls Sawgrass "an awesome property with an abundant amount of opportunity." But it also comes with the many challenges such a high-profile course offers.

"No one winter is the same here in northeast Florida," Andrews says. "We had a really good December, but (January and February) have been viciously cold."

The weekend before the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show — as any attendee who played in the GCSAA Championship can attest — air temperatures got down to 22 degrees F, with soil temperatures as low as 32.

"That's not common in Florida. We probably lost four or five weeks of production," Andrews says. "Turf production, our landscape plant materials, were decimated. We've been working hard to repopulate and revegetate those areas. We have a very favorable forecast ahead of us, and we're marching on. Expectations don't change."

One of the key partners of Sawgrass is Quali-Pro, who returns in 2026 as one of the course's top sponsors of the tournament and its volunteers.

"They've been a core piece of our program," Andrews says. "Where we're at in Florida, you turn your back for a minute and we're getting attacked by insects or weeds. We know that Quali-Pro is going to have us covered from insects to any kind of weeds



Andrews says not much is different despite the leadership change, and he wants to build on the foundation Plotts left at the club.

that we're going to be tackling."

A relatively new father, Andrews and his wife enjoy bringing their 2-year-old daughter out to see the course in the weeks leading up to the Players.

"She's kind of been raised out here now," Lucas says.

The same could be said about the former St. Andrews intern and Sawgrass AIT — Lucas has also been raised out there. His one piece of advice to his fellow turf professionals trying to make it? Pace yourself.

"You graduate college at 22, 23, 24, somewhere in that range. You've got a 40-year career ahead of you," he says. "If you're not a superintendent within a couple years of college, it's OK. Build that foundation. Find yourself good mentors. Grow into yourself."

"It's the same as going through a tournament," he continues. "A month out from the tournament, you don't want to be killing yourself, blowing yourself out in the first week. You've got to be sure that you're there at the end of it. I think the same goes for a career. It's just a matter of recognizing there's a lot of opportunity in this industry. The more time you put into building the foundation ... the stronger, the higher you're going to be able to rise than you ever thought." **G**

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Texas Children's Houston Open and The Chevron Championship

By Will Coughlin

Everything is bigger in Texas — the food, the long drives, the rodeos and, especially, the golf.

What could be bigger than hosting one professional golf tournament in the nation's fourth most populous city? Hosting two tournaments within one month of each other. Which is exactly what Memorial Park Golf Course and its superintendent, Parker Henry, have signed up for.

Memorial Park has a long history of hosting the Houston Open on the PGA Tour, hosting for the third straight year in the spring-time after a few years on the fall leg of the tour. What makes this year different is it will be followed by the LPGA's Chevron Championship just three weeks after the men finish up. Henry and his crew have a jam-packed spring schedule on the horizon.



Parker Henry

FAST FACTS

DATES: March 26-29 (Houston Open), April 23-26 (The Chevron Championship)

SUPERINTENDENT: Parker Henry

CLUB: Memorial Park Golf Course

LOCATION: Houston, Texas

TOUR: PGA Tour (Houston Open), LPGA Tour (The Chevron Championship)



Memorial Park GC manages 50,000 annual rounds and two professional tournaments.

PHOTO: PARKER HENRY, MEMORIAL PARK GC

About the superintendent

Henry grew up on a farm in central North Carolina. His turf career started in high school when he was looking for a job and began working at Forest Oaks Country Club in Greensboro, N.C.

Henry went to North Carolina State University to major in business and quickly came to the common realization that he was not meant to be stuck in an office all day — he wanted a job outside working with his hands. Luckily, he didn't have to go far, and he quickly found the great turfgrass management program at NC State.

After graduating, Henry took an assistant superintendent gig at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro and took part in hosting the PGA Wyndham Championship. Henry got the full-blown tournament itch and found himself as the superintendent at Memorial Park in 2022.

A community staple

Having to manage 50,000 annual rounds and two professional tournaments is not for the faint of heart, but the rush is what keeps Henry trucking along. Being a municipal golf course, Memorial does not have the internal support often seen at private clubs that host pro events, but what they do have is an endless amount of community support and pride in seeing their golf course take on the world's best.

For example, Houston Astros owner Jim Crane has significantly boosted local golf, notably by creating the Astros Golf



The bunkers were a large point of the 2019 renovation. Many of them were removed to make the experience better for the average golfer and maintenance easier with the amount of rounds Memorial Park hosts every year.

Foundation to bring the PGA Tour back to the city. Collaborating with the city of Houston, Crane partnered with architect Tom Doak to renovate Memorial Park, elevating it to PGA Tour standards while enhancing accessibility for public golfers by removing select bunkers.

And as a result, Henry, Crane and the Astros Golf Foundation have added a second professional tournament just three weeks following the Houston Open.

Keeping it moving

On Jan. 7, 2026, it was announced that the 2026 Chevron Championship would be moving to Memorial Park.

Henry said the biggest focus in the brief period between the tournaments is morale. He knows his crew can go pedal to the medal when needed, but he wants to ensure that energy and momentum can remain high.

"Finding time to rest and unwind in those three weeks can be crucial for operating at a high level during long hours on tournament weeks," he says.

Henry commended assistant superintendents Kyle Neal and Derrick Ross for their key work in preparing for the tournament, specifically highlighting their efforts in the driving range renovation and infrastructure build-out.

And with the high pressure that comes from hosting two tournaments in the same season, there's sure to be some top-tier management involved to keep the course looking pristine throughout it all. 🧠



The two tournaments will be held less than a month apart.



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Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass

By Chris Lewis

In May 2025, Superintendent Chase Green accepted an opportunity to serve Phoenix, Ariz.'s Whirlwind Golf Club. During his first few months of employment, he worked at the club's Devil's Claw course, one of its two 18-hole championship courses.

Later in the year, he was asked to serve the club's Cattail Course instead. The timing couldn't have been better. A few months beforehand, Cattail had been announced as the Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass' host site. Although he had never served as a superintendent before, he felt he was prepared to help host the PGA Tour event in 2026 due to his array of past experiences.

For starters, he interned at two renowned golf destinations: Muirfield Village Golf Club and TPC Colorado. In addition, he served as an assistant superintendent at Cleveland's Canterbury Golf Club and Hilton Head Island, S.C.'s The Golf Club at Indigo Run.

"At Muirfield Village, I was fortunate to learn from some of the best and gain the knowledge of what it takes to host a professional tournament," Green says.

This knowledge led to his present opportunity, which he simply couldn't pass up.

"What brought me to Whirlwind was an opportunity — an opportunity to be a part of a great club," he adds. "(It's) a club that really cares for the courses in themselves and appreciates the efforts our agronomy team puts into the product day in and day out."



Cattail is a 18-hole, par-72 and 7,334-yard course that's part of Whirlwind Golf Club. Designed by Gary Panks, the course features gradual elevation changes and multi-tiered greens.

Reseeding for March

Since Cattail is a winter overseed golf course, Green prefers to have cooperation from Mother Nature while preparing to host the Ford Championship in late March. Unfortunately, in October 2025, Mother Nature didn't cooperate the way he had hoped.

Two major storms occurred during the middle of his team's overseed process. As a result, some fairways washed away, and each green had to be completely reseeded. A one-week process suddenly became a roughly three-week process, requiring full clean up and reseeded.

"Moments like these are when I'm grateful to have such a good group of guys," Green emphasizes. "They knew what had to be done and buckled down and got the job done with time to spare."

As Green looks ahead to the Ford Championship, he's now focused on ensuring Cattail is prepared in a way that he wants it to be viewed — by PGA Tour members, spectators and sponsors — throughout the tournament.

"We hope to produce a firm and fast golf course. That, in itself, is a challenge," he says. "It requires daily input and a tremendous amount of a balancing act between plant health and playability."

Continued on page 18



Chase Green

FAST FACTS

DATES: March 26-29

SUPERINTENDENT: Chase Green

CLUB: Whirlwind Golf Club, Cattail Course

LOCATION: Phoenix, Ariz.

TOUR: PGA Tour



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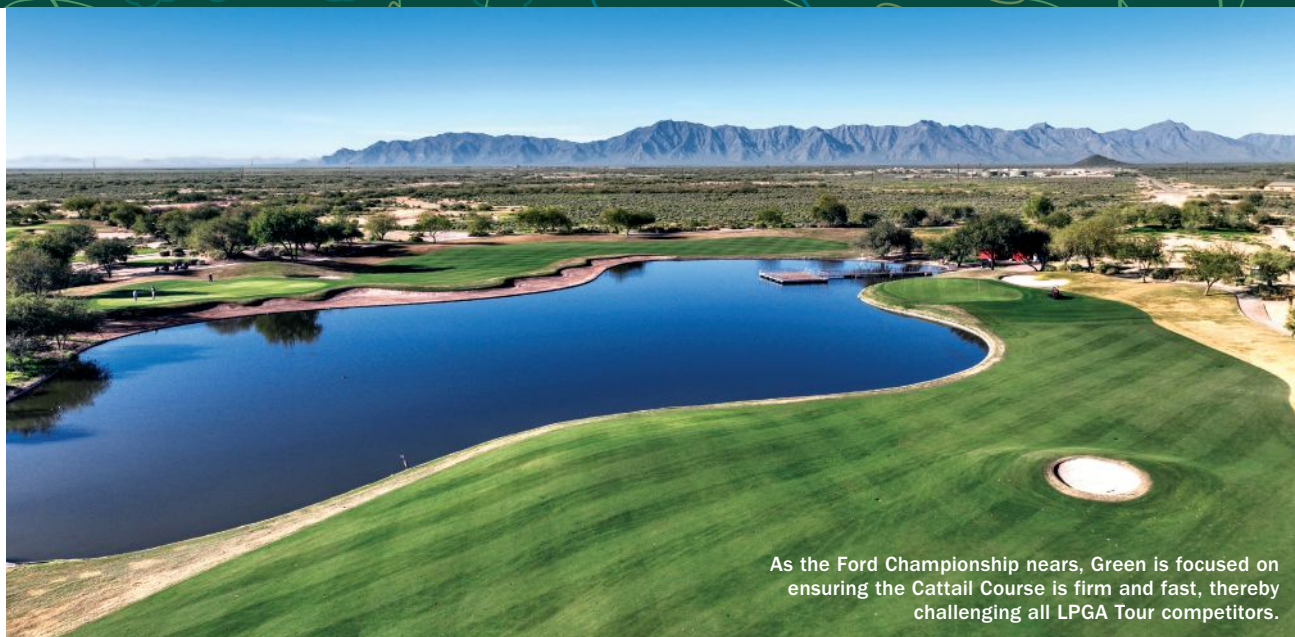
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As the Ford Championship nears, Green is focused on ensuring the Cattail Course is firm and fast, thereby challenging all LPGA Tour competitors.

Continued from page 16

Adamant about data collection

In recent months, Green and his team have become more steadfast in tracking data and logging it every day. By doing so, they've been able to adjust their daily practices — along with their overall agronomy plan — whenever necessary.

As the Ford Championship quickly approaches, they've been tracking categories like clipping yield, firmness levels, greens moisture levels and greens speeds. Furthermore, they've been collecting data about daily irrigation totals and weather.

"I believe that the more information you have at the end of the day, the more likely you're able to make better informed decisions for the course," Green says. "Our ability to continue collecting data will only continue to benefit us and (provide) us something to look back on if issues arise."

Network, network, network

Without question, Green will fully use his past experiences with

other professional golf tournaments as he prepares for the Ford Championship. In particular, he helped host the PGA Tour's Memorial Tournament and volunteered at two PGA Championships held at Southern Hills Country Club.

"The biggest thing I've taken away from those experiences is to continue to learn from previous years or past experiences," he notes.

He also advises superintendents — those who are also preparing to host professional tournaments — to remember that their courses were chosen for a reason. The tours that have chosen the courses not only have faith in the courses themselves, but the superintendents as well.

"This will be my first Ford Championship at Whirlwind, and I've leaned on the guys that were here for the 2025 event," Green says. "(We've talked) about what worked, what didn't work, what should be changed and what was a major emphasis in the past."

The bottom line? Superintendents should use their network as much as possible while seeking advice from them. As they do, it's important to not only acquire their insights, but also remember that every course is different.

"Every superintendent and course does things differently," Green adds. "It's important to find what works for you and your property." 



Recently, Green and his team have been consistently tracking data like firmness levels, greens moisture levels and greens speeds.

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JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro

By Chris Lewis

As Zach Stephens, superintendent of Tarzana, Calif.'s El Caballero Country Club, prepares to host the JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro, two challenges especially stand out to him. First, El Caballero has a non-overseeded bermudagrass golf course. And second, its LPGA Tour tournament is held in April, following a season of weather-related unpredictability.

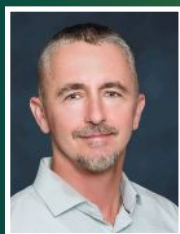
"In a cold, dry winter, we can go fully dormant and do a ton of rounds but have little to no weed and disease pressure," Stephens says.

However, if the winter is wet and mild in Tarzana — a neighborhood of Los Angeles — El Caballero's course may remain green, and its growth and recovery might continue throughout the winter. More than likely, there won't be extensive periods of wear and tear due to cart traffic either. Nonetheless, weed and turf disease pressure will possibly skyrocket because of the mild weather.

"Either way, we are praying for a warm spring and growing conditions that aren't guaranteed," Stephens says.

Consequently, Stephens and his team will address a variety of questions from December to March. Will their decisions be correct as they adapt to the weather? Will their fertilization and chemical applications be implemented at the effective times?

"How effective will those applications be? Have we budgeted for all of that properly?" he asked. "If we're happy with course conditions coming into tournament week, then the execution of it all really won't be that difficult."



Zach Stephens

FAST FACTS

DATES: April 16-19

SUPERINTENDENT: Zach Stephens

CLUB: El Caballero Country Club

LOCATION: Tarzana, Calif.

TOUR: LPGA Tour



Since its founding in 1957, El Caballero Country Club has provided members a beautiful, challenging course designed by renowned architect Robert Trent Jones Sr.

Autonomous mowers, staff communication

Presently, El Caballero is preparing to purchase two Toro autonomous mowers, which will be used on approaches, dew-walks, fairways and tees. They likely won't be available in time for the JM Eagle LA Championship, but based on Stephens' past experiences in the ever-unpredictable field of golf course agronomy, it could be too early to say that with 100-percent confidence.

"If my career as a superintendent has taught me anything, I'd bet that they're delivered with just enough time for us to sort out all of the GPS mapping, the software and the training to implement them in time for tournament week," he says. "I'm very excited about the technology."

As soon as the autonomous mowers arrive, Stephens' team members will be notified. In fact, he strives to share as many updates with them as soon as he can, time after time. Stressing that superintendents "can't overcommunicate with staff," he discusses tournament updates with them quickly — and advises other superintendents to follow suit.

"It's critical that superintendents give their staff enough time to plan for and figure out how they'll adjust their personal lives around the absolutely wild schedule they'll demand of them during tournament week," Stephens says.

PHOTO: KERRY CORCORAN



Rees Jones — Robert Trent Jones Sr.'s son — recently redesigned El Caballero Country Club's course, as he completed his work in 2021.

Setting standards and expectations

Stephens recommends superintendents focus on thinking outside of the box regarding what they do for their employees, especially during tournaments.

“Spending a little extra on local hotel rooms for key guys with long, traffic-prone commutes is money well spent,” he says.

Furthermore, superintendents can set up digital countdown clocks in their employees’ break room weeks — or even months — in advance of whichever tournament their course will be hosting. By doing so, he says employees’ excitement for the tournament will steadily increase as they prepare to help host it.

“Superintendents need everyone on their staff to appreciate how important this is for their club and course and remain hyper focused,” Stephens says. “But they also need to feel confident and enjoy the week.”

To increase the likelihood of their staff members having fun

and maintaining high confidence throughout the tournament, he advises superintendents to set standards and expectations for their team, too. No two courses and tournaments are the same, so communicating what is needed and expected at each one is a crucial step in tournament prep. Those small details are critical, regardless of which standard the superintendent decides to implement.

“Dialing in every detail of staff members’ schedules and planning out how to keep their team well fed and hydrated during each shift are all things superintendents want to be doing months — not days — before the tournament,” Stephens says.

A Jones design (and redesign)

With more than 20 years of experience in the agronomy industry, Stephens has worked for courses across the United States; from Rhode Island, to North Carolina, to Nevada. But when he was offered the opportunity to serve El Caballero as superintendent in August 2023, he was especially intrigued.

Its location, history, pedigree, challenges and golf course “were all attractive” to him. After all, since its founding in 1957, the club has provided members a course designed by renowned architect Robert Trent Jones Sr. Not to mention, the course has been redesigned by another well-respected architect, Rees Jones, who completed his work in 2021.

Stephens believes JM Eagle LA Championship patrons will also be enamored by the club’s location, history and course, along with its friendly members.

“For me, it’s all about surrounding yourself with great people who share common goals,” he says. “From our employees to our members, we have that here at El Caballero.” 



Superintendent Stephens believes patrons will be enamored by El Caballero Country Club's course while watching this year's JM Eagle LA Championship.

PHOTOS: KERRY CORCORAN



Myrtle Beach Classic

By Payton Szymczak

While the Myrtle Beach Classic may be one of dozens of PGA Tour tournaments in 2026, for Steve Hamilton, CGCS and The Dunes Golf and Beach Club's director of agronomy, it's a proud focal point of his year. As he heads into the club's third of its four-year contract to host the event, his approach reflects the expertise of someone who has facilitated this waterfront classic for years.

Hamilton's path to Myrtle Beach started in his hometown of Richmond, Va., before leading to his time as a student at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va. He played a variety of sports as a kid and ended up playing baseball in college while enrolled in the horticulture program. The plan after graduation was to go back home and wholesale plants to housing developments and landscapers.

"I was like, 'Dad, I'm not quite sure that I want to kind of go down that route,'" Hamilton remembers.

Chance and circumstance

At Virginia Tech's campus course, you could play golf "for six bucks, all you can play, all day long," Hamilton says. One day, he bumped into a professor, and they struck up a conversation.



Steve Hamilton

FAST FACTS

DATES: May 7-10

DIRECTOR OF AGRONOMY:
Steve Hamilton

CLUB: Dunes Golf and Beach Club

LOCATION: Myrtle Beach, S.C.

TOUR: PGA Tour

“Usually, when you get awarded a PGA Tour or a large, fairly decent event, you have a few seasons to prepare for it,” Hamilton says. “I think we had 10 or 11 months once they awarded us the tournament.”

Hamilton talked about how he'd worked on a course outside Richmond in high school, mowing greens and weeding creek banks early in the morning.

"I had zero idea that I was ever going to get into this at all," he says.

Hamilton's professor recommended that he come and sit in on his Turf 101 class. And since Hamilton was already familiar with some of the material, one thing led to another, and he graduated from Virginia Tech with two degrees in horticulture and crop and soil environmental sciences.

"I guess it was just kind of dumb luck that I had ran into him," he says.

His first stop post-graduation was Pinehurst, where he worked at The Country Club of North Carolina for superintendent George Thompson, a USGA Green Section Award, GCSAA Distinguished Service Award and Carolinas GCSA Distinguished Service Award winner.

"He's one of the icons back in the day of our region, really the Southeast," Hamilton says.

Taking a superintendent job at The Dunes in 2001, he figured he'd stay for maybe three to five years. But, nearly 25 years later, he looks back and laughs about how he "fooled some

Continued on page 24

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Dunes Golf and Beach Club stretches toward the Atlantic, where Hamilton reminds his crew to pause during tournament week and simply "take it all in."

Continued from page 22

people" into believing he knew what he was doing when they hired him — and how he's been "fooling them ever since."

One of the biggest reasons he took the job was the golf course. It's a historic Robert Trent Jones design built in 1948 that "has kind of stood the test of time," Hamilton says. The club is roughly 230 acres adjacent to the Atlantic and experiences the coastal sunrise every morning. Hamilton also added that there's more movement and roll than anticipated for a seaside course.

"It's a really unique piece of property that has been a treat to be able to work on for the past couple of decades," he says.

Coming together

Hosting a PGA Tour event at The Dunes came together quickly.

"Usually, when you get awarded a PGA Tour or a large, fairly decent event, you have a few seasons to prepare for it," Hamilton says. "I think we had 10 or 11 months once they awarded us the tournament."

Once the club got the word, the team moved fast to prepare. "We had to do some tee work on our championship tee decks," Hamilton says — most of those tees were redone, and zoysia-grass was installed on the surfaces. "But other than that, we didn't do too much else to the golf course, which was great. I think it was a testament to our teams that we were able to host an event that quickly," he says.

Pulling off an event like this is more than just turf work.

Hamilton and the team juggle daily course tasks for club members and all the amenities, along with the extra load of tournament preparation.

"You put an annual event on top of that, and that's kind of a big portion of what I work on throughout the year," he says.

Hamilton says that perspective shapes everything, from how he plans to how he defines success: Similar to a football game, the execution matters most, and his goal for everyone at the club is to win together. He strives to be an even-keel person in times of chaos and when things don't go in a certain direction.

Tournament week, he jokes, is "organized chaos," from managing weather issues to planning where helicopters can safely drop in celebrities, but he does it all with a positive mindset. His advice is simple for students watching and working alongside him: be curious, be patient and be consistent.

"Don't allow a bad situation to dictate the things that you have control over," he says. "You can learn just as much what not to do as you can what to do." 

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Colonial Life Charity Classic

By Nathan Mader

The ever-present staple location of professional golf and elite courses — the Carolinas — once again plans to make a statement with the addition of a new Korn Ferry Tour tournament: the Colonial Life Charity Classic.

Taking place from May 14-17 at The Woodcreek Club near Columbia, S.C., superintendent Steven Smith says he's excited to showcase the course and the surrounding area, especially with some hefty investments being made to propel the club further into that top-tier status.

"I think it's also a beautiful part of the country, and I think there's still a lot of really good Southern hospitality here that I'm thoroughly enjoying," Smith says. "It'll be good for the town to have this event and for companies to see Columbia have this kind of golf tournament and have this kind of business coming to us. I think it's great for the area, and I'm glad to be part of it."

A new chapter

Despite the five-year deal given to the club for the Colonial Life Charity Classic, Smith says he hasn't even spent six months at the club yet, having just started in November when the course was going into its winter semi-dormancy.



Smith says he's working on getting volunteers for the tournament to support his amazing crew, and the community and membership is excited to have the tournament come to town.



Steven Smith

FAST FACTS

DATES: May 14-17

SUPERINTENDENT: Steven Smith

CLUB: The Woodcreek Club

LOCATION: Elgin, S.C.

TOUR: Korn Ferry Tour

In addition, Smith says the club's owner and developer of the Woodcreek Farms neighborhood, Harold Pickrel, has invested heavily into The Woodcreek Club the past few years to help secure its tournament host status.

"He's been a member here from the beginning, bought it and has subsequently invested heavily in the club," Smith says. "They got relatively new greens, a bunch of work has been done on the maintenance facility and golf course, and he's doing a multimillion-dollar renovation to the clubhouse and facilities here in preparation for the tournament. So, I was really excited about that."

Other improvements include bunker renovations (not all of them will be completed for this year's tournament) with EcoBunker products, irrigation auditing, weed control, drainage improvements and detail work to ensure the course is ready for the spring and summertime.

"When I started my job, what I've been doing is just riding the course with the crew, assessing course conditions, helping with irrigation auditing, weed control," Smith says. "I spray greens and then detail work. I like to pick at things like edging irrigation heads around the greens, edging the greens and helping with setup and just different odds and ends around the course."

Smith says that while this will be his first time hosting a pro tournament, but he's not completely new to the task ahead. He's been the assistant for both men's and women's U.S. Open qualifiers before, and he also spent time as the superintendent at Dothan (Ala.) Country Club, host site of the Future Masters.

“I think it's also a beautiful part of the country, and I think there's still a lot of really good Southern hospitality here that I'm thoroughly enjoying.”

The Future Masters tournament, according to Smith, is an event featuring roughly 500 top junior golfers across different age groups, representing more than 20 countries and all 50 states. The tournament has drawn in big names such as Bubba Watson Jr., Stewart Cink and the kids of Tiger Woods and John Daly.

“That was a nine-day event, and we worked really hard on getting that golf course into really great shape for that tournament. And then we'd have 1,200 rounds over nine days, so it was a grueling tournament,” Smith says. “I feel something like that is good preparation for me — knowing how to plan and get ready for an event like this.”

Optimistic opportunity

Despite all the challenges that come with hosting an inaugural tournament and operating out of the transition zone (Smith, like many other superintendents, says he just wishes he could control the weather), Smith remains optimistic about the Colonial Life Charity Classic and what he'll be able to showcase in May.



Smith says Tom Fazio did a wonderful job incorporating the land's topography and flow into the course's layout, and he appreciates the club itself having a humble mom-and-pop feel to it.

One factor contributing to his positive, can-do attitude comes from his run in with Guillain-Barré syndrome around high school, a rare autoimmune disorder where the immune system attacks the peripheral nervous system.

“I was athletic when I was younger — ran cross country — and I went from all of that to paralyzed from basically the chest down in about 48 hours, which is an extremely severe case,” he says. “It took me a really good year to get back to where I could kind of get back to work and school and things like that.”

After being sidelined for the year, he began working at a Houston resort restaurant, one that was facing the resort's golf course. After playing a bit of golf himself, an assistant superintendent recommended going into the turf program at Texas A&M University. Now, he's back up and running, about to host a Korn Ferry tournament on an elite Tom Fazio-designed course.

“I'm very grateful for the opportunities that I've had, and looking back at that, it makes me grateful to be in this position, to be able to get out on the golf course and walk around with my crew and help with bunkers, help with projects,” he says. “I think that kind of experience, going through that when I was younger, has made me more appreciative of the opportunities and what I'm able to do now and where I'm at in my career.” **G**



“I just want to make everyone here at the club — our particular owner, our members and everyone here in town — proud,” Smith says. “I want to show that we can take this club to the next level and show it getting better and better every year.”

PHOTOS: THE WOODCREEK CLUB



UNC Health Championship

By Nathan Mader

For 30-plus years, this Korn Ferry classic has set the standard for professional golf in Raleigh, N.C., both on and off the course.

Now associated with its current sponsor, the UNC Health Championship moved to Raleigh Country Club (RCC) in 2022, expecting to not only carry out its mission of being a top venue, but also an opportunity for philanthropic efforts.

“UNC Health always tries to involve the community, and we have a health care day, military day, a kids and family day and other charities in the community that we support,” says Billy Cole, superintendent of RCC. “There’s also a day where all the people supporting the NHL’s Carolina Hurricanes team can come out and get together to further support the community.”

And on top of the fundraising focus, Cole says the club itself receives a lot of kindness in return, especially regarding the many volunteers and community figures that help with course preparations.

RCC is a private club owned by McConnell Golf, who operate 17 premier courses around the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia (including The Country Club at Wakefield Plantation, the previous host site of the tournament), meaning Cole has plenty of clubs to pull expert volunteers from. Still, the course also uses local organizations like the Carolinas GCSA and emphasizes recruiting young professionals looking to gain experience.

“Volunteers are just very special because they’re taking time away from their family — a whole week to come and be part of



FAST FACTS

DATES: May 28-31

SUPERINTENDENT: Billy Cole

CLUB: Raleigh Country Club

LOCATION: Raleigh, N.C.

TOUR: Korn Ferry Tour

Billy Cole

your team, and that’s very special to me,” he says. “I’m sure they have kids that are in school, and they’ve left wives to come and want to be a part of that.”

And Cole says those volunteers are learning from some of the best; he praises his crew for both their people and course management skills that make tournament prep almost routine.

“Our members expect great conditions each and every day, just like the Tour does. So, when you’re in that mind frame as a crew, then it doesn’t require much additional work,” Cole says. “(Volunteers) can see how well that the crew can do it, and they’re very helpful in showing the volunteers how to do the job that is expected of them when they’re here. My assistants are the ones I rely on a lot when we host a tournament.”

Most of that additional work is detailing and fine tuning the course to make it as close to perfect as possible come its kickoff on May 28. Plus, as always, adjusting for weather is one of the biggest challenges that keeps Cole and the crew on their toes.

If everything goes according to plan and according to the tournament’s history of excellence, then players and attendees should expect to see 18 holes and almost 7,400 yards of challenging bentgrass greens and bermudagrass fairways. Cole says the course was the last one designed by legendary architect Donald Ross, who died in 1948 while the front side was still being built.

“We want golfers to leave this place and say, ‘That was a great test of golf,’” Cole says. “I think it’s important ... the players can look back on it, maybe they didn’t play the best in the world, but they hopefully realized they were at a special place.” **G**



Raleigh Country Club went through a large renovation in 2020 that built more tees and saw the addition of new bentgrass greens, irrigation, drainage systems and more.

PHOTO: RALEIGH COUNTRY CLUB



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2026 PGA Championship

By Seth Jones

It's a club that's steeped in history, dating back to 1896 when it started out as Belmont Golf Association — a few simple golf holes as an add-on for the Belmont Cricket Club. The club moved a few times before landing at its current location in Newtown Square, Pa. Located just outside of Philadelphia on 300 acres, the club hired Donald Ross to build the new Aronimink Golf Club.

That was almost 100 years ago. This year, the club celebrates the 250th anniversary of America's founding — a semi-quincentennial — in nearby Philadelphia by hosting the 2026 PGA Championship.

"This started off as a cricket club — it was a cricket club until 1900. We've had several locations, this golf course opened up in 1928," Superintendent John Gosselin says. "The coolest thing is, the golf course, all the holes are still the same. The greens are still the same — they've never been rebuilt. They're almost 100 years old. We lost corners here and there and then we recaptured them with Gil Hanse. The last two opportunities to do work on the golf course were in the early 2000s with Ron Prichard, and then in 2016 with Gil Hanse and his team. We really turned back the clock."

The course is no stranger to major championship golf, but it's been a minute since there was a men's major at the club. Go back to 1962, when Gary Player won the PGA Championship there, and admission was free (see *Golfdom* Files, page 8.)

The course has also hosted the U.S. Amateur (1977), the

U.S. Junior Amateur (1997), the Senior PGA Championship (2003) the AT&T National (2010, 2011), the BMW Championship (2018) and the Women's PGA Championship (2020.)

All the support we need

As of press time, Gosselin said the course was ahead of schedule on things they needed to complete, but Mother Nature wasn't fully cooperating. For the last several years, the course has only seen a dusting of snow and then it goes away.

"Lo and behold, this year we got a monster snowstorm, and we've had snow on the ground for about three weeks now," Gosselin says. "We push snow out of the way and they're building the suites. We have a nice blanket of snow that we're not worried about yet. But if we get up to the 30-, 40-day mark? Then we're going to start to worry."

Even if Mother Nature isn't fully supporting the PGA Championship yet, the City of Brotherly Love is. Gosselin and his crew will have the support of the greater Philadelphia golf community and beyond, as well as area vendors.

"We'll have about 70 different clubs represented from around the country," he says. "The support has been phenomenal. The different vendors, not just the ones we deal with, want to be a part of it and they've really stepped up to the plate."

Gosselin says many of the partners have opened their wallets so the volunteers can have a great experience. Housing, clothes, shuttles, meals and headlamps are just some of the ways they're supporting the crew and volunteers.

"It really does take the whole golf community, the agronomic community, to pull this off," he says. "We're awfully lucky, we're in a big area, the Philadelphia area, and that helps. There are so many clubs in the area, and we have all the support we need, and then some."

A mentor to many

Gosselin has been at Aronimink for more than 20 years now. He came to the industry because of his love for the game. He wanted to follow his passion, he says. The Penn State grad pre-

Continued on page 32



John Gosselin

FAST FACTS

DATES: May 14-17

SUPERINTENDENT: John Gosselin

CLUB: Aronimink Golf Club

LOCATION: Newtown Square, Pa.

TOUR: PGA of America



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The site of Aronimink GC operated as a cricket club until 1900 before the current golf course opened in 1928, remarkably keeping all the same holes to this day.

Continued from page 30

viously spent time at DuPont CC, Wilmington, Del., where he served as superintendent, then sports and facilities manager for DuPont Hospitality which included DuPont CC and Hotel DuPont, and Rolling Green GC, Springfield, Pa.

"I started working at a golf course in high school, and I'd go off and do other things, and for one reason or another, I kept coming back to the golf course," Gosselin says. "The public course in the community I grew up in, it was just the place where a lot of people hung out. It had the pool, the ice-skating rink, the pizzeria, the disco — that should date me ...

"Barry Laverty, the superintendent there, told me about the Penn State two-year program," Gosselin continues. "From there, I did what I needed to do. Once I got into that, I did an internship at Merion for Richie Valentine, and that started my career."

A past president of the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents (2010-2011), Gosselin was awarded the Eb Steigner award by the association last year for his dedication to the industry and mentorship of future superintendents.

Gosselin thinks back to when he was working at DuPont CC as the sports and facilities manager, a position he calls a "very good

job," and the moment he decided to leave that position to become the superintendent at Aronimink.

"When I worked at DuPont, I was spending a lot of time with the facilities. We had a hotel in downtown Wilmington. Even though we had three golf courses, I just wasn't hardly getting on the golf course," he recalls. "It was a little bit of a crazy move to just jump and leave that job. But looking back, it was the right move. Everything's worked out great."

The mentor to many in the industry advises others not to be fearful of change, because change can be good.

"Don't be afraid to change jobs," Gosselin says. "Some of the biggest salary increases I've gotten is when I've changed jobs. Don't be afraid to take the next challenge, if that's what drives you." **G**

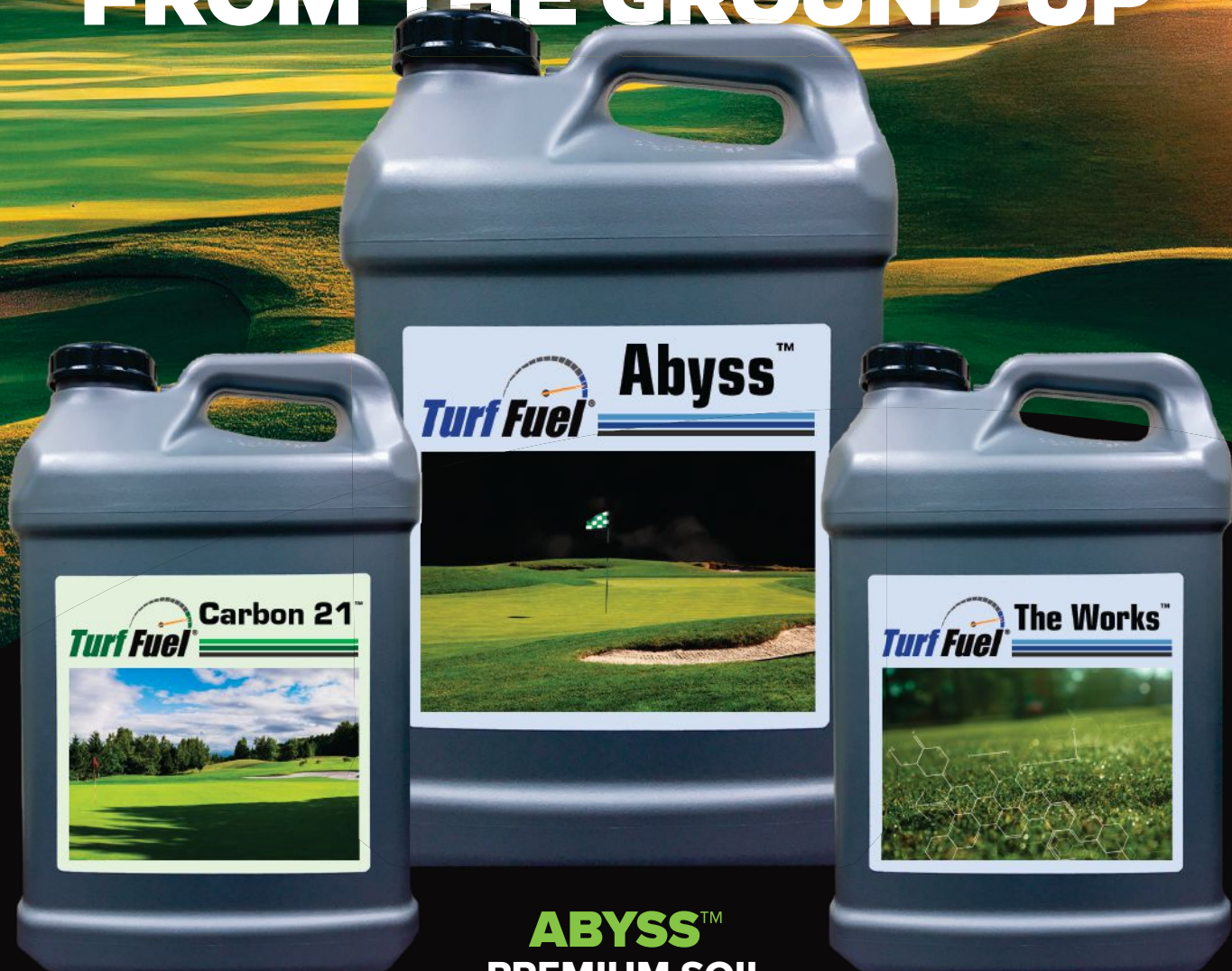
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RBC Canadian Open

By Chris Lewis

Over the years, TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley has hosted a variety of high-level championships. But none have compared to the PGA Tour's RBC Canadian Open, according to David Hunter, superintendent of the Hoot and North Courses.

After all, Canada's national championship is "on another level when it comes to the spotlight being shined" on the North Course. While reflecting on last year's and this year's tournament (the North Course has hosted it since 2025), he has noticed a change in expectations.

In particular, his team's expectations and his own have increased in two main ways: how the North Course will look and how it will play. Above all else, these expectations are driven by the fact that "thousands of on-site spectators and millions of worldwide viewers" will see their work.

"For our team, one of the greatest challenges is not thinking about those expectations too much and instead focusing on the day-to-day operations that help us achieve our goals and exceed them," Hunter says. "With a year under our belts now, we know what that process is like and can head into 2026 with an even clearer plan of what we aim to accomplish and how we want to do it."



According to Hunter, the RBC Canadian Open is more than just a golf tournament, as national pride has fueled TPC Toronto's efforts to prepare the course for future events.



FAST FACTS

DATES: June 11-14

SUPERINTENDENT: David Hunter

CLUB: TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley, North Course

LOCATION: Caledon, Ontario, Canada

TOUR: PGA Tour

A quick turnaround

Due to the North Course's location in Caledon, Ontario, Hunter and his team have a quick turnaround between the time in which snow melts until the RBC Canadian Open begins in early June. Last year, the team experienced an especially fast turnaround when compared to the norm.

For Caledon's standards, spring arrived very late. How late? Well, according to Hunter, there was still snow on the ground less than 50 days before PGA Tour members teed off during the RBC Canadian Open's first round.

"Waiting for the turf to wake up and start growing to the point where we can really get conditions where we want them to be in that short of a timeline is certainly a challenge," Hunter emphasizes.

Nonetheless, the tournament was a huge success; the North Course was pristine, and thousands of spectators witnessed Ryan Fox defeat Sam Burns in a four-hole playoff.

"Knowing what we accomplished last year gives us plenty of confidence about what we can do for 2026," he adds.

Installing Spiio soil sensors

Aside from his team members' hard work, training and commitment, the North Course's success — as a first-time PGA Tour host in 2025 — may have been due to his team's installation of Spiio soil sensors on some of the North Course's greens. Through these

Continued on page 39

PHOTO: TPC TORONTO AT OSPREY VALLEY

KORN FERRY TOUR

Date	Tournament	Location	Superintendent	Years of Experience	College
March 26-29	Club Car Championship	The Landings Golf & Athletic Club, Savannah, Ga.	Tyson Helsel	22	Kansas State University
April 2-5	LECOM Suncoast Classic	Lakewood National Golf Club (Commander Course) Lakewood Ranch, Fla.	Joel Ehrhart	13	Edison State College
May 14-17	Colonial Life Charity Classic	The Woodcreek Club, Elgin, S.C.	Steven Smith	15	Texas A&M University
May 21-24	Visit Knoxville Open	Holston Hills Country Club, Knoxville, Tenn.	Ryan Blair, CGCS	25	University of Tennessee
May 28-31	UNC Health Championship	Raleigh (N.C.) Country Club	Billy Cole	26	North Carolina State University
June 4-7	BMW Charity Pro-Am	Thornblade Club, Greer, S.C.	Jordan Strange	3	Horry-Georgetown Tech
June 11-14	OccuNet Classic presented by Amarillo National Bank	Tascosa Golf Club (La Paloma Course), Amarillo, Texas	Bart Howard	12	Kansas State University
June 25-28	Memorial Health Championship	Panther Creek Country Club, Springfield, Ill.	Brandon Razo, CGCS	7	Penn State University
July 9-12	The Blue Championship	TPC Colorado, Berthoud, Colo.	Kevin Malloy, CGCS	11	University of Arizona
July 23-26	Evans Scholars Invitational	The Glen Club, Glenview, Ill.	Adam Wiles	6	Michigan State University
July 30-Aug. 2	Utah Championship	Ogden (Utah) Golf & Country Club	Greg Gilmore	34	Weber State University
Aug. 6-9	Pinnacle Bank Championship	The Club at Indian Creek, Omaha, Neb.	Jim Nedrow	17	University of Nebraska
Aug. 13-16	Albertsons Boise Open	Hillcrest Country Club, Boise, Idaho	Matt Gourlay, CGCS, MG	20	Kansas State University
Aug. 20-23	AdventHealth Championship	Blue Hills Country Club, Kansas City, Mo.	Logan Spurlock	23	Kansas State University
Sept. 10-13	Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation	Vanderbilt Legends Club, Franklin, Tenn.	Charlie Schauwecker	7	University of Missouri
Sept. 17-20	Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship	Ohio State University Golf Club (Scarlet Course), Columbus, Ohio	Dennis Bowsheer, CGCS	39	Ohio State University
Oct. 1-4	Compliance Solutions Championship	The Patriot Golf Club, Owasso, Okla.	Jack Dunn	18	Tulsa Community College
Oct. 8-11	Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by Virginia's Richmond Region	The Federal Club, Glen Allen, Va.	Ryan Holbrook	8	Virginia Tech

Golfdom

Every American and Canadian tournament, with information regarding the course's superintendent, experience and education | Compiled by **THE GOLFDOM STAFF**

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Date	Tournament	Location	Superintendent	Years of Experience	College
Jan. 15-18	Sony Open	Waialae Country Club, Honolulu	Dave Nakama, CGCS	23	University of Hawaii
Jan. 22-25	The American Express	Pete Dye Stadium Course, La Quinta, Calif.	Denver Hart	8	University of Guelph
Jan. 29-Feb. 1	Farmers Insurance Open	Torrey Pines GC (South Course), San Diego, Calif.	Devin Cullen	5	Penn State University
Jan. 31-Feb. 2	GCSSA National Championship	Disney's Magnolia Golf Course, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.	Alex Lambert	17	Walter State Community College
Feb. 5-8	WM Phoenix Open	TPC Scottsdale (Atrix) (Stadium Course)	Blandon Reese	14	Texas Tech University
Feb. 12-15	AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am	Pebble Beach (Calif.) Golf Links	Pete Bachman, CGCS	10	Penn State University
Feb. 19-22	The Genesis Invitational	The Riviera Country Club, Pacific Palisades, Calif.	Marshall Dick	6	California Polytechnic State University
Feb. 26-March 1	Cognizant Classic in the Palm Beaches	PGA National Resort (The Champions), Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.	Keith Einwag, CGCS	40	Lake City CC
March 5-8	Arnold Palmer Invitational	Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill Club & Lodge, Orlando, Fla.	Chris Flynn, CGCS	24	SUNY Cobleskill
March 12-15	The Players Championship	TPC Sawgrass (The Players Stadium Course), Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.	Lucas Andrews	1	University of Guelph
March 19-22	Valspar Championship	Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead Course), Palm Harbor, Fla.	Ryan Stewart	19	
March 26-29	Texas Children's Houston Open	Memorial Park Golf Course, Houston	Parke Henry	4	North Carolina State University
April 2-5	Valero Texas Open	TPC San Antonio (Texas) (Oaks Course)	Roby Robertson, CGCS	35	Kansas State University
April 9-12	The Masters	Augusta (Ga.) National Golf Club	Brent Seyer	18	Purdue University
April 16-19	RBC Heritage	Harbour Town Golf Links, Hilton Head, S.C.	Jonathan Wright	30	University of Kentucky
April 23-26	Zurich Classic of New Orleans	TPC Louisiana, Avondale, La.	Tyler McCool	16	Mississippi State University
April 30-May 3	Cadillac Championship	Trump National Doral (Blue Monster), Miami, Fla.	Tim Williams		
May 7-10	Truist Championship	Quail Hollow Club Charlotte, N.C.	Keith Wood	24	Rutgers University
May 14-17	PGA Championship	Dunes Golf and Beach Club, Myrtle Beach, S.C.	Steve Hamilton, CGCS	30	Virginia Tech University
May 21-24	The CJ Cup Bryon Nelson	Aronimink Golf Club, Newton Square, Pa.	John Gosselin	36	Penn State University
May 28-31	Charles Schwab Challenge	TPC Craig Ranch, McKinney, Texas	Steve Gross, CGCS	36	Ohio State University
June 4-7	The Memorial Tournament	Colonial Country Club, Fort Worth, Texas	Rich McIntosh	11	Ohio State University
June 11-14	RBC Canadian Open	Muirfield Village Golf Club, Dublin, Ohio	Chad Mark	10	Ohio State University
June 18-21	U.S. Open	TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley (North Course)	David Hunter	22	University of Guelph
June 25-28	Travelers Championship	Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, Southampton, N.Y.	Jon Jennings, CGCS	38	University of Massachusetts Amherst
July 2-5	John Deere Classic	TPC River Highlands, Cromwell, Conn.	Jason Cannata	15	UConn
July 9-12	ISCO Championship	TPC Deere Run, Silvis, Ill.	Jonathan Graham	18	University of Nebraska
July 23-26	3M Open	Hurstbourne Country Club, Louisville, Ky.	Walter Pritchett, CGCS	23	Aquinas College
July 30-Aug. 2	Rocket Classic	TPC Twin Cities Blaine, Minn.	Joseph Rolstad	17	North Dakota State University
Aug. 6-9	Wyndham Championship	Detroit (Mich.) Golf Club	Sam Moynihan	18	West Virginia University
Aug. 13-16	FedEx St. Jude Championship	Sedgefield Country Club, Greensboro, N.C.	Chad Cromer	25	Appalachian State University
Aug. 20-23	BMW Championship	TPC Southwind, Memphis, Tenn.	Nick Bisanz	23	Ogeechee Technical College
Aug. 27-30	Tour Championship	Bellerive Country Club St. Louis, Mo.	Nick White, CGCS	8	University of Arkansas
Sept. 17-20	Biltmore Championship Asheville	East Lake Golf Club, Atlanta, Ga.	Charles Aubry	8	Michigan State University
Sept. 24-27	Presidents Cup	The Cliffs at Walnut Cove, Asheville, N.C.	Steve Shand	14	Penn State University
Oct. 1-4	Bank of Utah Championship	Medinah CC (No. 3), Medinah, Ill.	Nick Bell	2	Rutgers University
Nov. 12-15	Good Good Championship	Black Desert Resort Golf Course, Wins, Utah	Ken Yates	25	Iowa State University
Nov. 19-22	The RSM Classic	Omni Barton Creek Resort & Spa (Fazio Canyons Course), Austin, Texas	David Madar	18	Rutgers University
Dec. 11-13	The Grant Thornton Invitational	Sea Island Golf Club (Seaside Course and Plantation Course), St. Simons Island, Ga.	Dylan Stafford	19	Western Kentucky University
		Tiburron Golf Club, Naples, Fla.	Grayson Grainger	19	Horry-Georgetown Technical College



CHAMPIONS

Date	Tournament	Location	Superintendent	Years of Experience	College
Jan. 22-24	Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai	Hualalai GC, Ka'upulehu-Kona, Hawaii	Dan Husek/Mike Clifford	17/31	Southern Illinois University/Rutgers University
Feb. 13-15	Chubb Classic	Tiburón Golf Club, Naples, Fla. (Black Course)	Grayson Grainger	19	Horry-Georgetown Technical College
March 6-8	James Hardie Pro-Football Hall of Fame Invitational	The Old Course at Broken Sound, Boca Raton, Fla.	Kyle Asbury	8	
March 20-22	Cologuard Classic	La Paloma Country Club, Tucson, Ariz.	Daniel Mayfield	8	University of Arizona
March 27-29	Hoag Classic	Newport Beach (Calif.) Country Club	Scott Dey	15	California Polytechnic State University
April 16-19	Senior PGA Championship	The Concession Golf Club, Bradenton, Fla.	Jason Rouk	20	Oklahoma State
April 24-26	Mitsubishi Electric Classic	TPC Sugarloaf, Duluth, Ga.	Kyle Worthy	16	Clemson University
April 30-May 3	Regions Tradition	Greystone Golf & Country Club, Birmingham, Ala.	Jason Miller	26	University of Tennessee
May 8-10	Inspire Invitational	The Woodlands (Texas) Country Club	Chris Hartman	26	Sam Houston State University
June 5-7	American Family Insurance Championship	TPC Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.	Eric Leonard, CGCS	18	Kishwaukee College
June 12-14	Principal Charity Classic	Wakonda Club, Des Moines, Iowa	Dane Wilson	21	Western Kentucky University
June 26-28	DICK'S Sporting Goods Open	En-Jolie Golf Club, Endicott, N.Y.	Sullivan Murphy	12	SUNY Delhi
July 2-5	U.S. Senior Open Championship	Scioto Country Club, Columbus, Ohio	Bob Becker, CGCS	27	Ohio State University
July 9-12	Kaulig Companies Championship	Firestone Country Club, Akron, Ohio	Larry Napora	42	Penn State University
Aug. 14-16	Boeing Classic	The Club at Snoqualmie (Wash.) Ridge	Ryan Gordon	21	Oregon State University
Aug. 21-23	Rogers Charity Classic	Canyon Meadows Golf & Country Club, Calgary, Alberta, Canada	Chris Nelson	26	Fairview College
Aug. 28-30	The Ally Challenge	Warwick Hills Golf & Country Club, Grand Blanc, Mich.	Dylan MacMaster	8	Michigan State University
Sept. 11-13	Sanford International	Minnehaha Country Club, Sioux Falls, S.D.	David Swift	35	Penn State University
Sept. 18-20	PURE Insurance Championship	Pebble Beach (Calif.) Golf Links	Pete Bachman, CGCS	10	Penn State University
Oct. 2-4	Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic	Lehigh Country Club, Allentown, Pa.	John Chassard/James Lanza	46/23	Penn State University/Rutgers University
Oct. 9-11	Constellation Fuyuk & Friends	Ocean Course at Hammock Beach, Palm Coast, Fla.	Michael Meehan	44	State University of New York - System
Oct. 16-18	SAS Championship	Prestonwood Country Club, Cary, N.C.	Bradley Pope	12	Wayne Community College
Oct. 23-25	Stifel Charity Classic	Norwood Hills Country Club, St. Louis, Mo.	Michael Nul/James Bucher	44/17	Iowa State University/Southeast Missouri State University
Oct. 30-Nov. 1	Simmons Bank Championship	Pleasant Valley Country Club, Little Rock, Ark.	Don Armbust	15	UMass
Nov. 12-15	Charles Schwab Cup Championship	Phoenix (Ariz.) Country Club	Craig Werline	33	Ohio State University
Nov. 30-Dec. 6	Slechers World Champions Cup	Feather Sound Country Club, Clearwater, Fla.	Michael Strube	18	University of Florida
Dec. 14-20	PNC Championship	Ritz-Carlton Golf Club, Orlando, Fla.	Joshua Kelley	20	Illinois State University

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Jan. 29-Feb. 2	Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions	Lake Nona Golf & Country Club, Orlando, Fla.	Nick Dolimpo	6	Delaware Valley University
March 19-22	FortNet Founders Cup	Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club, Menlo Park, Calif.	Chad Twaddle		
March 26-29	Ford Championship	Whirlwind Golf Club, Cattail Course, Phoenix, Ariz.	Matt Bachman/Chase Green	12/12	University of Arizona/Penn State University
April 2-5	Aramco Championship	Shadow Creek Golf Course, Las Vegas, Nev.	Scott Delpiere	11	Michigan State University
April 16-19	JM Eagle LA Championship	El Caballero Country Club, Los Angeles	Zachary Stephens	16	UMass
April 23-26	The Chevron Championship	Memorial Park Golf Course, Houston, Texas	Parker Henry	4	North Carolina State University
May 7-10	Mizuno Americas Open	Mountain Ridge Country Club, West Caldwell, N.J.	Cliff Moore	23	Western Michigan University
May 14-17	Kroger Queen City Championship presented by P&G	Maletewah Country Club, Cincinnati, Ohio	Rolin Baker	10	State Technical college of Missouri
May 29-31	ShopRite LPGA Classic powered by Wakefern	Seaview Hotel (Bay Course), Galloway, N.J.	William Leedom	3	Penn State University
June 4-7	U.S. Women's Open presented by Ally	Riviera Country Club, Pacific Palisades, Calif.	Marshall Dick	6	California Polytechnic State University
June 11-14	Dow Championship	Midland (Mich.) Country Club	Kevin Welb, CGCS	36	Michigan State University
June 18-21	Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give	Byrhefield Country Club, Belmont, Mich.	Collin Romanick	28	Penn State University
June 25-28	KPMG Women's PGA Championship	Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska, Minn.	Chris Titebaugh	19	University of Minnesota - Twin Cities
Aug. 13-16	The Standard Portland Classic	Columbia Edgewater Country Club, Portland, Ore.	Jim Myers, CGCS	34	Ohio State University
Aug. 20-23	CPKC Women's Open	Royal Mayfair Golf Club, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	Wade Peckham	30	
Aug. 27-30	FW Championship	TPC Boston, Norton, Mass.	Kyle Elliott	5	SUNY Cobleskill
Sept. 25-27	Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G	Pinnacle Country Club, Rogers, Ark.	Michael Takach	21	Rutgers University
Oct. 1-4	LOTTE Championship	Hoakalei Country Club, Ewa Beach, Oahu, Hawaii	Tim Brubaker	25	UMass
Nov. 12-15	The Annika	Pelican Golf Club, Belleair, Fla.	Chris Corr	5	Rutgers University
Nov. 19-22	CME Group Tour Championship	Tiburron Golf Club (Gold Course), Naples, Fla.	Grayson Grainger	19	Horry-Georgetown Technical College



Editor's note: This list was compiled by the Golfdom staff using GCSAA Tournament Fact Sheets ([GCSAA.org/Media/Tournament-Fact-Sheets](https://www.gcsaa.org/Media/Tournament-Fact-Sheets)) as well as phone calls and emails to attempt to make the list as complete as possible. In some cases, we could not confirm information by press time. For corrections and updates for next year's list, email [Golfdom Editor-in-Chief Seth Jones, sjones@northcoastmedia.net](mailto:Golfdom-Editor-in-Chief Seth Jones, sjones@northcoastmedia.net).

Note regarding job titles: Many of the people listed under the header of Superintendent go by various job titles, including Director of Agronomy, Director of Grounds and Director of Golf Course Maintenance, among others.

Date	Location	Superintendent	Years of Experience	College
May 7-10	Trump National Golf Club, Washington, D.C., Potomac Falls, Va.	Brad Enle	17	Penn State University
June 25-28	Bayou Oaks at City Park, New Orleans	Keith Johnson	15	Gateway College
Aug. 6-9	Trump National Golf Club, Bedminster, N.J.	Jeffrey Reggio	7	Penn State University
Aug. 20-23	The Club at Chatham Hills, Westfield, Ind.	Jeff VerCautren	29	Illinois State University
Aug. 28-30	The Cardinal at Saint John's, Plymouth, Mich.	Kevin Peck	4	Michigan State University



TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley's North Course was renovated in 2023 under the guidance of architect Ian Andrew. As a result, the course was transformed into a venue that's capable of hosting a PGA Tour event.

Continued from page 34

sensors, the team acquired “remote, real-time measurements” on various aspects of turf health, including moisture, salinity and temperature.

In turn, Hunter and his team were able to visualize any potential areas of concern in real time, enabling them to react to issues and solve them quickly. Each morning, his team had “a general snapshot of how the greens were holding moisture,” which was critical throughout the tournament.

“Having the ability to monitor moisture levels at any time helped us prepare for tournament play,” Hunter says. “(It) gave us the best chance of creating optimal playing conditions during tournament week, as well as throughout the golf season.”

More than a golf tournament

In addition to the soil sensor installation, the North Course was renovated extensively in 2023 under course architect Ian Andrew's guidance. To ensure the course was “a championship venue that could test the world's best players,” according to Hunter, FlightLine Golf (particularly its owner, Spencer Adams) was also hired as a contractor.

“Waiting for the turf to wake up and start growing to the point where we can really get conditions where we want them to be in that short of a timeline is certainly a challenge.”

Through Andrew's and FlightLine Golf's efforts, new tees were constructed, fairways were narrowed and new shortgrass areas — around many green sites — were created. Each bunker was renovated and reconstructed too via the Better Billy Bunker system.

Before the 2025 RBC Canadian Open began, roughly 70 staff members and 30 volunteers were hired to meet every aspect of the North Course's agronomy needs. Although

their backgrounds varied considerably (from superintendents and assistants to suppliers and turfgrass management students), one commonality was observed: their high energy.

“There was so much energy within the team every morning and afternoon during the tournament,” Hunter says. “This was key in the overall success of the event.”

Throughout the tournament week, Hunter noticed a lot of pride as well — pride for the North Course, the event and Canada itself.

“This event is so much more than a golf tournament,” Hunter stressed. “It's our national open, and so many people take a lot of pride in putting our best foot forward for the world to see.”

U.S. Adaptive Open

By Tracey Walker

Woodmont Country Club (South Course) in Rockville, Md., is the official site of the 2026 U.S. Adaptive Open Championship, July 6-8, 2026.

Woodmont is a private, multi-course facility that offers one of the most diverse golf experiences in the Mid-Atlantic. Woodmont's diverse offerings are overseen by a leadership deeply committed to the sport, in this case, the leadership of Ryan Severidt, CGCS, director of golf course and grounds operations.

For many golf course superintendents, the path into the industry begins not only with experience and education, but with a love for the game and being on the course. For Severidt, the journey was rooted in his lifelong passion for golf.

"I have always loved golf and started playing at a young age," Severidt says. "I played all through high school and one year of college golf but had never worked on a golf course."

Entering college as a marketing major, Severidt knew he wanted to work in sports but had no structured plan for turning that passion into a career. Eventually, he took a summer job on the grounds crew at his local course, and the hands-on nature of course maintenance immediately interested him.

"I absolutely loved it from the start," he says. "I had always worked jobs that required working with my hands and loved being outside."

With just one semester to go, that experience prompted him to finish his marketing degree in 2004 while also adding a second degree in turf management in 2005. He then launched his career with an internship at Kinloch Golf Club in Richmond, Va.

Severidt spent some time as an assistant superintendent at Kinloch, but in 2010, he accepted his first superintendent role at The Olde Farm Golf Club in Bristol, Va., where he spent eight years developing his leadership and agronomic philosophy. He joined Woodmont CC in May 2018, and this upcoming season marks his ninth year at the club.

Severidt says the Woodmont property features two distinctly different 18-hole golf courses, the North and South Course, along with a nine-hole short course called The Loop.

The North Course has always been considered the "Championship" golf course; a narrow, traditional parkland-style design comprising all cool-season grasses and known for demanding precision and mental toughness. The course has hosted nearly 40 U.S. Open Men's Final Qualifiers, numerous U.S. Women's Open Final Qualifiers and, most notably, the 2020 U.S. Women's Amateur. It remains one of the most challenging final qualifying sites in the country.

Severidt says the South Course, once considered the club's "second course," underwent a major phased renovation completed in 2023 — including a fairway expansion and rebuilding several greens — transforming it into a second championship-level golf course.

Inspired by Australia's Sand Belt courses, the South Course features more than 60 acres of fairway-height turf, with Meyer zoysiagrass fairways and Tahoma bermudagrass approaches and tees. Greens flow seamlessly into fairways, while fine fescue natural areas bleed organically into short-cut turf. The teeing grounds are informal and expansive, with multiple options benched into the landscape rather than rigid, defined boxes.

"The layout and Australia Sand Belt vibe gives the course a uniqueness like nothing else in the area," Severidt says. "It's become the favorite among our membership."

"We have had enormous support from local and national vendors. There are too many to thank," he continues. "One that has made an extra special commitment, though, is Finch Turf and John Deere. Finch is our John Deere dealer. They have stepped up to support our USGA Championships in a major way."



Ryan Severidt

FAST FACTS

DATES: July 6-8

SUPERINTENDENT: Ryan Severidt, CGCS

CLUB: Woodmont Country Club

LOCATION: Rockville, Md.

TOUR: USGA Championship



The sixth hole at Woodmont Country Club (South Course) is a short, dog leg right, uphill par 4.

Staying accessible

“The South Course layout lends itself to accessibility,” Severidt says. “The greens are very large, offering many hole locations that are more central in the green (with the average green area being more than 7,000 square feet) and large fairways with short-cut turf that continues from green to tee to fairway.”

In fact, a player could walk 18 holes without stepping on turf that is more than half an inch, and bunker design plays a huge part in the course’s upgrades.

“This offers multiple teeing locations at varied distances. We

can stretch over 7,000 yards and had no problem finding tee locations for the Adaptive Open at close to 4,000 yards and everywhere in between,” Severidt says. “The bunkers are very level as you enter, so seated players can enter many of our bunkers with no issues. We added sand ramps to many of the bunkers to make entry even easier. The club itself is very accessible. Our facility is very expansive, so we have numerous options to provide ideal club accommodations for the various player needs.”

A fun and efficient approach

Severidt says his approach to decision making is centered on passion and end-user experience.

“I am first and foremost a lover of golf,” he says. “So, I think my favorite tool is mindset and approach. We look at the golf course from a golfer’s perspective and conditions ... creating a fun and competitive experience and layout.”

From a physical tool/technology standpoint, Woodmont has also embraced autonomous mowing technology, and Severidt says they will be mowing all of the rough on both golf courses with autonomous mowers — more than 80 acres total.

But what it all boils down to is passion, according to Severidt, who is excited to host the championship and maintain the pristine conditions at Woodmont.

“I love coming to work every day for multiple reasons and genuinely get excited to jump into each day,” he says. 



Severidt says the South Course’s eighth hole is a medium-length par 3 and features a small, well-guarded green that demands a precise iron shot.

PHOTOS: LARRY LAMBRECHT

BMW Championship

By Scott Hollister

If things had played out differently, Nick White might be spending his days in a white lab coat, cleaning teeth and filling cavities.

As it turned out, though, dentistry's loss has become golf course maintenance's gain.

"I actually went to school to be a dentist, predoctoral biology," says White, now the director of agronomy at Bellerive Country Club in St. Louis, which will play host to this year's BMW Championship, the second leg of the PGA Tour's FedEx Cup playoffs, Aug. 20-23.

"But after my second year at (the University of) Arkansas, I realized that that wasn't going to be for me, wasn't going to be the life that I wanted."

So, with a little help from a brother-in-law already in the industry, White pivoted to turfgrass management and soon found a home in the business. He dove into an internship at Oakmont (Pa.) Country Club, under the guidance of John Zimmers; spent time at The Alotian Club near Little Rock, Ark.; then moved to Kansas City to work at The National Golf Club under longtime friend and mentor, Spencer Roberts.

It was Roberts who encouraged White to explore an assistant superintendent opening at Bellerive, shortly before the club was to play host to the 2018 PGA Championship.

"I eventually decided, 'You know what? I'll take a chance and throw my name in the hat,'" White says. "It was an opportunity to get a major championship under my belt, work in another market, and learn from a really good superintendent (Carlos Arraya). I thought, 'I can do anything for a year.'"



Nick White

FAST FACTS

DATES: Aug. 20-23

DIRECTOR OF AGRONOMY:
Nick White

CLUB: Bellerive Country Club

LOCATION: St. Louis

TOUR: PGA Tour



White's team upgraded the course for tournaments while improving the daily member experience.

That year has now turned into nearly a decade. When Arraya was promoted to the club's general manager position in 2021, White moved into the top role on the club's maintenance team. He's since overseen a greens renovation project, a tree removal effort and is now preparing his team for the club's biggest event since that PGA.

"I just fell in love with the place. I love the membership here, the community and especially the team we have in place," White says. "It's a wonderful place to work, and Carlos has been a terrific mentor to me, which is why I haven't had any interest in leaving. We've accomplished a lot since 2017, and we're excited about what this year has to offer."

Running it back ... sort of

From a strategic standpoint, the layout at Bellerive that players will tackle at this year's BMW Championship is largely the same as the one that the world's best played during the 2018 PGA. But behind the scenes, White and his team undertook several big projects between then and now designed not only to prepare the course for professional tournaments but also to give the club's members the best golf experience possible on a day-to-day basis.

Continued on page 44

PHOTO: STEVEN STORY



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Continued from page 42

Chief among those projects was a full-scale greens renovation in 2019 that saw the putting surfaces rebuilt from the ground up and regrassed with T1 bentgrass.

"These are all brand-new greens, a full rebuild," White explains. "They are new all the way from the bottom up, with new drainage, new mix, everything. The greens were scanned and put back exactly the way they were ... so while the guts are all new, they still have the same feel."

And while selecting a bentgrass putting surface might seem like a roll of the dice for a facility in the heart of the transition zone, White says T1's overall stress resistance, rapid recovery and aggressive growth characteristics won him over, along with a host of other turf managers in the region.

"It's gotten really popular over the years in St. Louis, and it's performed really well for us," White says. "Considering the weather that we can get in the summers here, we studied a lot of options but decided T1 made the most sense from both a performance and a turf health standpoint."

Other work that has taken place at Bellerive in the run-up to this year's BMW includes an extensive tree removal project that has opened views and vistas throughout the property, while also benefiting agronomic conditions with improved air movement and sunlight. And most recently, the course was lengthened slightly with alterations to some back tees and landing areas in an effort to accommodate the playing abilities of today's top pros.

Weather wise

White's earlier mention of the notoriously fickle weather that is common in St. Louis is worth revisiting.

While most remember the 2018 PGA at Bellerive for Brooks Koepka's two-shot victory over Tiger Woods or for it being the last PGA to be scheduled for the month of August before the event's move to May (the 2020 PGA was also contested in August, but was moved there because of the COVID-19 pandemic), many superintendents will remember the event for the stormy weather that threw curve balls at the club's maintenance team throughout the week. Most notably, second-round play was eventually suspended because of strong thunderstorms.

That kind of weather certainly isn't uncommon in St. Louis during the summer. So, with the BMW bringing professional golf back to Bellerive in late August, White and his team will be keeping an eye on the sky in advance of the event and are planning operations accordingly.

"St. Louis in August is no easy task. It doesn't take a genius to see that. It's humid here, we sit right between two major rivers, and there's a time frame from about mid-July to late August



In preparation for this year's BMW Championship, Bellerive underwent extensive tree removal, opening up views and vistas across the property.

where any kind of storm can happen at any time," White says.

"So, our take on the weather is to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. All we can do is make sure we're ready for that kind of weather in the event we get it and do everything we can to produce firm, fast conditions both before and after any kind of weather event."

As a part of those preparations for whatever Mother Nature has in store for the week of the BMW, White will have a collection of 60 volunteers at his disposal to support the Bellerive's full-time staff. The team will also have the backing of a host of industry partners who have stepped up to provide assistance for the tournament, including John Deere (Bellerive's primary equipment partner), Heritage Landscape Supply, Harrell's and PBI-Gordon.

"It's going to be a first-class volunteer experience, a really fun championship to be a part of," White says. "And honestly, some of the work we've done on the golf course is going to really enhance that experience. And as an added benefit, removing trees and opening up areas will make it much easier for our crews to get around the golf course and do what they need to do."

"That work also made it easier to walk the property and created new places to watch the golf, so it will be a great experience for both fans and our crews." 

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Sanford International

By **Scott Hollister**

From the outside looking in, David Swift was living the dream, at least as far as golf course superintendents are concerned.

As a young turf manager, Swift landed a position at Whistling Straits a year after the famed Wisconsin complex opened for business. Almost immediately, he was asked to serve as the grow-in superintendent for the facility's Irish Course. Once that layout was up and running, Swift moved back to the championship Straits Course and served as the host superintendent for the PGA Championship in 2004 and the U.S. Senior Open in 2007.

"We had a bunch of great people working there at that time, had a ton of fun and two really successful tournaments," Swift says. "Life was good."

But as Swift is quick to tell you, just because you're living one dream doesn't mean that something better might be right around the corner. Newly married with a newborn son, Swift caught wind of an opening at Minnehaha Country Club in Sioux Falls, S.D., about 90 minutes from where he was born and raised in western Minnesota.

"I had a baby at home and a wife that I loved very much, but what I saw on the horizon (at Whistling Straits) was three more



Minnehaha CC cherishes its history, taking pride in its prominent role within the region's golf story.



David Swift

FAST FACTS

DATES: Sept. 11-13

SUPERINTENDENT: David Swift

CLUB: Minnehaha Country Club

LOCATION: Sioux Falls, S.D.

TOUR: PGA Tour Champions

major championships coming down the road," Swift says. "So, I had to ask myself, 'Do I really want to keep doing this tournament thing?' Those were really great, really fun, but they were also all-consuming. And I wasn't sure an opportunity to go back to a place I knew really well would ever come around again."

So, Swift exchanged one dream for another and took the leap to Minnehaha, becoming just the fifth superintendent in the club's 100-year-plus history. "I feel very fortunate. It's been a great move," he says. "It's a great club, and we have lots of friends and family close by."

And in the end, the move didn't mean the end of Swift's professional tournament journey after all. Six years into his tenure in Sioux Falls, the club landed the PGA Tour Champions' Sanford International. The 2026 event will be contested Sept. 11-13.

"We didn't necessarily see that coming, but the club thought it would be a good opportunity to support the community, and the title sponsor (Sanford Health) is right down the street," Swift says. "We thought it would be a short-term thing, but lo and behold, here we are heading into year nine."

Slow and steady

If Swift being on a very short list of club superintendents didn't already give it away, Minnehaha CC is a club that embraces and values its history. It's proud of its golf course, which was designed by William Langford and Theodore Moreau and opened in 1922, and its prominent place in the region's golf story.

But don't confuse that with being stuck in the past. Minnehaha

Continued on page 48

PHOTO: DAVID SWIFT

A man and a woman are looking at a laptop screen in a warehouse setting. The man is wearing a green polo shirt and a dark jacket, and the woman is wearing a grey sweater and glasses. They are both smiling and looking at the laptop. The background shows a large industrial building with a white door.

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In the Spotlight

Continued from page 46

CC has never been shy about making improvements to the course as new trends and technology take hold in the game. Before Swift came on board, five different architects were brought in to make course changes, and since he's joined the club, that momentum has only continued.

That includes a massive tree removal project that began shortly after Swift started. "When I walked in the door ... this was a 100-year-old club with something like 1,500 trees. And I suppose 60 or 70 percent of those were old, stately trees — a lot of ash, a lot of silver maples. They were native trees, but they were just not very good trees," Swift says.

"So, we underwent a massive tree removal program. And as we did that, we began to open up areas of the golf course. We started to realize that there was a lot of original Langford and Moreau out there that had never been touched, despite the club working with those architects over the years. We realized there were a lot of improvements we could make."

Over the span of eight years, the club worked with golf course architect Ron Forse to make changes and improvements as time and budgets allowed. Most recently, architects Brian Schneider and Blake Conant have worked with the club to create a long-term master plan for Minnehaha that takes both regular member play and the club's now annual hosting of the Sanford International into account.

"We're hoping to line something up to start maybe this fall, but once we start work, we're probably not going to stop for a while," Swift says. "We want to start fixing what needs to be fixed on this golf course and take it to a level we've never really been before."

Tournament tested

Swift is quick to admit that the scope of what he and his team at Minnehaha CC do to prepare for the PGA Tour Champions event pales in comparison to what went into preparing for a PGA Championship and U.S. Senior Open at Whistling Straits.

But the to-do list is still a long one in advance of the Sanford International, and checking all those boxes requires significant teamwork among the club's full-time staff and the volunteers who lend a helping hand. At Minnehaha, Swift is quick to praise the efforts of Ryan Lehmann, his senior assistant superintendent, who started at the club a year before Swift joined the team.

"He's the best guy I've been lucky enough to work with in my career, and there are a lot of great people I've been able to work with," Swift says. "He's like a brother and a best friend, and he's a great leader for our team."

Swift also noted the important role played by Tony Hayes, second assistant superintendent; Jared Gill, horticulturist; and Issac Johnson, assistant superintendent, in getting the course ready for the tournament.

"When I first got here in 2018, I was the only one who had ever



Minnehaha CC has never been shy about improving the course to match new trends and technology.

really been around a tournament before,” Swift says. “Now here we are, eight years later, and we have all these guys who are now seasoned veterans in hosting a Champions event. It’s a really good team, and I’m proud of how they come together for this event.”

The local turfgrass community has also risen to the occasion to support Swift and his team during the Sanford International, dedicating their time and sweat equity to make the event a suc-

cess. Swift notes the efforts of Kelly Eilers, the superintendent at nearby Brandon Golf Course, in organizing groups of local turfgrass professionals to help with the tournament.

“We call them ‘Kelly’s Heroes,’” Swift says. “He always has a group of volunteers ready to go and to lend a hand during the tournament.”

Minnehaha CC also gets a boost from a host of future golf course superintendents enrolled in the sports turf management program at Southeast Technical College in Sioux Falls. One of the program’s instructors, Cory Borgen, has been organizing groups of students to assist with tournament prep since the first year of the tournament in 2018.

“From day one, (Corey) saw an opportunity and really rescued us,” Swift says. “He brought in 14 guys the very first year, and he’s had about the same number of students or more volunteering ever since. They come out and help every morning, and a lot of them come back to do the same in the evening.

“It’s really been wonderful the way the local turfgrass community has come together to help with the Sanford. We couldn’t do it without them, and it’s getting to be more fun every year. It’s just a really good thing we have going here in Sioux Falls.” **©**

PHOTO: DAVID SWIFT



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Biltmore Championship Asheville

By Nathan Mader

As a new PGA Tour event, the Biltmore Championship in Asheville, N.C., aims to be a huge inaugural success. Part of the FedExCup Fall, the championship sees PGA Tour golf return to this city for the first time in more than 80 years and will be hosted at The Cliffs at Walnut Cove.

But for superintendent Steve Shand, he hopes the tournament brings a little extra to the city he now calls home.

“Unfortunately, so many businesses (and) restaurants closed — haven’t reopened — and some still haven’t been able to climb out of it. And a lot of businesses literally just got washed down the river, which is heartbreaking,” Shand says, referring to the lasting effects and damage caused by Hurricane Helene when it hit the city in late 2024. “We want to just kind of keep saying, ‘Hey, Asheville is an awesome area rebuilding stronger, and the community is here.’”

Shand says that his team and their homes and families were thankfully OK, but for a city that relies heavily on tourism, the effects of the hurricane can still be felt despite continuous relief efforts. That’s where he hopes the championship comes in, and he says his goal is to keep Asheville on the map.

“I know that this will be a positive event that, again, just highlights a special part of the country,” he says.



Shand says he was fortunate enough to intern at Augusta National in the early 2000s, which helped him better grasp top-tier maintenance practices and tournament execution.



Steve Shand

FAST FACTS

DATES: Sept. 17-20

**DIRECTOR OF GOLF COURSE
OPERATIONS:** Steve Shand

CLUB: The Cliffs at Walnut Cove

LOCATION: Arden, N.C.

TOUR: PGA

Meet the course

The course itself is also special; it’s a Jack Nicklaus design that celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2025. Shand says they’re a private course that plays to about 7,200 yards and is all cool-season turf with its bentgrass/*Poa* greens, bentgrass tees and fairways and bluegrass roughs.

The Cliffs at Walnut Cove is also one of seven properties owned by The Cliffs, but it’s the only one in North Carolina. To further try and stand out and make sure course maintenance is done right, Shand says he always tries to indulge in a very hands-on management approach.

“I like to see things with my own eyes. I enjoy riding the course in the morning, being part of the setup and just doing what I can to motivate the team,” he says. “My main goal is to support my team and help them succeed.”

The Biltmore Championship isn’t until later this year — Sept. 17-20 to be exact — meaning Shand is still focusing heavily on maintaining top-tier conditions for the club’s members and staying visible to them. In the coming months, though, the team will work toward a new goal of tournament preparations.

“We’re trying to identify and address any drainage challenges now, especially in the landing zones, as well as finishing a complete irrigation renovation in March which will allow us to more precisely irrigate our different turfgrasses to improve plant health and playing conditions, as well as be better stewards of the environment by using less water,” Shand says. “Once the growing season starts, it’s going to be full on.”

PHOTO: BILTMORE



The PGA Tour is returning to Asheville, N.C., for the first time since 1942, when the city hosted the Land of the Sky Open.

“I like to see things with my own eyes. I enjoy riding the course in the morning, being part of the setup and just doing what I can to motivate the team.”

Balancing conditions for members and for PGA preparation will be a challenge, especially for a new tournament, but Shand and the team have a plan once it gets closer to August and September.

“Once we are a month out, it’s really about dialing in the timings with growth regulators, plant protectants and fertility,” he says. “That sets the foundation so we can really tighten things up the week before.”

And Septembers in Asheville can be tough with the transition zone climate. Warm weather, humidity and thunderstorms can cause turf problems and be unpredictable, meaning Shand plans on having a more conservative summer in terms of maintenance to really keep the grass healthy. He says higher

mowing heights on fairways and greens and being more generous with fertility are possibilities he’s looking into.

A group effort

Even if this is a new experience for the course, Shand says he’s confident the team will be able to tackle it head on. He attributes a lot of the expected success to the tight-knit community of superintendents, volunteers and maintenance pros throughout the Carolinas.

“With a new event of this scale, everything is new, from championship directors to vendors. Everyone will be working together with the same goal: delivering an amazing event,” he says. “It’s an opportunity to connect and collaborate with new people throughout the industry.”

Shand specifically wanted to praise his assistants, Brenden Leis and Thatcher Schlup, plus Jay Fojtik, the club’s landscape manager, for their hard work on the course.

“It’s an honor to have the tour recognize Walnut Cove as a place they want to be,” Shand says. “My wife and I feel incredibly fortunate to live here. One of the event’s main goals is to highlight how special Asheville and western North Carolina are, and to do that at a place I get to call my office is pretty great.” **G**

PURE Insurance Championship

By Chris Lewis

On Aug. 16, 2026, Pebble Beach Golf Links will be hosting its 75th annual Concours d'Elegance. As one of the world's most prestigious car shows, it will attract thousands of automobile fans, along with hundreds of iconic cars.

During the show, each car, collector and attendant will gather on Pebble Beach's world-renowned 18th fairway to see who will win the "Best of Show" award. Considered a highly respected award in the automotive industry, the "Best of Show" enables Pebble Beach Golf Links to showcase its stunning fairways and greens to yet another audience — as some attendants aren't avid golf fans.

Due to the event's high attendance, Pebble Beach Golf Links' turf has an unusual amount of strain throughout the day-long celebration. And, as a further challenge to Director of Agronomy and Superintendent Peter Bachman and his team, the turf must be recovered very quickly.

After all, the course will open for business right after the Concours d'Elegance concludes. A resort business, Pebble Beach Golf Links attracts roughly 60,000 to 65,000 golfers every year. Therefore, Bachman must ensure the course is ready for play on a nearly 365-day basis. Not to mention, it will host the PGA Tour Cham-



Pebble Beach Golf Links' greens are consistently maintained, ensuring guests' experiences are steadily first-rate.



Peter Bachman

FAST FACTS

DATES: Sept. 18-20
DIRECTOR OF AGRONOMY AND SUPERINTENDENT: Peter Bachman
CLUB: Pebble Beach Golf Links
LOCATION: Pebble Beach, Calif.
TOUR: PGA Tour Champions

pions' PURE Insurance Championship in mid-September, too.

"We work diligently before the Concours d'Elegance to ensure the turf is in prime condition to withstand this strain," Bachman says. "And then (we'll work) quickly on the back end to manage any areas that need additional attention. We'll also keep the fairways in pristine condition for play the next day."

Optimizing playing conditions

A key component of Bachman's success is his past experience at Pebble Beach Golf Links. An employee of the Pebble Beach Company since 2008, his career with the organization began as an intern with the agronomy crew. From there, he worked his way up through the company, while serving in various capacities until 2024, when he was named the director of agronomy and superintendent of Pebble Beach Golf Links.

Furthermore, Bachman and his team have rapidly adopted autonomous technologies. For example, they've been using autonomous mowers. Since Pebble Beach welcomes so many golfers each day, Bachman and his team have a narrow window of time to mow fairways and greens. Typically, they'll mow them in the morning before any guest tees off.

To mow more efficiently and have more time to focus on other tasks in the morning instead, Bachman is striving to eventually utilize his team's autonomous mowers at night. For further assistance — regarding their overall agronomy operations — Bachman and his team are also consistently using two USGA technologies.



As PGA Tour Champions competitors prepare to compete at Pebble Beach for the 22nd straight year this fall, they'll likely notice some recent renovations.

"We're avid users of the GS3 'smart ball' and moisture meters, both of which feed data into the Deacon app," Bachman says. "(They) analyze our programs and optimize playing conditions in the most efficient way possible."

Preparing for future tournaments

As PGA Tour Champions members prepare to compete at Pebble Beach Golf Links for the 22nd straight year this fall, they'll be playing the 10th hole as it was initially envisioned.

"During the summer of 2025, the 10th green was restored to its original size and design intent," Bachman says.

In turn, it will be similar to the green that Jack Neville and

Douglas Grant first designed in 1919. Some PGA Tour Champions competitors will likely recognize this original green layout, as it featured in U.S. Opens in the 1980s and 1990s.

Aside from the 10th green restoration, some tee boxes were recently moved. For instance, the sixth hole's championship tee was moved back 21 yards. Additionally, two of the 15th hole's back tees were realigned.

Along with hosting the PURE Insurance Championship — and the PGA Tour's AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am every February — the entire Pebble Beach team is focused on each of its 60,000-plus guests throughout these types of projects. To ensure guests' experiences are constantly top notch, the greens always remain a focal point for Bachman.

With this in mind, the greens' conditions are consistently maintained, leading to once-in-a-lifetime experiences for every guest. Through Bachman and his team's efforts, guests personally witness the awe-inspiring beauty they may have only previously seen on television. From its immaculate, 100-percent annual bluegrass greens to its gorgeous Pacific Ocean backdrop, Pebble Beach Golf Links continues to stun guests every day.

Likewise, it will consistently host the game's best players, year after year. While reflecting on previous professional tournaments and preparing for the future, Bachman can't stress the importance of teams enough — his own, as well as others.

"Lean on the resources of the host organization," Bachman says. "We have terrific relationships with the agronomic leads at both the PGA Tour and the USGA."

He adds, "It is truly a team effort putting on a great professional tournament together." 



Since Pebble Beach Golf Links is a resort business, up to 65,000 golfers may play at the course annually.

PHOTOS: PEBBLE BEACH COMPANY

Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic

By Chris Lewis

This year, Allentown, Pa.'s historic Lehigh Country Club will be hosting the PGA Tour Champions' Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic for the very first time this autumn.

Although Grounds Superintendent Jim Lanza believes there will be challenges, he is fully confident as he and his staff prepare throughout the coming months. He attributes his confidence to sheer mindset — both with himself and with his team members, too.

"The culture we have created at Lehigh sets us up to handle whatever is thrown our way," Lanza stresses. "When the morale is high and (the) staff is having fun, we smile when a challenge is presented, knowing we'll be better on the other side of the task."



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Installing irrigation

To ensure Lanza and his team are more likely to "be better on the other side of the task," Lehigh CC is installing a Toro two-wire, full, high-density polyethylene (HDPE) irrigation system this year. According to Lanza, the installation will occur in two phases. First, the system's mainlines will be installed throughout the spring, as the club's contractor, George E. Ley Co., will finish the first phase by Memorial Day.

"This gives our membership the golf course for the summer golf season," Lanza says. "At the same time, (it) gives us some time to heal from the mainline install, prior to the Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic in the fall."

Once the Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic has been completed in early October, George E. Ley Co. will return to the club and begin the irrigation system installation's second phase — the

PHOTO: LEHIGH COUNTRY CLUB

installation of laterals.

Aside from this installation, some tee boxes will be renovated as well. One tee box in particular stands out: the par-3 seventh hole.

“(It has) over 100 feet of vertical drop from tee to green,” Lanza says. “So, working on top of the very steep bank, setting in tees, (will be) quite the project.”

Preparing for a bright future

Currently, Lanza is preparing to host the Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic for at least the next five years. Most likely, it will be held in the fall each year, which is perfect timing, according to Director of Grounds John Chassard.

“The course should play awesome, and the vistas will be spectacular,” Chassard says. “I truly believe it will produce memories to come not only for us and our volunteers, but also for the players

and all involved.”

Designed by golf course architect William Flynn, Lehigh CC will provide PGA Tour Champions competitors a simultaneously challenging and fair test. Renowned for its ideal conditions, natural beauty and spaciousness, the course will also be memorable, according to Chassard.



John Chassard



Jim Lanza

FAST FACTS

DATES: Oct. 2-4

DIRECTOR OF GROUNDS: John Chassard

GROUNDS SUPERINTENDENT: Jim Lanza

CLUB: Lehigh Country Club

LOCATION: Allentown, Pa.

TOUR: PGA Tour Champions

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“Our goal is to make the Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic a memorable event,” he says. “We’re planning on having a lot of fun.”

Chassard is also optimistic about Lehigh CC’s central location between three superintendent associations: the Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents and the Pocono Chapter, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

“We should have plenty of help from a great resource of professionals representing their own courses while they volunteer here,” Chassard says. “It will be an exciting and fun week.”

Along with these superintendent associations, Lehigh CC has received assistance from the Golf Association of Philadelphia as well. The relationship has been so positive, in fact, that Lanza advises other golf clubs to remain as engaged with their local golf associations in the same way Lehigh Country Club has.

“Events like the Jefferson Lehigh Valley Classic are most likely to be held at clubs that have good backing from their local associations,” Lanza says.

A succession plan

Since 1987, Chassard has served Lehigh CC as director of grounds. However, he is preparing to retire sometime in the near future. With this in mind, Lanza was hired in April 2025.

“We hired Jim as superintendent to work with me until my retirement and then assume my role,” Chassard says. “It’s been one of the best professional experiences I could have anticipated. We have worked well together, excelling (in) both of our expertise.”

The duo of Chassard and Lanza will be especially vital as the club looks ahead to welcoming a full field of PGA Tour Champions members. By blending their skill sets, they’ll be able to offer the best course layout possible this fall.

“Our story is unique in our industry,” Lanza says. “It speaks to the type of club Lehigh CC is.”

“I’ve spent many years pouring my life into the club, and I felt an obligation to leave (it) in good hands,” Chassard adds. “I feel confident that Jim is the man to see it through when I decide to retire.” 



As Director of Grounds John Chassard prepares to retire in the near future, Grounds Superintendent Jim Lanza was hired in April 2025.



Lehigh CC will install a Toro two-wire, full, high-density polyethylene (HDPE) irrigation system this year.

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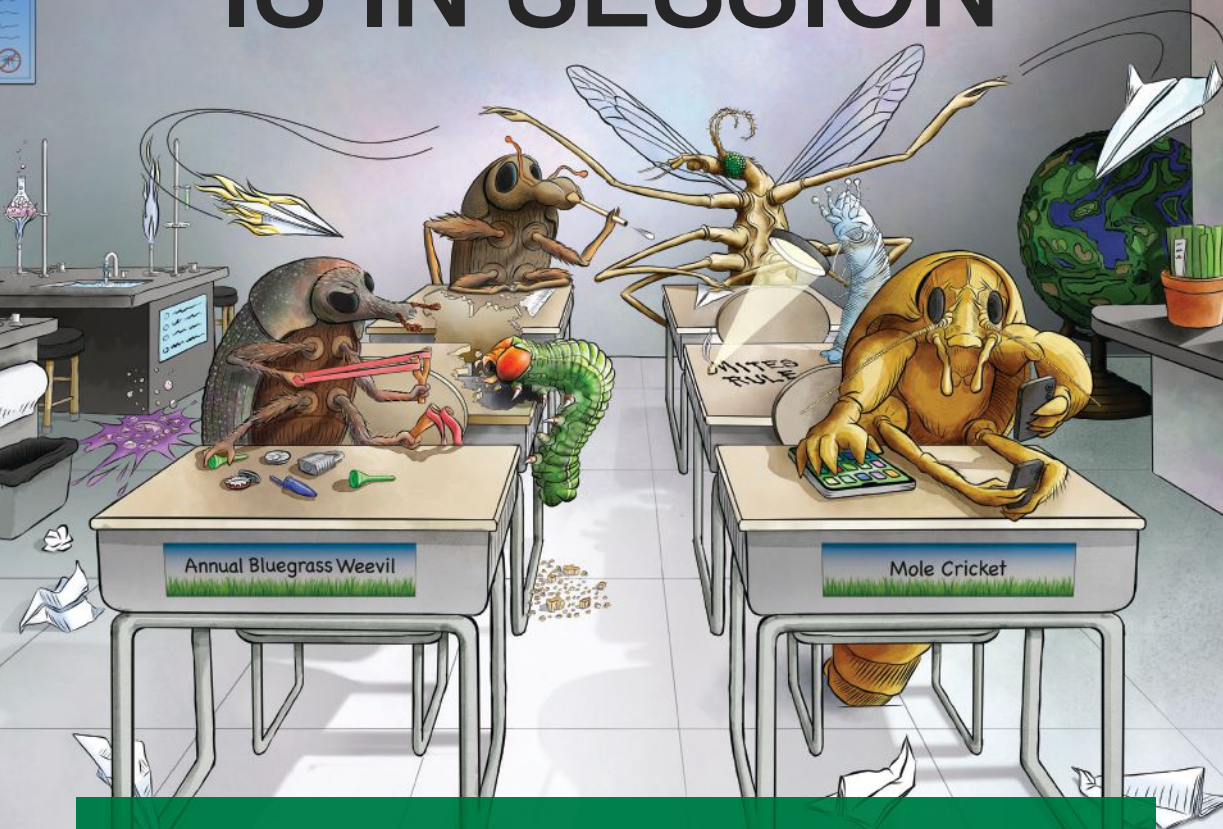
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