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King and Prince renovates Hampton Club

Scenic and splendid layout greatly enhanced

By Cindy Acree

The King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year. The famed resort, one of only a handful in Georgia to be recognized as a member of the Historic Hotels of America, is located on St. Simons Island, the state's largest barrier island.

As an anniversary gift to itself, and certainly to the golfers who have discovered it, the King and Prince recently completed a fabulous renovation of its King and Prince Golf Course at The Hampton Club. Just as the King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort is acclaimed for preserving its history, it preserved the natural beauty and design integrity in its \$3.6 million update.

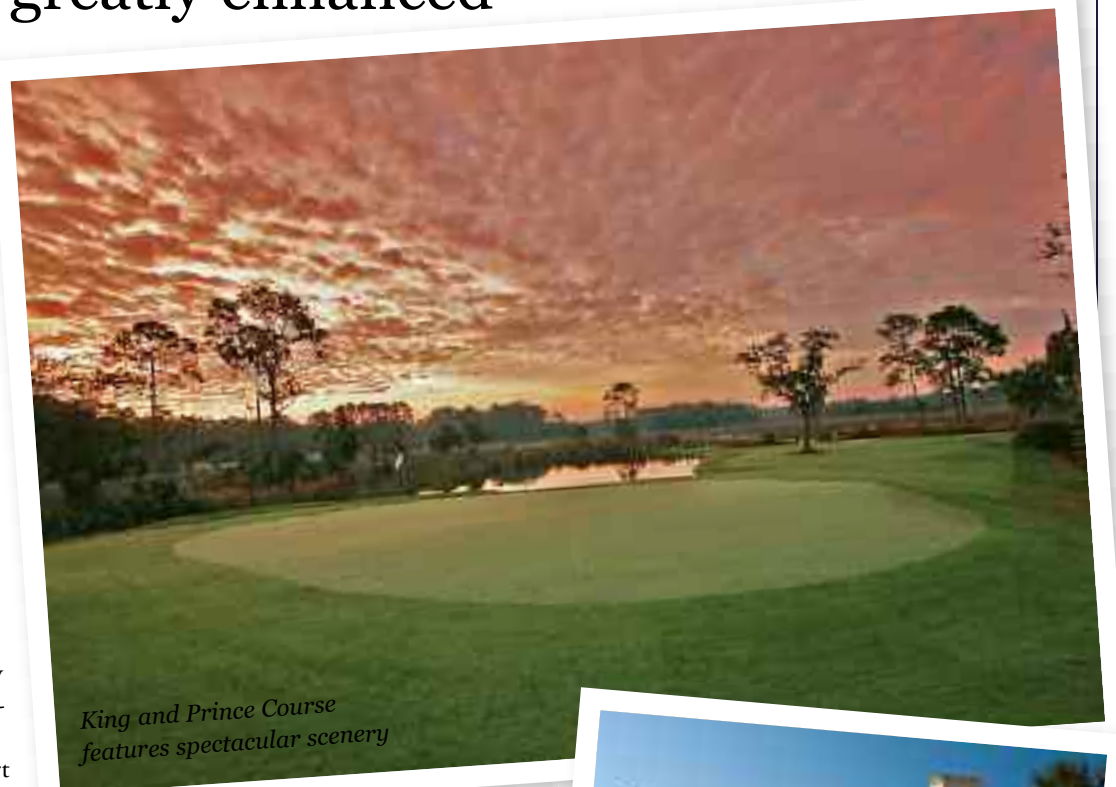
The King and Prince Golf Course is an adolescent compared to its historic namesake. The 20-year-old course is a gem, located on the northern tip of the island, but was ready for an update, largely due to vast improvements to turf care technology and grasses. Legendary architect Joe Lee designed the course, taking a beautiful piece of land with magnificent views and character, and then masterfully and naturally weaving a golf course into the landscape.

When the decision was made to renovate the course, one of the biggest

requirements was maintaining the masterpiece that Lee crafted. The club's ownership and management team has been in place since the course opened in 1989, so they were in a great position to know what preserving Lee's original design should look like. They hired Billy Fuller Golf Design and together they accomplished their goal.

Despite measuring only 6,462 yards from the back tees, the course was not lengthened, but a fifth set of tees were added. The new forward tees are 4,929 yards, approximately 300 yards shorter than the previous forward set of tees.

Don't let the relatively short yardage from the tips fool you. The back set, now known as Old Ironsides, has a slope rating of 140, and the traditional men's tees have a slope of 137, the same as the back tees before the renovation. The men's tees (formerly the whites, now the blues) have added just over 200 yards, and now measure 6,209 on the scorecard. The newest set of tees will help shorter hitters reach fairways or clear doglegs on tee shots.



King and Prince Course features spectacular scenery

A number of factors contribute to the disparity of length and difficulty. From day to day, the ocean breezes can change some shots by up to three club lengths, such as on the first island hole, the par-3 12th. Often, it is not such a good thing to

[See King and Prince, page 6]



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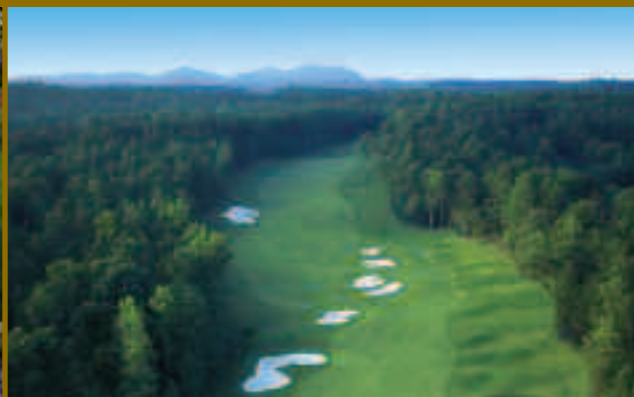
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When it comes to kids and golf, “if it is fun, they will play”

By John Godwin
Master Professional

As a full time youth golf professional, kids have taught me a very important lesson throughout the years. If it is fun, they will play! Once it becomes work, they are out of here. As adults, we know about work. Sometimes you go when you do not want to, you stay late to finish and work overtime when it is necessary. Sometimes your job interferes with your golf fun!

Kids are always looking to have fun; it is an important part of being a kid. Serious stuff is for Mom and Dad. If you have a child interested in golf, then your best efforts should be to provide them access to the game and make it as much fun as possible. That sounds simple enough, but it may take some effort on your part. The initial investment is the trial stage. During this trial, kids are deciding if they like golf. At some point during this trial, which may last for years, they will move on to the next step, commitment. Sometimes parents and coaches, with all good intent, mix these two up.

The trial process is where all the groundwork is laid and fundamental foundations are built. Golf instructors, I like to call them coaches, have a tremendous opportunity to help them through the trial. Their job is to control the challenge while improving the skill of young players. If the challenge is too great, then confidence can be shaken. By carefully adding challenges at just the right time, the trial process becomes enjoyable and confidence grows. Kids learn best in groups in the beginning, it is more interesting and not intimidating.

I have learned that not all kids like golf; others cannot get enough of it and most take time to develop their interest. Those who are hooked on golf have a passion for



it. They make the choice to play and practice, not Dad, Mom or their coach. The best kids that I have coached all share some common traits. They are not afraid of failure and do not give up when things are going wrong. They are good learners, meaning that they are organized, both on and off the course, and they set their sights on obtaining a goal. Once in the game, they make the most of the opportunities presented to them.

Kids learn differently than adults. They do not want all the small details; they want just enough to get started. They need the fundamentals of grip, stance, ball position and aim. If they learn them early on and review them for as long as they play, then they have a good base on which to build and maintain a sound swing. All they really want in the beginning is to play on the course and this should be balanced with learning times on the range.

Equipment is a vital component as well. Young players need properly fitted clubs during the trial process. If the club is too heavy, too long or too stiff then they are not going to play very well which puts a serious damper on the fun. The game is difficult enough for young players; the club itself should not be part of the challenge.

Competition is necessary for kids throughout the learning process. The focus should not be on results but the process of playing the game. Kids love to compete and that energy can be channeled in a positive way. Competition gets a bad rap sometimes, especially by people who have never played on an elite level. Bobby Jones said he never learned anything by winning; it was all the losses that made him become a better player and person. Competition is a wonderful exercise for the whole person, especially a young one. It is not what happens to you on the course, it is how you react to it that determines how fast you learn and grow as a player.

So, if you have a young one wanting to play or already into it, remember it can be a complex yet fun experience. They are always trying to have fun and enjoy being with others like them, learning, growing and playing the greatest game of all. 🏌️

John Godwin has been a PGA member for 33 years and his career is focused entirely on junior golf. He is the 2004 PGA National Junior Leader and served on the PGA of America Junior Golf Committee. Godwin is currently Chairman of the Georgia Section Junior Golf Committee and is the Director of Player Development for U.S. Kids Golf. He is on the board of the First Tee of Columbus at Godwin Creek Golf Course, which was named for his father. You can reach Godwin at: jgodwin@uskidsgolf.com.

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King and Prince

[Continued from cover]

have honors on this hole, which barely exceeds 100 yards in length.

Golfers can easily get distracted by the awesome expanse of beauty of the start of these marsh-view island holes. Soon after, golfers are holding their breath as they wonder whether the tee shot that was just fired dead at the flagstick is even going to land on the green. A short shot will likely land in a greenside bunker or in the small pond, while over-clubbing will probably send your shot over the new greens complex into the marsh.

Keys to scoring are club selection and shot making at the King and Prince Course. Strategically placed bunkers, trees, doglegs and the wind make shot-making essential.

Because the renovation was largely done to replace obsolete construction, such as the irrigation system and greens complexes, many of the changes made to the golf course took place underground, and did not alter the natural beauty or original course design. The entire irrigation system was replaced and the upgraded technology in this new system has greatly enhanced the playability of the course, allowing superintendent Chuck Moore to better regulate watering and drainage.

The new irrigation system was critical to appreciating the full renovation. Not only were all greens complexes re-built with state of the art technology, but a number of new and varied grasses were added to the course.

The new greens are phenomenal and the same as those recently installed at Atlanta's famed East Lake Golf Club. While it seems desirable to use whatever grass East Lake used, Fuller had to be sure that St. Simons' warmer climate and salty coastal conditions could sustain these same turf grasses.

The re-shaped greens are a Mini-Verde ultra-dwarf Bermuda grass. Green collars were added and planted with TifSport Bermuda, with tees, fairways, and rough sodded with Celebration Bermuda.

All the bunkers were changed and are now etched with Empire Zoysia. Without a doubt, the new bunkering is the most noticeable and notable change to the golf course. Bunkers were reshaped and in most



14th hole at King and Prince Course

cases made deeper and more severe, making for tougher shots to the green. These grasses, particularly the Zoysia outlined bunkers, have really enhanced the character of The King and Prince Course.

The driving range was also transformed into a true practice facility. The driving range and putting green have the same grasses as found on the course. Also added were a chipping green, fairway bunkers and shorter target greens. The practice facility was even mapped for GPS, with the King and Prince Golf Course now providing a great place to work on your game.

The course starts out with two straight-away par 4s of average length, although the second hole can play pretty long at just 375 yards because it faces the incoming breezes off the marsh. Both holes have fairway bunkers on the right with plenty of sand surrounding the greens.

After No. 2, golfers drive through Hampton Plantation on the way to the three marsh-side holes on the front side. The three holes also wrap around a good-sized brackish pond. The lengthy par-5 third hole faces directly into the marsh, and there is often a pretty strong breeze, coming off the marsh. The fifth hole, also a par 5, parallels the third in the opposite direction, with both playing fairly straight-away from the back tees and a bit right-to-left from the middle and forward tees. where drives require some shaping to avoid trees or bunkers.

At 193 yards, the fourth hole is the longest of the par 3s and requires an accurate tee shot to avoid a bunker that runs the length of the deep green on the left, with a grass bunker and water guarding the putting surface on the right.

Holes 6, 7 and 8 return to the interior of the course, with no water in play on any of the trio. The 8th is one of the longer par 4s

on the course, and forms a strong closing duo on the front nine with the 9th, the signature hole on the King & Prince Course. The 9th wraps around Butler Lake, with tee shots from the two back sets of tees having to carry water with their drives and approach shots.

The 9th is one of three holes that have added a significant amount of length from the men's tees, and now plays from the same tee as those playing from the tips. The lake hugs the left side of the fairway and must be carried on the approach shot, with anything short or left getting wet. Shorter hitters may have to play around the water to the right, while those playing from the senior or forward tees may have to lay up off the tee to avoid carrying the fairway, which turns sharply to the left for the second shot. Those who bail out a bit long and right on their approach shots may face a challenging bunker shot or chip across the green with the lake looming just off the edge of the putting surface.

The back nine starts with a medium length par 4 which requires a well-placed tee shot that also must carry Butler Lake. The dogleg right is bunkered and tree-lined down the right side, making the left side the preferred angle for the approach. The men's tees have added 35 yards to 366 on the scorecard.

The short 12th starts the four breathtaking marsh holes, which are connected to the mainland by a series of bridges that provide some splendid views of what you are about to experience. Lee discovered these islands while he was surveying Hampton Plantation for the course.

The par-4 13th is the third hole that has added considerable yardage from the blue tees, going from 315 to 386. It is now a real test, beginning with a tee set within the marsh, but a reasonably generous fairway eases the challenge somewhat.

Perhaps the most memorable hole on the course is the 14th, a serpentine par 5 that is easily within reach in two shots for those not averse at taking a risky line from the tee over the picturesque marsh and a row of trees. A pond down the right that forms the S-shaped fairway is in play for longer hitters, who face a decision whether to carry the water pretty much all the way to the green after a well-positioned drive. With the marsh on the left, the lay-up shot requires precise accuracy, and a potential three-club wind can make things even more interesting.

After the well-bunkered but otherwise tame par-3 15th, the course returns to the mainland, beginning with two of the tougher par 4s on the course. The 16th has added a new fairway bunker down the right side, with the left side remaining the preferred angle for the approach, which must carry a pond short and right of the green.



Upgraded practice facility

The 17th is the longest of the par 4s at 420 from the back tees, with a large tree at the corner of the slight dogleg right a formidable obstacle for shorter hitters. Some 150 trees were removed during the renovation, but the imposing one at the corner of the 17th remains.

Things ease up a bit on the par-5 finishing hole, although water down the right side that is in play on the second shot and a deceptive new bunker short of the green keep it from being too friendly a finale.

Overall, the King and Prince Golf Course is as inviting and fun as is St. Simons Island itself. The course renovation has enhanced its considerable beauty. It's a great place to play golf, whether it's just for one round during a coastal getaway or if you're lucky enough to call the King and Prince Golf Course and The Hampton Club your home club.

Rick Mattox is the club's long-time General Manager and Matt Evans is the Golf Professional.

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Woods, Mickelson have mixed records in Masters

Recent misses outnumber hits for top 2 players

By Mike Blum

After three straight Masters that lacked the always anticipated Sunday back nine heroics the event has long been known for, the big question coming into last year's tournament was where had the roars gone at Augusta National?

Following last year's Sunday fireworks in Augusta, that question has been answered. Coming into this year's Masters, the overriding question has nothing to do with the tournament itself, but with its most famous potential participant.

With more than a month remaining before the 2010 Masters, the speculation about the tournament revolves around whether **Tiger Woods** will tee it up in Augusta, and if he does, how will his mega-publicized and scrutinized private life impact his play?

After his highly anticipated but modestly revealing recent public statement, it appears that Woods is more likely to skip his annual trip to Augusta, but at press time, there was no definitive answer to his possible presence there.

Woods has won the Masters four times, matching his PGA Championship victory total. But his last win in Augusta came in 2005, and his record at Augusta National in recent years has been atypical of his previously established history on the course.

Prior to 2005, Woods' record in the Masters was black and white. Either he played well, winning the tournament with a total well into double figures under par, or he was a non-factor, finishing somewhere around even par.

Since Augusta National was stretched to its current length of almost 7,450 yards after his playoff win over **Chris DiMarco** in 2005, Woods has traveled a different route

in Augusta, and has stuck to that same path each year since.

Over the past four years, Woods has finished third, second, second and sixth in the Masters, and has been in position to win on Sunday on all four occasions. Each time, he did not have a strong finishing kick in him, as his career history of never winning a major championship when trailing after 54 holes has remained intact.

Last year was the first time in the four most recent Masters that Woods actually made some noise when in contention during the final round. Woods was seven shots off the lead after 54 holes in a tie for 10th, and teed off a full hour ahead of the leaders.

Woods' playing partner that day was **Phil Mickelson**, who was tied with Woods at 4-under 212. With a strong but less than charismatic group of leaders in front of them, the early focus of the CBS Sunday broadcast was all on Woods and Mickelson, and the game's two most prominent figures did not disappoint – one of them in particular.

It wasn't Woods.

Mickelson birdied 13 and 15, missing an eagle putt of no longer than 4 feet on the latter. Woods also birdied both holes, and when he added another birdie at the 16th, his only one of the day at a hole other than a par 5, he joined Mickelson in a tie for second, still just one off Perry's lead.

At that point, both Woods and Mickelson were 6-under for the day and both had a chance to post a number that would make the contenders several groups behind them take notice.

Unfortunately for the fans of the game's top two players, they reverted to increasingly frequent patterns of play that have dogged both at times in recent years.

After winning three majors in a two-year span from 2004-06, Mickelson kicked away the '06 U.S. Open at Winged Foot with some extremely sloppy ball striking the final day. That aspect of his game was not in evidence in the final round at Augusta National last year, however, with the obvious exception of his tee shot on 12.

The double bogey at the 12th appeared to have ended Mickelson's hopes, but he fought back with a stretch of brilliant play marred

weeks later at Bethpage Black, mounting another furious final round surge before his putter again betrayed him down the stretch with a championship within reach.

Woods, on the other hand, has limited his final round heroics in majors in recent years to one event that has managed to overshadow his multiple failures. His victory in the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines ranks as arguably the greatest effort ever by a player in a major championship, but does not erase his repeated lackluster efforts in final rounds of majors in which he has been in position to win.

In 2007, he was all but handed control of both the Masters and U.S. Open by faltering 54-hole leaders early in the final rounds. But he whiffed both times, with **Zach Johnson** and **Angel Cabrera** seizing the opportunities. He was unable to apply any pressure on **Trevor Immelman** at Augusta in '08, and had three cracks at victory in majors last year, failing most notably in the PGA Championship at Hazeltine, when he lost a 54-hole lead for the first time ever, shooting 75 the final day.

Woods came close to fumbling away a victory the last time he won the Masters. Leading DiMarco by two strokes with two holes to play, he butchered both 17 and 18 for a bogey-bogey finish, enabling DiMarco to force a playoff.

But his highlight reel chip-in birdie at 16 and superbly-played birdie on the first extra hole have all but expunged his shaky finish from memory. Last year, however, Woods rekindled the embers of his '05 finish, making back-to-back bogeys at 17 and 18 to fall into a tie for sixth.

After the disappointing conclusions in '09 by Mickelson and Woods, the spotlight returned to the lead trio of Perry, Cabrera and **Chad Campbell**. All three responded with some outstanding play down the stretch, although they did not inspire the fervor among the Masters patrons as their more idolized competitors had shortly before.

Perry, who shared the 54-hole lead with Cabrera, parred the first 11 holes before holing a bomb for birdie at 12. He shook off a 3-putt par at 13 with a birdie at 15, and seemed to lock up a green jacket when he almost holed his tee shot at 16, giving him a two-stroke lead with two holes to play.

Campbell gained a brief share of the lead with birdies at 12, 13 and 15, narrowly missing an eagle attempt at 15 and another birdie at 16. Cabrera took the early lead with a birdie at the third, but played his next nine holes 3-over before birdies on the friendly



Phil Mickelson

Mickelson, who has a history of Sunday theatrics in majors, rattled off six birdies on the first eight holes, tying the all-time Masters scoring record for the front nine (30) in the process. That pulled him into second place, one shot off the lead of **Kenny Perry**.

Woods, meanwhile, was a quiet bystander until an eagle at the 8th hole got him back in the picture. When Mickelson dumped his tee shot at the treacherous 12th into Rae's Creek, his charge appeared halted. But one of the characteristics that makes Augusta National such a wonderful venue for a major championship is its two potentially vulnerable back nine par 5s.

only by the other flaw in his game – his streaky short putting. He lipped out a putt for birdie at 14 and missed from 6 feet at 17, the latter basically ending his hopes of victory. His tee shot at 18 found the fairway bunker, leading to a bogey and a 5th place finish despite a final round 67 that could have been several shots lower.

It was the 11th time Mickelson has finished 7th or better in the Masters and the seventh time since 2001 he has been among the top five. On most of those occasions, he had an opportunity to win on Sunday, but usually has been too far off the lead after 54 holes to make a serious run at victory.

Mickelson provided a sequel of sorts 10



Tiger Woods

[See Masters preview, page 28]

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Augusta National stays the same despite changes

Added yardage hasn't altered character of course

By Mike Blum

Since it opened in 1933, Augusta National has been a work in progress. The course has undergone more than its share of alterations, some of them significant, others almost indistinguishable.

For most of its modern history, the changes to the layout were more of the subtle variety, with the biggest news from the 1950s to the 1990s the conversion to bent grass greens in 1981.

Although the official yardage for the Masters occasionally changed by minimal amounts, Augusta National remained essentially the same course from the early '50s to the late '90s. Some tees and bunkers were repositioned and other tweaks were made to the greens complexes. But other than the change from Bermuda to bent grass on the putting surfaces, the course **Tiger Woods** played in his record-setting 1997 victory was not much different from the one that challenged the likes of **Ben Hogan** and **Sam Snead** in the 1950s.

That began to change in 1998, when Augusta National officials announced the first of a series of course changes, mainly the lengthening of a handful of holes. Two holes were lengthened appreciably that year, but the process was just beginning. Nine holes added yardage in 2002 and six more, including some of the same holes, were extended in '06.

A course that officially measured just 6,925 yards as recently as 1998 is now listed at 7,445. There was a considerable amount of griping from some Masters participants after the two main rounds of lengthening in 2002 and '06, including the unthinkable prospect of having to hit a fairway metal approach on the 18th hole, where the tour's bombers had occasionally had as little as a sand wedge left before the tee was extended around 60 yards.

Given the recent improvements in equipment technology that has resulted in players hitting the golf ball much longer than they did as recently as 20 years ago, there was little question that Augusta National needed to add some distance in order to provide a comparable test for golfers of the modern era as it did to the likes of Hogan, Snead and **Byron Nelson**.

Ralph Guldahl shot 279 to win the sixth Masters in 1939, and just one player bettered that total for the next 21 years. Ben Hogan's 274 in 1953 was five strokes lower than any player had ever scored in the first 27 Masters, with **Arnold Palmer** the first to challenge that mark, shooting 276 when he won his fourth and final Masters in 1964.

Hogan's record fell the next year, as **Jack Nicklaus** shot 271 to win by a record nine strokes. Nicklaus shot 286 in dreary weather conditions to win his first Masters two years before, and tournament officials did not take kindly to having someone take apart Augusta National so relentlessly.

When players returned for the 1966 Masters, they were greeted by a course set-up designed to prevent anyone from challenging the scoring record set by Nicklaus the previous year. Only two players shot in the 60s during the tournament, with Nicklaus winning in a playoff with a score of even par 288.

That was just the third time in Masters history the winning score was not under par. The previous two times just happened to be in the three years after Hogan set the mark of 274 that stood for more than a decade.

Having proved their point that they could make Augusta National played as hard as they desired, Masters officials eased up on the set-up, and winning scores in the 8-to-10-under par range became the norm, with the exception of 1976, when **Ray Floyd** matched Nicklaus' 271 total and nearly equaled his mark for largest margin of victory.

The change from Bermuda to bent grass made the already quick greens among the most treacherous in golf, and kept scores from going any lower, at least for the next decade.

Ben Crenshaw matched Hogan for the third lowest score in tournament history in 1995, and **Greg Norman** was in position to challenge the Nicklaus-Floyd record the next year before his epic final round meltdown.

Then along came Tiger, who re-wrote the Masters record books in 1997, shooting 270 after carding a 40 on his first nine holes of the tournament. Woods was 22-under for his final 63 holes, winning by a staggering 12 strokes, a mark that likely will stand as long as the Masters is played.

The initial changes to Augusta National in the wake of Woods' record-shattering performance were modest, and he made a run at his scoring record in 2001, posting a winning score of 272. This time, however, he had company. **David Duval** was second at 274, the lowest non-winning score in tournament history, and **Phil Mickelson** was third at 275, matching the previous low for a non-winner, set six years earlier by **Davis Love**.

That coincided with the technological equipment advances that were simply making many of the classic courses of the PGA Tour and major championship venues

simply too short for the likes of the tour's elite players, almost all of whom had the ability to overpower those courses with their length.

After the 2001 Masters, Augusta National was lengthened by almost 300 yards to counter the technological improvements, but for three days in '02 the changes had little effect. Scores, at least those of golf's elite, did not change appreciably, until tournament officials decided to make a statement, if just for one day.



Zach Johnson

With all the biggest names in golf (Woods, Goosen, **Vijay Singh**, **Phil Mickelson**, **Ernie Els**, **Sergio Garcia**) at the top of the leader board, a demanding final day course set-up turned what could have been a memorable Masters finish into one of the least exciting in tournament history.

That decision by tournament officials also made the point that what really matters in the Masters is not how long the course is, but how firm and fast the greens are, and where the pins are positioned.

Then there's the weather, which even Masters officials have no control over. At the same time as Augusta National was being lengthened for the Masters, the tournament went through a stretch of weather that included unseasonably low temperatures accompanied by frequent rain showers.

The worst of the weather came in 2007, when players and spectators alike shivered through tournament week, with the result a winning score of 289 by **Zach Johnson**, equaling the highest winning score in Masters history.

The weather was mostly better the next year, but the wind made its presence felt Sunday, and spectators and TV viewers were treated to another suspense-less finish, although **Trevor Immelman** had more to do with that than the course or weather.



Angel Cabrera

Thanks to nice weather and a kinder, gentler course set-up, last year's Masters finally produced the red numbers and final round drama Masters fans have been witness to over the years. Three players shot 12-under 276 to force a playoff, and there were plenty of low scores all week, including Sunday when Mickelson shot a 67 that could just as easily been a 63.

Angel Cabrera came away with the green jacket, ending a brief two-year run in which players won the Masters who do not fit into the power-player formula that supposedly best suits Augusta National.

Since Augusta National has increased in length, power players like Woods, Mickelson and Cabrera have won the Masters. But so have more finesse-oriented players like **Mike Weir**, Johnson and Immelman.

For many years, Masters mythology has created the false belief that the course strongly favors big hitters, stemming from the success of Palmer and Nicklaus in the 1960s. A quick glance at the list of Masters champions reveals the names of **Gary Player**, **Billy Casper**, **Tommy Aaron**, **Ben Crenshaw**, **Bernhard Langer**, **Larry Mize**, **Nick Faldo**, **Jose Maria Olazabal**, **Mark O'Meara**, and the recent trio of Weir, Johnson and Immelman.

No bombers in that group, but at least five multiple Masters champions.

For all the flack Masters officials took for the changes to the course over the past decade, the fundamental character of Augusta National has not changed, with the possible exception of the 7th hole.

The course was not designed to have

[See Course changes, page 22]

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Change at the top raises LPGA Tour hopes

Chances of tour's return to Georgia remain slim

By Mike Blum

It's been almost four years since the LPGA Tour last visited Georgia, and a lot has changed in women's professional golf since then, not much of it for the better.

Since the LPGA last played at Eagle's Landing in 2006, the tour has endured more than its share of difficulties, in large part due to the tumultuous four-year reign of **Carolyn Bivens** as commissioner.

A player revolt last year ended Bivens' troubled time at the wheel of women's professional golf, and new commissioner **Mike Whan** has made some early progress at extricating the tour from the ditch in which he found it when handed the keys.

Whan has helped repair relationships between the LPGA and its tournament sponsors, many of whom had parted ways with the organization after Bivens' heavy-handed efforts at changing the way the tour operated.

Among the tournaments that expired during Bivens' years as commissioner was the one hosted by Eagle's Landing, which enjoyed a 15-year run before long-time sponsor Chick-fil-A elected to place almost all its sports marketing eggs in the college basket.

Chick-fil-A dropped its title sponsorship in 2005 after a decade in that role, and the tournament lasted one more year before quietly going out of business. There have been some low-key efforts to revive an LPGA tournament in the Atlanta area, but chances appear slim of that happening in the near future.



There are just 25 tournaments on the 2010 LPGA schedule, down from more than 40 during the late 1990s. That is the fewest number of tournaments in more than four decades, and of that modest total, just 14 will be played in the U.S.

Apart from a pair of tournaments in Alabama, both of which have short histories and uncertain futures, the closest the LPGA will get to the Southeast this year is an event in Arkansas, which is in pretty much the same boat as the two in Alabama.

Georgia, Florida, the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia have all lost established LPGA events in recent years, with the tour unable to sustain a tournament at its home base in Daytona Beach.

As bleak as the LPGA's schedule seems now, it was considerably darker before Bivens was forced out, with several former sponsors returning to revive events that Bivens' ill-advised policies helped kill.

The LPGA began its 2010 schedule with a pair of events in Asia, and will conduct its first U.S. tournament of the season March 25-28 at the La Costa Resort near San Diego. The tour will remain in southern California for the Kraft Nabisco Championship the following week, but over the next nine weeks will conduct just three tournaments before a stretch of five straight events beginning in mid-June.

Of the first seven tournaments on this year's schedule, just two are full field events, leaving little opportunity for a large percentage of tour members.

As the economy improves and sponsor-

ship dollars begin to flow more freely, there is realistic hope that the LPGA's schedule will have fewer off weeks in the near future. But there is no guarantee that the flagging interest in the tour will increase any time soon, as no player has stepped forward to fill the vacuum left by the retirement of **Annika Sorenstam**.

Mexico's **Lorena Ochoa** was Sorenstam's heir apparent, but her 2009 season was not up to her recent standards, especially in the LPGA majors. Like Sorenstam, Ochoa does most of her talking with her clubs, a consistent trait for the tour's top players over the past few decades with a handful of exceptions, most notably long-time Albany resident **Nancy Lopez**.

The LPGA has been waiting for **Michelle Wie** to emerge as a dominant player, and after a few injury-plagued seasons, the former teenage phenom began to show signs last year of living up to the incredible amount of hype that surrounded her as a youngster.

Wie collected her first professional victory late in the 2009 season in Mexico and finished the year 14th in earnings despite continuing her college studies at Stanford. It's hard to believe, but Wie will not turn 21 until the conclusion of the 2010 season, and many of her critics have forgotten how exceptional a player she was when she first captured the public's attention, competing for major championships while still attending middle school in Hawaii.

One of the reasons that there has been so much attention focused on Wie is the absence of more than a handful of Americans among the LPGA's elite in recent years. When Wie won Ochoa's tournament in Mexico in early November, it had been a full seven months since an American player had won on the LPGA Tour.

For all of 2009, just five Americans won LPGA tournaments out of the 27 conducted. Wie is one of four U.S. players ranked among the top 10 in the world, but there are just four other American players above 48th in the current rankings.

Cristie Kerr and **Paula Creamer** have established themselves in recent seasons as the top two American players, with Kerr developing into a constant presence at the top of LPGA leader boards, even if she has been winning a bit more infrequently (8 titles from 2004-06, one each in 2007-09).

Kerr was second on the money list last year, with Creamer the only other American ahead of Wie in earnings. After winning four times in 2008, Creamer was winless in '09, but managed six finishes of 3rd or better. Creamer had problems

staying healthy last year, and withdrew from the 2010 season opener in Thailand after one round due to a lingering injury to her left hand.

Other than Kerr and **Angela Stanford**, who are both just 32, most of the top Americans are in their early-to-mid 20s, as the women's game seems to get younger and younger every year. Some, like **Brittany Lang** and **Kristy McPherson**, have shown signs of improvement each year and are closing in on their first LPGA victories. Others, like **Morgan Pressel** and **Brittany Lincicome**, made early splashes as pros, but have not advanced beyond their initial standards, although Lincicome did manage a strong comeback after a dismal showing in 2008.

The most significant trend on the LPGA Tour in recent years has been a sizeable increase in the number of young Korean players and their impact on the tour. Korean golfers won 11 LPGA events last year, with **Jiyai Shin** claiming three of those titles and finishing first on the money list.

However, none of the many Koreans who have enjoyed recent success on the LPGA Tour has created a distinct identity as an individual, as first **Se Ri Pak** and later **Mi Hyun Kim** did. With all the Kims, Lees and Parks, it's a real task to differentiate the dozens of competitive Korean golfers, especially when one wins a U.S. Open and then falls off the map (the now inaccurately named **Birdie Kim**) or wins a tour event one year and never contends again (**Sung Ah Yim**, who won the final LPGA event in Atlanta in 2006).

Shin may have overtaken Ochoa as the LPGA's No. 1 player, but to the casual golf fan, the only things known about her is that she's short (5-foot-1) and wears glasses, if that. Then again, not much more is known about Ochoa, who has followed in the footsteps of Sorenstam and **Karrie Webb** as dominant players without outgoing personalities.

This year's schedule includes a premier site for the tour's No. 1 event. The U.S. Open returns to Oakmont for the first time since 1992, but the LPGA Championship will be largely indistinguishable from a standard tour event. After losing long-time LPGA Championship sponsor McDonald's, the tour turned to one of its most loyal sponsors (Wegmans) to take over the event this year, which will be played at the site of the tour stop in Rochester, N.Y., since 1977.

In addition to not having a tournament on the LPGA Tour, Georgia has little

[See LPGA preview, page 14]





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Reynolds begins rookie season on LPGA Tour

Newnan native coming off memorable '09 season

By Mike Blum

Jean Reynolds will be a member of the rookie class of LPGA Tour players for the 2010 season, but when she makes her debut in California later this month, it will not be her first start on tour.

Reynolds, a Newnan native and U. of Georgia graduate, thrust herself into the national golf spotlight last year, contending in the U.S. Women's Open for 54 holes before sliding down the leader board the final day.

Her U.S. Open experience was the highlight of Reynolds' 2009 season, but it was her play on the Futures Tour that earned Reynolds exempt status on the LPGA Tour for 2010.

Reynolds finished '09 as the No. 2 money winner on the Futures Tour with \$76,650, one of just four players to earn more than \$43,000. In 17 starts in just her second season as a professional, Reynolds won twice, had seven top-5 finishes and 10 top 10s to easily earn one of five exempt spots on the 2010 LPGA Tour.

The first tournament for Reynolds will be a new event played March 25-28 at LaCosta Resort in Carlsbad, Cal., the former host course of the PGA Tour Tournament of Champions. Because of the LPGA's reduced schedule, she probably won't play again for another month, and is likely to make just three starts before the tour plays five straight weeks in June and July.

Even though her opportunities may be a bit limited this year, Reynolds says she is "definitely very excited" about beginning her LPGA career, especially after her long layoff. Reynolds has not played a tournament since the Futures Tour wrapped up its schedule in early September of last year, but a lengthy layoff is not new to her.

Reynolds was one of the state's top female juniors, winning the GSGA Girls title three straight years from 2000-02, and reaching the finals of the Western Junior and quarter-finals of the USGA Girls Championship in '02.

But other than a handful of amateur events over the next five years, Reynolds was an infrequent competitor, electing to forego a spot on the Georgia women's team. She was a non-playing team member as a freshman, but left the squad and never played a competitive round of college golf, as life in a sorority and studies abroad occupied most of her time.

Reynolds' decision to abandon college golf is one she doesn't regret, and she is firm in the belief that it was the right one for her.

"I have no doubt that if I played four years



of college golf, I would not be where I am."

When she enrolled at Georgia, Reynolds says she "did not exactly know what I wanted to do. I was not one hundred percent into (golf), and decided to walk away. I enjoyed being in college and doing everything my friends were doing."

Reynolds never completely left golf, competing in some GSGA women's events during Summer break. She won the Women's Top 60 tournament twice, and after her second victory, was asked to participate on the GSGA team in the USGA State Team event in 2005.

Georgia won the championship that year and Reynolds says that tournament "got the fire of competition burning in me again."

Reynolds turned professional after graduating from Georgia and qualified for the Futures Tour in her first attempt. She played respectably as a rookie in 2008, finishing in the top 50 on the money list. But from her first tee shot in the first event of 2009, it was evident that Reynolds' game had made a significant leap from the end of 2008.

She shot 69 the first day in Winter Haven, Fla., to play her way into contention. She came from five shots back after 36 holes to force a playoff, which she won with a birdie on the third extra hole. After letting a chance for victory in Kansas City slip away the final day, Reynolds won again two weeks later in Indiana.

In addition to her two wins, Reynolds had four other finishes of 3rd or better, falling just short of victory on three other occasions despite final rounds of 65, 67 and 68.

Reynolds said winning the season-opening event last year "was a big confidence

builder. I worked hard before the season and got my mind right. I changed my attitude to being much more positive. That was the biggest turnaround.

"I knew all along I had the game. It's just a matter of believing in yourself. I never doubted I was good enough."

Reynolds described her first year on the Futures Tour as "a learning experience. I didn't play in college and played just a few amateur tournaments. It was just a matter of getting my feet wet and getting used to the travel."

After opening the 2009 season with a victory, Reynolds could have suffered a letdown. But apart from a brief stretch of spotty play in Texas, she maintained her game at a high level the rest of the season and was never in danger of dropping out of the top five on the money list and endangering her hopes of qualifying for the LPGA Tour.

"I didn't think about the big picture and forgot about all the pressure," she said, focusing her efforts on the task at hand instead of looking ahead to what might be.

In one stretch, Reynolds notched five straight top-10 finishes, including four of her top-3 showings. That run of exceptional play ended with a win in Hammond, Ind., just two weeks before the U.S. Women's Open.

Reynolds had played in the 2008 U.S. Open, missing the cut at Interlachen in Minnesota. Last year's tournament was played at Saucon Valley in Bethlehem, Pa., and like a lot of U.S. Opens, it featured a previously unknown player who made quite a splash.

In this case, that player was Reynolds.

After finishing third, second and first in her last three tournaments on the Futures Tour, Reynolds says she "went into the Open with tremendous confidence."

An opening 69 left her just one shot off the lead, and she was only two back after 36 holes following a 72 the next day. Reynolds slipped a bit to 74 in the third round, but was still tied for third, four off the lead and in the next-to-last group the final round.

From the opening round, Reynolds was the focus of a considerable amount of media attention, as well as building a strong following from the fans in attendance.

"When I walked off the 18th hole the first day, my head was spinning," Reynolds recalled. "I did not quite grasp what was going on. I got swept off and did a little media, and you have people pulling you several different ways."

Reynolds proved she was no one-day wonder with a solid effort the second day to remain near the lead. She held her ground

for almost the entire third round, but bogeys on three of the final four holes ended what had been an otherwise excellent effort tee to green. Reynolds' putter did not fully cooperate that day, but she was still in position to contend for a U.S. Open title with 18 holes to play.

Trailing by four entering the final round, Reynolds tried to make up ground, but headed in the opposite direction as the bogeys on her scorecard began to mount.

"I made some mistakes you don't make on Sunday in an Open. I went in there with the attitude to go out there and win, but I was always playing catch-up. I lost a couple of strokes early and felt I needed to make some birdies, and that led to more bogeys.

"It was a learning experience. You don't fire at pins on Sunday in the Open."

Despite the final round 77, Reynolds ended the tournament tied for 17th, with her lone birdie of the day at the 17th hole providing a little solace and a lot of cash after what had been a tough day. The birdie was worth approximately the entire amount of money she earned for each of her two wins, with her paycheck for the week (\$42,725) more than triple the first place prize money from her Futures Tour victories.

Money aside, Reynolds said it was "an incredible week. I had family and friends there, and one of the things that made the whole week so special was the reception of the galleries. They couldn't have been nicer." 🍷

LPGA preview

[Continued from page 12]

playing presence on the tour this year. Veteran players like **Cindy Schreyer**, **Mitzi Edge**, **Denise Killeen** and **Nanci Bowen** have all been retired for some time and **Vicki Goetze-Ackerman**, an LPGA Tour member for more than 15 years, made just three starts in 2009, failing to make a cut.

Angela Jerman, who showed some promise during her rookie season in 2003, has struggled since and has left the tour to take a job as membership director for Canongate's River Forest Club. Like Goetze, Jerman made just three starts in '09 and did not make a cut.

Newnan's **Jean Reynolds** will be playing her rookie season (see story, page 14), joining former UGA golfer **Reilley Rankin** as the only players with Georgia ties on the 2010 LPGA Tour. Rankin has played six years on the tour, finishing outside the top 90 on the money list for the first two times in her career the last two seasons. 🍷

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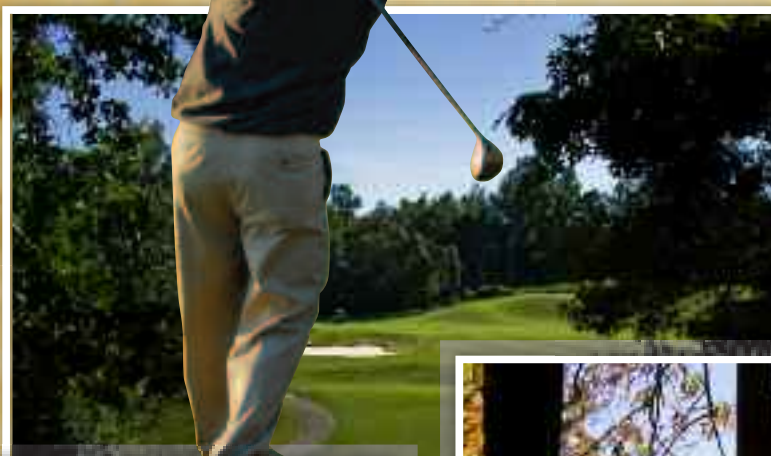


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Kirk starts season down under, but near the top

Runner-up finish in Australia sets stage for big year

By Mike Blum

American members of the Nationwide Tour have to travel all the way to New Zealand and Australia to compete in the season-opening tournaments.

For those who make the lengthy round trip and fail to play well, it can be a costly, time-consuming and potentially deflating start to a season that began with the promise of a berth on the PGA Tour the following season.

Among the more disappointed members of the Nationwide Tour's American contingent who made the long flight home in February after two weeks down under was **Chris Kirk**, a familiar name in Georgia golf circles over the past eight years as a junior, a collegiate standout and the last two-plus years as a professional.

Although Kirk brought some regrets back with him to his home of the past few years on St. Simons Island, he didn't make the long journey with empty pockets. Kirk returned with earnings of \$77,565, all but about \$2,000 of that total from his runner-up finish in the Moonah Classic, the

second of the two tournaments on the Nationwide Tour's opening swing.

For the second time in his brief Nationwide Tour career, Kirk found himself in a playoff at the end of 72 holes. And for the second time, his opponent birdied the first playoff hole, leaving Kirk to ponder on what might have been.

The first time Kirk was in a Nationwide Tour playoff was in 2008 in Knoxville, the city where he was born. He shot 67 the final day to rally from a 2-stroke deficit, forcing a playoff with a birdie on the 72nd hole.

This time, Kirk's comeback began a day earlier. He trailed 36-hole leader **Jim Herman** by 10 shots at the midway point, but made up all 10 strokes on Saturday, firing a 7-under 65, by three strokes the low score of the day in extremely windy conditions.

That vaulted Kirk into a tie for the lead going to the final round, where he was paired with Herman in the last group off the tee. With a pair of early birdies and a Herman bogey, Kirk built a 3-stroke lead over his playing partner, but two birdies by Herman reduced Kirk's lead to one.

With back-to-back birdies at 14 and 15, Kirk was two ahead with three holes to play, but a pair of bogeys at 16 and 17 dropped him into a tie heading to the final hole, a par 5. Kirk had notched birdies on each of the first three par 5s he played the final day, and was 9-under on them for the tournament.

But he never really managed to solve the 18th at the Moonah Links, missing a birdie putt in the 6-foot range that would have won him the tournament. Herman capitalized on his opportunity, making a birdie on the first playoff hole – the 18th.

"It was definitely a disappointing finish the last day," Kirk said a little over a week after his playoff setback. "It was one of those weird things. I hit a lot of good shots, at least until the last couple of holes. But if I had putt well, I would have had a six-shot lead."

Kirk played some exceptional golf over the final 36 holes, particularly in the third round when the wind sent scores soaring. It was relatively calm when Kirk teed off some 90 minutes before the final group, and he took advantage with birdies on four of the first six holes.

Even after the intensity of the wind increased significantly, Kirk said, "I continued to play solid the rest of the day. It

was that rare day in golf when everything goes your way. I was ten back after the first two rounds, then I came all the way back to tie for the lead. That thought never entered my mind."

Kirk had to re-adjust his thought process after his huge Saturday rally, going from also-ran to co-leader.

"I've been in that situation before," Kirk said of his spot at the top of the leader board, although most of his experience in that regard came at the collegiate level, where he was a two-time, first team All-American and the 2007 NCAA Player of the Year.

"I played well the last day. Just as well as on Saturday. But I could not make any putts."

That was Kirk's problem for most of the 2009 season, which was one he would just as soon forget. Kirk made just 4 of 13 cuts, with his best finish a tie for 24th. That was a continuation of his struggles late in 2008, when he missed six of his last seven cuts to end the season outside the top 60 on the money list, denying him exempt status for 2009.

Kirk suffered through a dismal showing on the greens last year, noting, "I made great strides with my full swing, but my putting got worse and worse and worse."

Fortunately, he seemed to have figured something out by the time he made his third trip to Q-school. After a so-so opening round in a first stage qualifier in St. Augustine, Fl., Kirk shot 66-68-69 the next three days and tied for second.

In a second stage qualifier at Callaway Gardens, Kirk was one shot over the line to advance to finals as he began play on his final nine, but responded with a clutch finish. He played his last eight holes in 5-under for a final round 64, leaping all the way into the top 10.

That enabled Kirk to advance to finals, and midway through the 108-hole marathon, he was just outside the top 25 and a spot on the 2010 PGA Tour. He got off to sizzling starts in both the fourth and fifth rounds, standing at 3-under at one point on the front nine both days. But he stumbled the rest of way in each round, shooting 73 and 75 to fall to 81st, which was right on the line for earning exempt Nationwide Tour status.

Again, Kirk came up with a big finish, closing with a 67 to jump up to 48th, easily claiming exempt status for the first time in his third Nationwide Tour season.

"Just starting off this year as an exempt player means so much," Kirk says. "I can play a full schedule for the first time and I'm able to play at the beginning of the year. That makes me a lot more confident and I don't have to worry about things week by week."

Like just about every college standout that turns pro, Kirk had his sights set on the PGA Tour and reached the finals of Q-school in his first attempt. Six rounds around par were not enough to even earn exempt status on the Nationwide Tour, but that is not the case this year.

Kirk is taking a longer view at his professional career, and says he is "looking at the big picture." He has seen contemporaries reach the PGA Tour before they are ready and have their confidence damaged, and is content to absorb what he can in golf's version of baseball's Class AAA before reaching the major leagues.

"I've learned a lot and I definitely have a lot to learn. It's a lot easier to learn those things on the Nationwide Tour."

Kirk has managed to get a little taste of life on the PGA Tour, making eight appearances over the last three years. He made the cut in four of his five starts in 2008 and '09, including the '08 U.S. Open and the now-defunct PGA Tour stop at TPC Sugarloaf.

"I definitely know I can play out there. Those guys are so refined and consistent. They don't make the mistakes a lot of young players make. They get the job done."

"But after you get past the top 10 or 15, the players don't have a better skill set than I do. It's just getting it done, and that comes with experience."

Kirk has enjoyed success at every level in which he has been competed, beginning with his days as a junior golfer in the Cherokee County community of Woodstock. He won four American Junior Golf Association titles to earn a scholarship to Georgia. After not playing the Fall of his freshman season, he broke into the lineup that Spring and was a key figure on the Bulldogs' 2005 NCAA Championship team as a sophomore. Kirk finished his career at Georgia with a school record seven individual titles and in his final event as an amateur, was a member of the victorious U.S. Walker Cup team.

Next month, Kirk will one of a number of former members of the Georgia golf team who will tee it up on their former home course, as the Nationwide Tour returns to Athens for a fifth straight year, but the first time at the UGA course. The University course was renovated and lengthened during Kirk's senior year, and he hasn't played it much since then.

But he is definitely looking forward to a return to Athens and former college friends and familiar restaurants, particularly after missing out on the tournament last year.

This year's UGA Classic will be played April 29-May 2, one week after the Nationwide Tour makes its annual stop in Valdosta for the South Georgia Classic at Kinderlou Forest April 22-25. ☎



Chris Kirk

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New sites for 3 major Georgia PGA tournaments

Event at Berkeley Hills added to 2010 schedule

By Mike Blum

The 2010 Georgia PGA tournament schedule features a mix of familiar sites along with some courses new to the events they're hosting, including the state's two most prominent open tournaments.

There is also a late addition to the schedule, as well as a new date for an existing event.

Your Community PhoneBook Georgia Open returns to Savannah for the first time since 1993, with Savannah Harbor serving as this year's site. The outstanding Bob Cupp design is also the host course for the Champions Tour Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf, and is considered among the state's top layouts, located just across the river from downtown Savannah at the base of the Talmadge Memorial Bridge.

The **Yamaha Atlanta Open** remains on the south side of the metro area for the third

at nearby Jennings Mill.

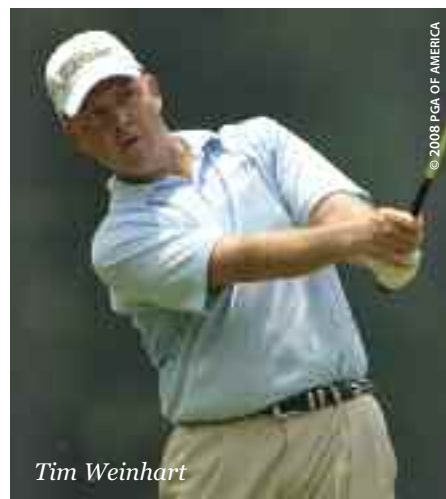
The only one of the Georgia PGA's four "majors" that will be played in the same location this year is the **E-Z-Go Georgia PGA Championship**, which returns to the Sea Island Club's Retreat course. The club's Seaside course, which has been the primary site for the Section Championship over the past decade, will debut as host of the PGA Tour's McGladrey Classic approximately two months after the Georgia PGA event is held on its sister course.

The 2010 Georgia PGA tournament schedule begins March 23 with the **Club Car Pro-Pro Scramble** at the recently renovated Legacy on Lanier course, formerly known as Emerald Pointe. Section qualifiers for the state's two Nationwide Tour events will be held April 6 at Rivermont (South Georgia Classic) and April 12 at the UGA course, with two available spots from each of the qualifiers. The Georgia PGA will stay in Athens for its **Yamaha Match Play Championship**, which is scheduled for April 13-15.

Matt Peterson, the head professional at the UGA course, is the defending match play champion, defeating Brookfield

winner **Clark Spratlin** of the soon-to-open Blue Ridge River & GC were the losing semifinalists last year. Koch defeated Weinhart in the quarterfinals in one of the highlight matches of the tournament.

The **Chicopee Woods Players Championship** will be played for third time at the Gainesville course, with the event retaining its unique format. The two-day tournament (May 17-18) has its players competing over 54 holes, 27 each day on the three Denis Griffiths-designed nines. UGA course instructor **Jeff Hull** won the inaugural tournament in 2008, with Jennings Mill's **Seth McCain** capturing the title last year.



Tim Weinhart

Georgia National has hosted a number of GSGA events in recent years, but this year's Atlanta Open (June 14-15) will be the first time the Georgia PGA has played one of its premier events on the course, also a Griffiths design. Weinhart secured his career Grand Slam with his victory at Heron Bay last year, with Peterson winning at Newnan CC in 2008.

McCain will have two titles to defend this year, as he won the annual **Griffin Classic** in 2009 shortly after his triumph at Chicopee Woods. This year's tournament at Griffin CC will be played two months later than in '09, moving to Sept. 13-14.

Taking over the July 12-13 dates is a new tournament at Berkeley Hills in Duluth, which will be similar to the event in Griffin. Details about the new tournament are still being worked out.

The Georgia Open is returning to south Georgia for the first time in a decade. The tournament was played at Barnsley Gardens the last two years, and has also been hosted by The Frog, Settindown Creek, the Legends at Chateau Elan, Reynolds Landing and Champions Retreat since it was held from 1997-2000 at Jekyll Island.

Alpharetta's **Roberto Castro** won at

Barnsley Gardens last year after making a run at victory the previous year. Castro, a recent All-American at Georgia Tech, played on the Nationwide, eGolf and Hooters Tour in '09. All three of those tours will be in action that week (August 5-8), which will likely limit the number of tour players in the tournament.

Hull, who won at Champions Retreat in 2007, and Weinhart, who won at The Legends in '04, are the only club professionals who have won the tournament since **Stephen Keppler** won back-to-back in 1994 and '95 at Lake Oconee courses. Keppler lost in a playoff at the Savannah Sheraton Resort (now the Wilmington Island Club), the last time the tournament was played in Savannah in '93. Peterson, who was a young tour player at the time, was the winner that year.

Hull, Peterson and Weinhart are all recent winners of the Georgia PGA Championship, with long-time tour player **Sonny Skinner** taking last year's weather-delayed event at Sea Island's Retreat course. The tournament, which has been held at all three courses of Sea Island GC, will be played Aug. 30-Sept. 2.

The final points event for 2010 is the **Georgia PGA Professional National Championship**, the Section's qualifier for the national club professional championship. The Georgia PGA event will be played Oct. 25-26 at Champions Retreat outside Augusta, with the top finishers qualifying for the 2011 PGA PNC.

Currently, nine Georgia PGA members are qualified for this year's PGA PNC led by Weinhart, who won last year's Georgia PGA PNC title at Achasta GC and contended for a victory in the national event in New Mexico. Joining Weinhart in the field in Indiana will be Spratlin, **Greg Lee**, **Shea Stancil**, Hull, **Wyatt Detmer**, Skinner, **Bill Price** and Koch.

The **Yamaha Georgia Senior Open** returns to Callaway Gardens and will be played May 24-25. Veteran mini-tour player **Javier Sanchez** won last year's tournament in his first appearance in the event. The **Georgia PGA Senior PNC** is scheduled for July 19-20 at Cartersville CC. **Gregg Wolff**, the head professional at Willow Lake in Metter, is the defending champion.

The **Yamaha Georgia Women's Open** will again be played at SummerGrove in Newnan. **Mariah Stackhouse** of Riverdale, the state's top junior girls player, won the tournament in 2009, along with a second straight victory in the Georgia Women's Golf Association Championship.

The **Georgia PGA Junior Championship** moves to the Country Club of Columbus, the site of the 2009 Georgia Amateur. **Ollie Schniederjans** of Powder Springs, the state's top junior player, won last year's tournament at Cartersville CC, with Duluth's **Kendall Wright** the girls champion. Wright has since left the junior ranks and is a freshman on the Georgia women's team. 📸

GEORGIA PGA Preview



Par-3 13th hole at the UGA course

straight year, moving from Heron Bay in Newnan to Georgia National in McDonough.

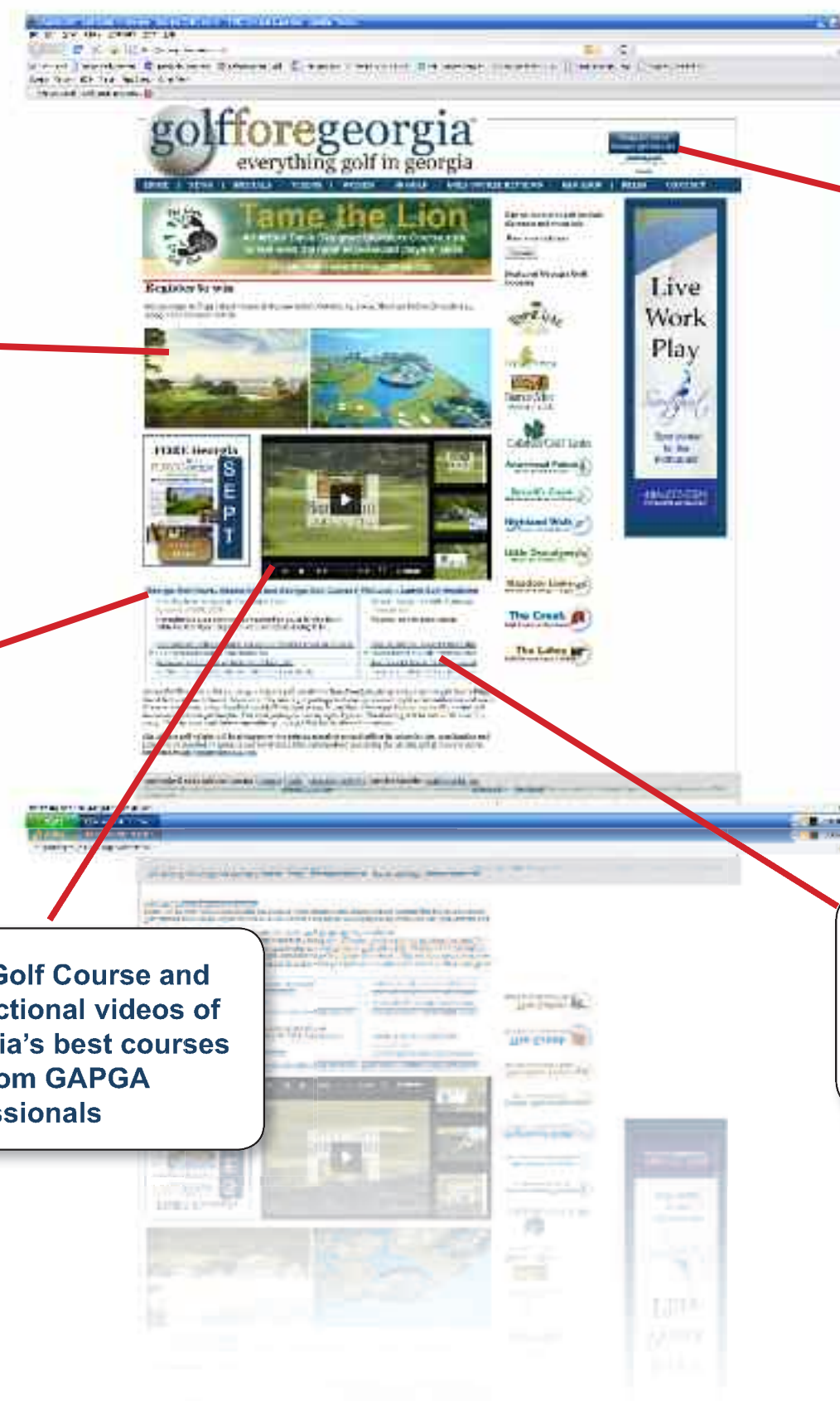
The **Yamaha Match Play Championship** also has a new site this year, with the tournament moving from Callaway Gardens to the University of Georgia course. The tournament will be played just two weeks before the Nationwide Tour makes its first stop at the UGA course after playing the last four years

instructor **Michael Parrott** in the finals last year at Callaway Gardens. Both are former members of the Georgia golf team. Peterson's win gave him titles in all four Georgia PGA "majors," a feat matched shortly after that by St. Marlo instructor **Tim Weinhart**, the 2005 Match Play winner.

Country Club of the South instructor **Shawn Koch**, the tournament's defending champion, and three-time Match Play

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Sluggish economy makes Berry's job a tough task

His mission: to find work for Georgia PGA members

By Mike Blum

Like just about every other profession in the U.S., the troubled state of the economy has impacted the aspirations and careers of PGA professionals in Georgia and throughout the country.

The number of golf courses to open in the state in recent years has been exceeded by the number of courses that have

more against the supply side.

That's where **Phil Berry** comes in.

Since 2001, Berry has been the Employment Services Consultant for both the Georgia and Florida Sections of the PGA, one of 12 career club professionals throughout the country serving the various PGA Sections.



The job for Berry and his fellow Employment Consultants is to match PGA professionals with facilities in search of the

right person to fill available golf-related positions, and he is closing in on a decade in that role.

"I get to help PGA professionals every day, and in today's economic climate, that's needed more than ever," says Berry, who is based at Towne Lake Hills GC in Woodstock.

For more than a decade, Berry worked with HMS Golf Management, helping the company open a string of new facilities in the Southeast. During his 13 years with HMS, Berry estimates he helped open nearly 20 facilities, among them Maple

Ridge, Towne Lake Hills, BridgeMill and Bentwater in Georgia.

Once Towne Lake Hills opened, Berry settled in the Atlanta area, and worked for HMS in a variety of roles, including Head Professional, Director of Golf, General Manager and Regional Manager.

Berry wound up in his current position through the same process in which he has assisted countless club professionals to find the right job for them over the past decade.

"In 2001, I was identified as a candidate for this position because I had put in association management as one of my preferences," Berry says.

Berry got into the Employment Consultant Services branch of the PGA at a time when the golf industry was changing gears, moving from a period of explosive growth to a much slower rate of expansion in the number of facilities.

"In the mid-to-late '90s, we were building a tremendous amount of golf courses, and jobs were more attainable. Now, with the economy, things have tightened up and it's more difficult to find positions. There are more pros looking than there are positions available. It's more difficult for everybody."

Without a steady flow of new courses opening, Berry says "there are not the new jobs to create the musical chairs" of available openings. "It's a challenge to find new opportunities, so we're exploring opportunities at clubs and facilities that did not have PGA professionals before."

With opportunities at what are considered "green grass" facilities not appreciably increasing, the PGA has expanded eligibility for membership to include a number of different golf-related offshoots of the standard club professional position.

PGA professionals no longer working at a club or practice facility can retain membership by working in management as a golf manufacturer or sales representative, as a college golf coach, in a golf media position, or in ownership or management of a golf retail facility.

Berry says those positions are "a small percentage of our total membership, but it provides unique opportunities for members to get into various aspects of the golf industry and not give up their membership."

In recent years, Berry says there have been "a flattening number of members" in the PGA, with the total holding steady in the 27,500 to 28,000 ballpark, but "fewer apprentices in the pipeline."

One aspect that has increased is the number of professionals who are concentrating more on their roles as instructors. Many PGA members at clubs face increasing responsibilities in other areas,

and "do not have as much time for teaching," says Berry, which is where the teaching professionals enter the picture.

"We need somebody to teach the game," Berry points out, noting that some facilities are turning to instructors who operate as independent contractors.

Although travel is still a big part of Berry's professional life, he has been able to settle in the Atlanta area after a lot of moving as both a youngster and since he became a golf professional.

Berry was born in Arkansas and says he has lived "in every state in the Southeast." He moved to Woodstock as a high school senior, graduating from Etowah HS. The house he lived in with his parents now overlooks the second green at Towne Lake Hills, the course where he worked for several years as a club professional before taking his current position.

The house has remained in the Berry family, with Phil's brother now residing in it.

Berry returned to Arkansas to attend college, but eventually wound up back in Georgia and says he has "spent most of my adult life in the state."

Although Berry no longer has a club of his own to help operate, he is connected to all the golf facilities in Georgia and Florida with PGA members, and has an even closer identification to his fellow PGA professionals than he did with the members at the many clubs he has worked at over the years. ☺

Course changes

[Continued from page 10]

players hitting wedges into the 11th and 18th holes and short irons into the par-5 15th. That's not how Nelson, Hogan and Snead played Augusta National 60 years ago, but that is the way the likes of Woods and Mickelson were playing it before 2002.

Along with the added length, Augusta National now has more trees and a "second cut" (light rough) to put more of a premium on accuracy. But the impact of those changes is not as cut and dried as the increased yardage.

Winning the Masters requires a lot more than just bombing it 300-plus yards off the tee. At almost 7,450 yards, a Zach Johnson can claim a green jacket with smart, precise play, just like Faldo and Player and Hogan before him.

Maybe a **Dustin Johnson**, **J.B. Holmes** or **Alvaro Quiros** will win the Masters in the near future, and Augusta National will be lengthened another few hundred yards, but don't count on either happening any time soon. ☺



GEORGIA PGA
Pro-file

closed, and many clubs have reduced the number of golf professionals on their staffs.

As a result, there are fewer available positions in a job market where the number of applicants has not diminished, with the supply and demand model tilting more and

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State mini-tour pros have increasing options

2 Atlanta-based tours join Hooters, eGolf

By Mike Blum

Georgia's mini-tour players will have even more options than usual this year, as two Atlanta-based tours will join the Hooters and e-Golf (formerly Tar Heel) tours to offer a multitude of playing opportunities.

The **Hooters Tour**, which has been around for some two decades and has been the springboard for many of Georgia's PGA Tour players, will have a particularly strong Georgia flavor this year, with four tournaments scheduled in Georgia and two others in South Carolina just across the Savannah River from Augusta.

The Hooters Tour was based for a long time in metro Atlanta before moving to its current home base in Myrtle Beach, S.C. It has expanded beyond its Southeastern roots, with events scheduled in both the Midwest and Southwest.

be played Sept. 2-5 and has been hosted by several Augusta courses, moves to North Augusta, S.C., at **Mt. Vintage Plantation**, which hosted an LPGA tournament in recent years.

Almost all the state's tour players have been Hooters Tour members at one or another, and the list of players from the state who have won on the tour is extensive.



Two-time Georgia Open champion **Dave Schreyer**, who played one year on the PGA Tour early in his career, is second on the all-time Hooters Tour victory list with 10, trailing only PGA Tour standout **Chad Campbell**.

Other PGA and Nationwide Tour players (current and former) who won on the Hooters Tour on their way up the professional golf ladder include **Franklin Langham, Vaughn Taylor, Kris Blanks, Kevin Blanton, Justin Bolli, John Kimbell, Charlie Rymer, Josh Broadaway, Paul Claxton, Matt Peterson, Blake Adams, Jason Bohn, Stewart Cink, Rob McKelvey and Brendon Todd**.

In recent years, the Hooters Tour has lost some players to the Tar Heel (now eGolf) Tour, but still maintains a strong Georgia base. Former Georgia Bulldog **David Miller** won his first Hooters tournament in 2009 and finished 6th on the money list.

Augusta's **Emmett Turner** has been a consistently successful player on the Hooters Tour in recent years, and was 23rd

in earnings in '09. Turner has conditional status on the Nationwide Tour this year.

Alpharetta's **Roberto Castro** had several strong showings on the Hooters Tour last year and was 36th on the money list, just ahead of Ringgold's **Luke List**, who will play full time on the Nationwide Tour this year. Tifton's **David Denham**, a member of the 2005 Georgia NCAA Championship team, was 40th.

Atlanta native **Ned Michaels** and Jonesboro's **Hank Kim** are both former Hooters Tour winners, and competed on the tour last year along with Ringgold's **Thomas Hagler**, Swainsboro's **Will Claxton** and **Mark Harrell** of Hazlehurst.

The **eGolf Professional Tour**, which is based in North Carolina, has become increasingly popular with Georgia's mini-tour players since it began as the Tar Heel Tour in 2006.

The tour played two events in Savannah last year, and returned there for an early season event last month at Savannah Quarters and Savannah Harbor. The tour, which plays only in states bordering on North Carolina, closes out its 2010 season at Callaway Gardens Oct. 12-14.

The leading money winners the last two seasons were Sandersville's **David Robinson** in 2008 and **Scott Brown** of North Augusta, S.C., last year. Brown, who won three tournaments in '09, has moved up to the Nationwide Tour this year, with Robinson again having limited Nationwide Tour status. Robinson dropped to 31st in earnings on the eGolf Tour last year.

Recent Georgia Tech standout **Roberto**

Castro had a profitable year in 2009, largely due to a pair of wins on the eGolf Tour. One of them came at Savannah Harbor, as he finished the year third in earnings with over \$100,000. Castro, who has four wins in less than three full seasons on the tour, also won the Georgia Open last year and closed out the year with two straight strong showings on the Nationwide Tour.

Athens' **Jay McLuen**, who won one tournament in each of the first three years of the Tar Heel Tour, was winless last year and slipped to 28th in earnings after finishing no lower than 11th from 2006-08. Along with Robinson, he has limited status on the Nationwide Tour this season.

Other Georgians who enjoyed some success on the eGolf Tour last year included Augusta's **Cortland Lowe**, former Norcross resident **Reid Edstrom** and Monroe's **Drew Bowen**.

Turner, Kim, Claxton and List also competed on the eGolf Tour last year, as did young mini-tour pros **Tim Schaetzel** of Atlanta and **John Saari** of Lilburn, and veteran tour player **Tim O'Neal** of Savannah, the 1997 Georgia Amateur champion.

In addition to the Hooters and eGolf Tours, Georgia's mini-tour players will have

[See Mini-tour preview, page 28]

MINI-TOUR Preview

After beginning in early March with a pair of events in Florida, the Hooters Tour will make two stops in metro Atlanta and one near Augusta in April.

Chattahoochee CC in Gainesville and **Crystal Lake** in Hampton will host Hooters Tour events for the first time this Spring. Chattahoochee will be the site of a Hooters event April 1-4, the week before the Masters, with Crystal Lake's tournament set for April 29-May 2, the same week the Nationwide Tour visits Athens.

In between, the Hooters Tour will play April 22-25 at **Savannah Lakes** in McCormick, S.C., a short drive from Augusta. The Savannah Lakes event has been a regular stop on the Hooters Tour in recent years.

After swings through the Midwest and Southwest, the Hooters Tour returns to Georgia in the Summer, and will play for the first time at **Callaway Gardens**, the host of a PGA Tour event from 1991-2002. That tournament is scheduled for Aug. 12-15.

The Hooters Tour returns to **Southern Hills** in Hawkinsville Aug. 26-29, and follows the next week with one of its longest-running events, the Kandy Waters Memorial Classic, which will have a new site this year. The tournament, which will



Par-3 15th hole at Crystal Lake

Roberto Castro



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Georgia, Tech face questions entering 2010 season

Augusta State looking to make a splash this Spring

By Mike Blum

The state's two most prominent golf programs entered the 2010 Spring season with some questions, while two other Georgia Division 1 programs began their Spring schedules with optimism after strong showings in the Fall.

The outlook for traditional power **Georgia** is very different than it was heading into the Fall schedule. Senior **Hudson Swafford** is redshirting this year while rehabbing a shoulder injury. Sophomore **Patrick Reed** transferred to Augusta State and promising youngster **Will Kropp** returned home to his native Oklahoma to play for a Sooners team coached by former Bulldog **Ryan Hybl**.

COLLEGE Preview

That leaves Georgia coach **Chris Haack** with just two experienced players, as **Brian Harman** and **Adam Mitchell** graduated after the 2009 season. The Bulldogs reached the semifinals of the new NCAA Championship format last season and have three top-5 finishes in the NAAs the last five seasons, including a national title in 2005.

However, for one of the few times in his tenure as Georgia's coach, **Chris Haack** leads a squad that has plenty of uncertainty entering the Spring schedule.

"The Fall was a little bit of a struggle, but we had a good end to it and start this year ready to play," Haack said before Georgia's Spring opener in Puerto Rico in late February.

Georgia will be led by juniors **Russell Henley** of Macon and **Harris English** of Thomasville, giving the Bulldogs one of the strongest 1-2 duos in the country.

Henley, a second team All-America selection in each of his first two seasons, picked up the third medalist trophy of his career last Fall, winning the Brickyard Collegiate in his hometown. The two-time defending Georgia Amateur champion finished seventh or better in four of his five Fall starts and began the 2010 season as the No. 2 player in the country in Golfweek's rankings.

English, a third team All-American his first two seasons in Athens, added a third career title last Fall, winning at Olympia Fields in Chicago, the host course of the 2003 U.S. Open. But he struggled a bit over his final three events in the Fall, and will look to bounce back with a stronger showing this Spring.



Russell Henley



Harris English

"We're going to lean on Russell and Harris heavily," Haack says. "They both won tournaments in the Fall and kept us on the radar."

Redshirt freshman **T.J. Mitchell** of Albany emerged as the team's No. 3 player in the Fall, finishing with a 6th place finish at Isleworth, where the Bulldogs scored their second straight 4th place showing to close out their 2009 schedule.

Freshman **Brian Carter** of Augusta joined Mitchell in the lineup for all four Georgia events in the Fall, but had only one top finish, a tie for 10th at Olympia Fields. Junior **Rob Bennett** of Augusta made three Fall starts, but will be pressed to remain in the lineup this Spring, as Haack has added a pair of recruits from Australia and New Zealand, along with two walk-on seniors, one of whom (Savannah's **Wills Smith**) saw action during the Fall.

"It's pretty wide open," Haack said of the competition for the spots on the travel team. As he was nearing the time when he had to set his lineup for Georgia's season opener, Haack said there was essentially a four-way tie for the No. 4 and 5 spots.

After its opener in Puerto Rico, the Bulldogs have events scheduled in Las Vegas and Austin, Tx., along with the annual Linger Longer Invitational at Reynolds Plantation March 26-28 and the SEC Championship at Sea Island GC April 16-18.

Playing without Henley, Georgia tied for 6th in the Puerto Rico Classic with an 8-under 856 total. Henley did not make the trip due to illness.

English led the Bulldogs with a strong 3rd place showing, posting a 12-under 204 total highlighted by a second round 64.

Australian freshman Bryan Macpherson made his Georgia debut and was second on the team, tying for 15th at 211.

Georgia Tech enjoyed a successful Fall season with top-4 finishes in three of four starts, including a win in Greensboro, N.C., in the Yellow Jackets' final '09 start.

With 2009 Tech graduate **Cameron Tringale** now a rookie on the PGA Tour, the Jackets lack a dominant No. 1 player. Juniors **John Tyler Griffin** and **Kyle Scott** both played well in the Fall, particularly Griffin, who was 4th, 2nd and 4th in his last three starts. Scott, a transfer from West Florida, contributed a pair of top-10 starts in the Fall.

Sophomore **James White** of Acworth had two top-15 finishes in the Fall, and is among a large group of players competing for spots in the Tech lineup this Spring. White tied for 6th in Tech's 2010 opener in Hawaii, joining Scott (also 6th) and Griffin (10th) in the top 10, but Tech's No. 4 and 5 players struggled, with the team placing 6th, 11 strokes behind the winner.

The Jackets finished 5th in Puerto Rico, shooting 855 to edge rival Georgia by one stroke thanks largely to strong showings by Griffin and White. Griffin tied for 4th at 205 with a 65 in the second round. White tied for 15th at 211.

After trips to Puerto Rico and Las Vegas, Tech will play in the Linger Longer Invitational at Reynolds Plantation before back-to-back events in North Carolina, including the ACC Championship April 23-25. The Jackets will be the host team for an NCAA Regional May 20-22 at Capital City Club's Crabapple course, with the NCAA Championship scheduled for June 1-4 at the Honors Course outside Chattanooga.

In recent years, **Augusta State** has become a national caliber D1 program, largely on the strength of players from overseas. The current 10-man roster consists of five golfers from Europe and Australia and five from Georgia, three of whom are part of the Jaguars' primary starting lineup.

Junior **Carter Newman** of Evans, sophomore **Taylor Floyd** of Macon and Augusta's **Patrick Reed**, a transfer from Georgia, were all regulars in the Augusta State lineup last Fall, including the team's win in the Brickyard Collegiate in Macon, where Reed tied for third in his Augusta debut and Newman and Floyd both tied for fifth.

The Jaguars placed 4th and 3rd in their final two Fall tournaments, with Reed and Floyd both notching top-10 finishes in the Jaguars' '09 finale in California. Sweden's **Henrik Norlander** recorded three top-6 finishes in the Fall, with Australia's **Mitch Krywulycz** the fifth Augusta golfer with a top-5 Fall finish.

Savannah sophomore **Brendan Gillins** and Buford freshman **Shawn Yim** are also on the roster for the Jaguars, who play three tournaments in the Carolinas in March before hosting the Augusta State Invitational April 3-4 at Forest Hills.

Georgia Southern had a win and a runner-up finish in its four Fall starts, with senior **Ryan Zabroske** of Alpharetta leading the way with two 2nd place showings and a tie for 5th.

The Eagles play all six of their Spring tournaments close to home, with two events each in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. Georgia Southern hosts the annual Schenkel Invitational March 19-21 at Forest Heights CC and plays in the Augusta State Invitational.

Georgia State, which has largely relied on European imports in recent seasons, has gone to a more local approach, with four of the Panthers' five starters from Georgia. However, England's **Tom Sherreard** remains the team's No. 1 player, with top-20 finishes in all three starts last Fall and another top-20 showing in the Spring season opener.

The Panthers struggled in their first two Spring tournaments in Florida, and will compete in events in Wilmington, N.C., and Tallahassee, Fla., before taking part in the Augusta State Invitational.

Alpharetta junior **Alex Castro** is the team's No. 2 player behind Sherreard, with **Alan Fowler** and **Jared Cagle**, both of Gainesville, and **Brent Paul** of Columbus rounding out the starting five for coach **Joe Inman**, who won on both the PGA and Champions Tour.

[See College preview, page 28]

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GSGA's top event at different Savannah course

The Georgia State Golf Association returns to a familiar city but a new site for its showcase event in 2010.

The GSGA will be visiting Savannah for the 10th time for its championship event, but will be playing on a different course this year.

The Landings Club, which features six golf courses within a sizeable residential community on the 6,500-acre Skidaway Island, 12



GSGA
GEORGIA STATE GOLF ASSOCIATION

GSGA Preview

miles from downtown Savannah, will host this year's Georgia Amateur, which will be played on the Deer Creek course July 8-11.

Deer Creek opened for play in 1991 and was designed by Tom Fazio, with his company renovating the course last year. Deer Creek was the host course for the 2002 GSGA Senior Championship, and is one of

four courses at The Landings that have hosted that event.

Savannah GC has hosted the GSGA Championship seven times, most recently in 2005, sharing the distinction with Coosa CC in Rome and Idle Hour in Macon for hosting the event the most times. Wilmington Island Club was the host course twice in 1979 and '84, when it was known as the Savannah Inn & CC.

Russell Henley, a junior on the Georgia golf team, has won the Georgia Amateur the last two years at Idle Hour (his home club) and CC of Columbus, both times finishing ahead of teammate **Harris English**, who won the event in 2007 at Settindown Creek in Roswell.

There will be 10 qualifiers for the event at courses around the state from June 1-21.

The GSGA Mid-Amateur Championship will also have a new site this year – Macon's Brickyard at Riverside. Augusta's **Jeff Knox** will be shooting for his third straight title in the event May 21-23, winning at Cuscowilla on Lake Oconee in 2008 and White Columns last year.

Also looking for a three-peat will be Dalton's **David Noll**, who has won the Atlanta Amateur Match Play Championship the last two years at Rivermont CC. Noll has won the tournament the last three times it has been played at Rivermont, capturing his first title at the north Fulton club in 2005. This year's dates are Oct. 7-10, with 18 holes of stroke play qualifying followed by three days of match play with a 32-player field.

The GSGA Public Links Championship will be played on a new site, as Canton's BridgeMill Athletic Club hosts the event for the first time Sept. 11-12. **Ollie Schniederjans** of Powder Springs, the state's top junior golfer, won last year at Overlook Links in LaGrange with a 134 total, matching the lowest score in the event's 21-year history.

The Senior Championship makes its first visit to Dahlonga's Achasta GC, with the tournament scheduled for Aug. 25-27. **Jimmy Thomas** of Johns Creek scored a surprise win last year at Green Island in Columbus, edging out four-time champion **Spencer Sappington** of Milton.

The GSGA will play its Super Senior Championship for the third time, with this year's event scheduled for April 14-15 at Polo

G&CC in Cumming. **Matt O'Brien** of Decatur won last year at Settindown Creek.

The 4-Ball Tournament, which will be played at Kinderlou Forest and Valdosta CC, opens the GSGA schedule March 26-28. Other team events on the schedule are the 4-Ball Championship April 23-25 at Albany's Doublegate CC; the Team Championship Oct. 30-31 at the Georgia Club; and the Senior 4-Ball Nov. 10-12 at the Lakes at Laura Walker and Okefenokee CC.

Two former pros – mini-tour player **Rob Butler** of Atlanta and ex-club professional **Chris Dietzel** of Monroe – won last year's 4-Ball Championship at Governor's Towne Club in Acworth, with Dalton G&CC winning the Team Championship for the second time in three years.

The GSGA women's schedule opens with the Match Play Championship at Carrollton's Sunset Hills April 14-16. Augusta's **Laura Coble** won for the seventh time last year, defeating Riverdale's **Mariah Stackhouse** on the 21st hole in the finals. Stackhouse, Georgia's top girls junior, had won the event the previous two years.

[See GSGA, page 27]

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The Landings Club, Savannah (Idle Hour) Course, Wood Lake, 2008 Georgia Amateur Championship
Photo by Robert Felt



Golf FORE Juniors

Brackett captures Junior Tour opener

The Georgia PGA Junior Tour kicked off its 2010 schedule last month at Forest Heights in Statesboro, with **Will Brackett** of Canton shooting a final round 72 for a 147 total to edge **Jimmy Beck** of Columbus by one stroke in the boys 16-18 age group. Beck shot 74 in both rounds.

Will McFarlin of Alpharetta closed with a 71 to tie for third at 150 with **Cory Griffin** of McDonough. **Brandon Lee** of Alpharetta was the boys 14-15 winner at 154, with **Kevin Gomez** of Stockbridge second at 160 and **Tanner Landry** of Marietta third at 161.

Jonathan Keppler shot 73-76—149 to win boys 11-13 by 10 shots over **Will Watson** of Evans, with **Andrew Bourg** of Fayetteville third at 161. **Lauren Court** of Lawrenceville shot 162 to win the girls division by three strokes over **Emee Herbert** of Johns Creek.

The next event for the Georgia PGA is March 13-14 at Macon's Brickyard at Riverside. Other upcoming tournaments include Georgia Vets in Cordele April 24-25 and Callaway Gardens May 22-23.

New to the Georgia PGA Junior Tour schedule this year is a team high school event at Achasta GC in Dahlgonega April 5, with the event open to teams and individuals. Golfers do not have to be Georgia PGA members to compete.

Also new on the 2010 schedule are three one day events during the Summer at three of Atlanta's most prestigious clubs –



Lauren Court, Forest Heights Girls Champion



Will Brackett, Boys Champion

Atlanta Athletic Club (June 28); Dunwoody CC (July 12) and Capital City Club's Crabapple Course (July 19).

The Georgia PGA will play its Junior Championship at one of the state's most respected courses – the Country Club of Columbus. The tournament is scheduled for June 7-8 and is open to non-Junior Tour members.

The Junior Tour's schedule concludes with its Tour Championship Dec. 4-5 at Savannah Quarters.

For information on the Georgia PGA Junior Tour, visit www.georgiapgga.com or call 678-461-8600. Scott Gordon is the Junior Tour's Tournament Director.

Shuman, Hill claim SJGT titles at home

Billy Shuman and **Amelia Hill** of St. Simons Island took home Southeastern Junior Golf Tour titles on home turf, winning the boys and girls divisions of a recent tournament at Sea Island GC.

Shuman was the boys 16-19 winner at 147, edging **Dylan Freeman** of Athens by one stroke. Hill's 157 total was five strokes better than Roswell's **Taylor Blair** in girls 15-19. **Tye Waller** of Griffin shot 153 to win boys 12-13 by three strokes, with **Parker Derby** of Columbus shooting 152 to take the 14-15 age group by five over **Buster Bruton** of Dallas.

Hyo Eun Kim of Martinez was the girls 12-14 winner at 160, two shots ahead of **Diane Lim** of Norcross.

Kim was among the winners in the SJGT's 2010 opener at Sanctuary Cove in Waverly. She shot 159 to win her division in a playoff over **Elizabeth Kim**, also of Martinez. **Emee Herbert** won a three-way playoff in girls 15-19 over **Caitlin Cole** of Brunswick and **Gabby Gregory** of Alpharetta. All three players shot 166 over 36 holes.

Freeman was the boys 16-19 winner at 144 after an opening round 69. **Hyuk chul Shin** of Martinez was second at 145. **Garrett Marschke** of Suwanee won a playoff over **Chris Sells** of Savannah in boys 14-15, with both players posting 148 totals. **Reid Rathburn** of Alpharetta edged **Jackson Bishop** of Gainesville by one shot in boys 12-13, 160-161.

The SJGT returns to Georgia for tournaments April 17-18 at Douglas CC and May 1-2 at Dublin CC.

Schniederjans fifth in AJGA '10 opener

Powder Springs' Ollie Schniederjans opened the 2010 American Junior Golf Association schedule with a fifth place finish at Carlton Woods outside Houston. Schniederjans shot 1-over 217 to wind up six shots behind the tournament winner.

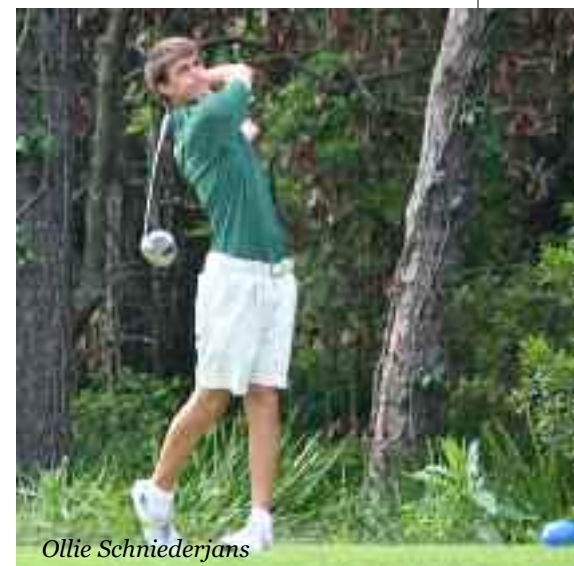
Schniederjans closed out 2009 by winning the prestigious Polo Junior Classic in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. After tying for sixth in stroke play qualifying, he swept through five match play opponents, winning 1-up in the championship match.

Riverdale's **Mariah Stackhouse** was 11th in the ANNIKA Invitational in Reunion, the opening AJGA girls event.

The AJGA has six scheduled tournaments in Georgia this year, beginning with an All-Star event at AJGA headquarters at Chateau Elan April 2-4. The event is limited to players age 12-15, with another All-Star event set for WindStone GC in Ringgold June 8-10.

Chateau Elan will also host a Pre-Season event April 2-4 for juniors who yet to compete in an open AJGA tournament.

Other AJGA tournaments in Georgia this year will be played at Country Club of the South (April 23-25), Coosa CC in Rome (June 29-July 1) and West Lake in Augusta (July 7-9). 🏌️



Ollie Schniederjans



Mariah Stackhouse

GSGA

[Continued from page 26]

Stackhouse will be the defending champion for the Georgia Women's Golf Association Championship, which will be played July 27-29 at White Columns in Alpharetta. Stackhouse won last year at Idle Hour.

The Greater Atlanta Women's Amateur will be played June 8-10 at Brookstone CC, which last hosted the event in 1993. Coble collected her fourth title in the tournament last year at Newnan CC.

The GSGA Women's Top 60 Classic moves to Coble's home town of Augusta, with West Lake CC serving as the host June 29-30. The tournament has been dominated in recent years by college age golfers, with St. Simons' **Rebecca Durham**, a member of the Stanford women's golf team, winning last year at Reynolds Landing.

The Senior Women's Championship is scheduled for Aug. 30-31 at Houston Lake

in Perry, with Marietta's **Brenda Pictor** looking for her third win in four years. Pictor, who reached the semifinals of the 2009 U.S. Senior Women's Championship, won at Arrowhead Pointe in Elberton last year.

The Junior and Girls Championships will both be played June 21-23, with the boys playing at Green Island in Columbus and the girls competing at the recently renovated Capital City Club. **Scott Wolfes** of St. Simons won at Sea Island's Retreat course last year, with **Carrie Metz** of Carnesville taking the girls title at Polo G&CC. Both players won with record-breaking totals for 54 holes.

The Junior Sectional Challenge Match, which consists of teams from seven geographic sections of the state, will be played July 27-28 at Southern Hills in Hawkinsville, which last hosted the tournament in 1998 and '99. The teams are made up of players from various age groups who qualify by competing in GSGA Sectional junior events around the state. 🏌️

Mini-tour preview

[Continued from page 22]

two local options to choose from this year, with two separate tours with extensive schedules looking to get off the ground in the state.

The **Peach State Professional Golf Tour** has been around in Georgia for four years, but has kept a very low profile with a handful of one-day events with modest fields and minimal purses. The tour will operate under new management this year, with Golf Logistics and Jim Thompson, who managed the Big Stakes match in Nevada in 2005, taking over the tour's operation.

The tour has more than 20 two-day events scheduled for 2010, all at Canongate courses. The first event is set for April 4-5 at Whitewater Creek in Fayetteville.

All the tournaments will be played on Mondays and Tuesdays, with the tour's members having the option of Canongate membership for the duration of the tour (April through September).

For information, visit www.pspgt.com.

Dates and sites are set for the first 21 tournaments on the schedule, with three events in September and a 54-hole Tour Championship in October to be determined. Membership fees are \$550 without Canongate membership, \$1,050 with Canongate membership included. Entry fees for individual events are \$500 for

members and \$750 for non-members, with guaranteed \$5,000 first place prize money.

The **Metropolitan Golf Association** Atlanta has posted a similar schedule to that of the Peach State Tour, with 17 events from March through August already listed and five TBA events in September and October, followed by a Tour Championship Oct. 27-30.

The first event on the 2010 schedule is set for March 3-5 at Stonebridge in Albany, with the remainder of the events in metro Atlanta. The next six tournaments are scheduled for Canongate courses, with other tournament sites including Sunset Hills and Oak Mountain in Carrollton, Orchard Hills and the Coweta Club in Newnan, the Frog, Indian Creek, Stone Mountain, Chateau Elan and Legacy on Lanier.

The tournaments will be played Wednesday to Friday over 54 holes, with first place prize money of \$10,000 per event based on 72-player fields. Purses for each event are projected at \$24,000, with the top 12 finishers earning checks. The fields are to be cut to the low 30 and ties after 36 holes.

The tour is being run by Mitch Marlow, who operated the Southern Golf Association in Georgia in the mid-1990s. Membership fee is \$500 (\$300 for amateurs) with entry fee for each tournament \$435 for members and \$485 for non-members (\$335 and \$385 for amateurs).

For information, visit www.mgaatl.com.

Masters preview

[Continued from page 8]

back nine par 5s gave him some hope. He remained within two shots of Perry with a matching birdie at 16, and closed with a pair of pars while Perry imploded with his first major within grasp.

Perry's bogey-bogey finish resulted in a three-way playoff, which did not produce the caliber of play that had been on display for most of the final round.

The first playoff hole (18) featured a wayward drive and an attempted recovery shot that ricocheted off a tree (Cabrera), two extremely poor approach shots (Perry and Campbell) and a botched 4-foot par putt (Campbell). Cabrera managed to save par after his very fortunate carom to match Perry, and won in anticlimactic fashion when Perry suffered his third bogey in four holes at the 10th, the second playoff hole.

The 2009 Masters ended the three-year string of drama-free finishes in Augusta, but left a slightly bitter taste after the late failings of Mickelson, Woods and especially Perry, who was clearly the sentimental favorite.

That started a trend that continued through all four 2009 majors, each of which ended with a somewhat surprising champion and a very disappointed fan favorite as the runner-up.

The last three Masters champions are the

unlikely trio of Johnson, Immelman and Cabrera. Will a fourth straight unexpected winner emerge from the ranks, or will one of the game's elite players claim a green jacket? We'll find out next month.

College preview


[Continued from page 24]

The **Georgia women's team** opened the Spring by finishing 4th in Puerto Rico after leading at the end of the first round. **Marta Silva Zamora**, who was medalist in two tournaments last fall, tied for second in Georgia's season opener, with freshman **Emilie Burger** of Hoschton tying for fourth.


Burger had a pair of top-10 finishes in the Fall, but Georgia's lack of depth, which has been a problem for the team of late, was again in evidence. Duluth freshman **Kendall Wright**, who started in all four Fall tournaments, was the only other Georgia golfer among the top 60 in Puerto Rico.

Tess Fordham, a sophomore from Metter, played well in the opening round to help give Georgia the early lead, but could not repeat that effort the next two days.

Georgia makes two appearances in the state in March, playing at Kinderlou Forest in Valdosta March 1-2 and hosting the annual Liz Murphey Intercollegiate March 26-28.



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2010 GEORGIA Tournament Schedule

Tour events

April 8-11: Masters, Augusta National
April 19-25: (Champions) Legends of Golf, Savannah Harbor
April 22-25: (Nationwide) South Georgia Classic, Kinderlou Forest
April 29-May 2: (Nationwide) Stadion Classic, UGA GC
Sept. 23-26: Tour Championship, East Lake GC
Oct. 7-10: McGladrey Classic, Sea Island GC

(Mini-Tours)

Feb. 24-27: eGolf, Savannah Quarters/Savannah Harbor
April 1-4: Hooters, Chattahoochee GC
April 22-25: Hooters, McCormick, S.C. (Augusta)
April 29-May 2: Hooters, Crystal Lake
Aug. 12-15: Hooters, Callaway Gardens
Aug. 26-29: Hooters, Southern Hills
Sept. 2-5: Hooters, Mt. Vintage (N. Augusta, S.C.)
Oct. 12-14: eGolf, Callaway Gardens

Georgia PGA

March 23: Pro-Pro Scramble, Legacy on Lanier
April 6: Valdosta Nationwide qualifier, Rivermont CC
April 12: Athens Nationwide qualifier, UGA GC
April 13-15: Match Play Championship, UGA GC
May 17-18: Players Championship, Chicopee Woods
May 24-25: Georgia Senior Open, Callaway Gardens
June 1: Pro-Assistant, Cherokee CC
June 14-15: Atlanta Open, Georgia National
July 7-8: Georgia Women's Open, SummerGrove
July 12-13: The Championship at Berkeley Hills
July 19-20: PGA Senior PNC qualifier, Cartersville CC
Aug. 5-8: Georgia Open, Savannah Harbor
Aug. 30-Sept. 1: Section Championship, Sea Island GC (Retreat)
Sept. 13-14: Griffin Classic, Griffin CC
Oct. 25-26: PGA PNC qualifier, Champions Retreat
Dec. 6-7: Pro-Pro Championship, Jekyll Island GC

(Qualifiers)

Atlanta Open

May 24: Jennings Mill
May 25: The Frog
May 27: Glen Arven
June 7: Orchard Hills

Georgia Open

July 19: Orchard Hills
July 20: The Frog
July 21: Wilmington Island GC
July 22: Barnsley Gardens & Glen Arven CC
July 26: Berkeley Hills & Jennings Mill

(Senior Division)

Jan. 25-26: Lakes @ Laura Walker
Feb. 8-9: Doublegate CC
March 1-2: Meadow Links (Jamboree)
March 18: Hard Labor Creek
April 5-6: Willow Lake (Dan Parrish)
April 26-27: Summit Chase
May 10-11: Newnan CC
June 21-22: Mystery Valley
July 6: Chicopee Woods
Aug. 9-10: Jekyll Island (Championship)
Aug. 23: Orchard Hills
Sept. 27-28: Canongate GC (Lee-Weir)
Oct. 18-19: Tour Championship, Legends at Chateau Elan
Nov. 15-16: Wallace Adams GC (Senior-Junior)
Nov. 29-30: Challenge Matches, Newnan CC

GSGA/GWGA

March 26-28: 4-Ball Tournament, Kinderlou Forest/Valdosta CC
April 14-15: Super Senior, Polo G&CC
April 14-16: Women's Match Play, Sunset Hills
April 23-25: 4-Ball Championship, Doublegate
April 27-28: GWGA 4-Ball, Jekyll Island
May 21-23: Mid-Am Championship, Brickyard at Riverside
June 8-10: Atlanta Women's Am, Brookstone
June 21-23: Junior Championship, Green Island CC
June 21-23: Girls Championship, Capital City Club
June 29-30: Top 60 Women's Classic, West Lake
July 8-11: Georgia Amateur, The Landings
July 16-17: Ga.-S.C. Jr. Challenge Match, Atlanta CC
July 27-28: Jr. Sectional Challenge Match, Southern Hills
July 27-29: GWGA Championship, White Columns
Aug. 7-8: Ga.-S.C. Girls Challenge Match, Harbor Club
Aug. 25-27: Senior Championship, Achasta GC
Aug. 30-31: Senior Women's Championship, Houston Lake
Sept. 11-12: PubLinks Championship, Bridge Mill
Sept. 29-30: Women's Team Championship, Savannah Harbor
Oct. 7-10: Atlanta Am Match Play, Rivermont CC
Oct. 30-31: Team Championship, Georgia Club

Nov. 10-12: Senior 4-Ball, Lakes @ Laura Walker & Okefenokee CC

USGA Qualifiers

May 10: U.S. Open local: Marietta CC & Planterra Ridge
May 26: Women's Open: White Columns
June 1: Women's PubLinks: Oaks
June 7: U.S. Open sectional: Settindown Creek
June 15: U.S. PubLinks, The Frog
June 17: U.S. Girls, River Club
June 28: U.S. Junior, Pinetree
June 28: Senior Open, Standard Club
July 19: Women's Am, Brookfield
July 27-28: U.S. Am, Piedmont Driving Club
Aug. 9-10: U.S. Am, Achasta GC
Aug. 30: Mid-Am, St. Ives
Sept. 5: Women's Mid-Am, The Landings
Sept. 7: Women's Mid-Am, Rivermont CC
Sept. 8: Senior Am, Barnsley Gardens
Sept. 13: Women's Senior, Sea Island GC (Retreat)

College/Amateur

March 19-21: Schenkel Invitational, Forest Heights CC
March 26-28: Linger Longer Invitational, Reynolds Plantation
March 26-28: Liz Murphey Classic, UGA GC
April 3-4: Augusta State Invitational, Forest Hills
April 16-18: SEC Championship, Sea Island GC
May 20-22: NCAA East Regional, Capital City Crabapple
June 17-20: Southeastern Am, CC of Columbus
June 30-July 3: Dogwood Invitational

Georgia PGA Junior Tour

Feb. 20-21: Forest Heights, Statesboro
March 13-14: Brickyard @ Riverside
April 5: North Ga. High School Classic, Achasta
April 24-25: Georgia Vets, Cordele
May 22-23: Callaway Gardens
June 7-8: Junior Championship, CC of Columbus
June 28: Atlanta Athletic Club
June 30-July 1: Stone Mountain GC
July 7-8: Glen Arven
July 12: Dunwoody CC
July 19: Capital City Crabapple
July 26-27: Governors Towne Club
Aug. 14-15: Champions Retreat
Sept. 18-19: Wilmington Island
Oct. 9-10: Heron Bay
Oct. 23-24: Georgia Club

Other Junior Tours (Southeastern)

Jan. 16-17: Sanctuary Cove
Feb. 13-14: Sea Island GC
April 17-18: Douglas CC
May 1-2: Dublin CC
June 2-3: Orchard Hills
June 7-8: Marietta CC
June 14-15: Georgia Club
July 13-14: Idle Hour
July 26-27: Hawks Ridge
July 26-27: Jekyll Island GC
Aug. 2-4: West Lake (Championship)
Aug. 21-22: Doublegate CC
Sept. 11-12: CC of Columbus
Sept. 25-26: Forest Hills
Oct. 2-3: UGA GC
Oct. 2-3: Glen Arven CC
Oct. 23-24: Capital City Crabapple
Nov. 6-7: Callaway Gardens

(American Junior)

April 2-4: All-Star. Chateau Elan
April 23-25: Country Club of the South
April 29-31: Preseason, Chateau Elan
June 8-10: WindStone GC (Ringgold)
June 29-July 1: Coosa CC
July 7-9: West Lake CC

Georgia mini-tours Peach State

April 5-6: Whitewater Creek
April 12-13: River Forest
April 19-20: Mirror Lake
April 26-27: Heron Bay
May 3-4: White Oak
May 10-11: Traditions at Braselton
May 17-18: Georgia National
May 24-25: Mirror Lake
June 7-8: Bentwater
June 14-15: Healy Point
June 21-22: Flat Creek
June 28-29: SummerGrove
July 5-6: Chapel Hills
July 12-13: Fairways of Canton
July 19-20: Planterra Ridge
July 26-27: Whitewater Creek

Metro Atlanta

March 3-5: Stonebridge, Albany
March 17-19: Canongate GC
March 24-26: Georgia National
March 31-April 2: Traditions of Braselton
April 14-16: Mirror Lake
April 21-23: White Oak
April 28-30: Heron Bay
May 12-14: Sunset Hills
May 19-21: Oak Mountain
June 9-11: Orchard Hills
June 16-18: Coweta Club
June 23-25: The Frog
July 14-16: Indian Creek
July 21-23: Stone Mountain GC

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Course Reviews

Forest Hills Golf Club (Public)

1500 Comfort Rd., Augusta • 706-733-0001; www.theforesthillsgolfcourse.com

STAFF: Bill Robinson is the PGA General Manager/Golf Professional;

Darren Davenport is the Superintendent.

PAR/YARDAGE: Forest Hills is a par 72 with five sets of tees: Black (7,231 yards); Blue (6,886); White (6,335); Gold (5,529); Green (5,053).

COURSE RATING/SLOPE: 74.5/138 (Black); 73.1/129 (Blue); 70.5/126 (White); 67.1/121 (Gold); 69.5/118 (Green).

ABOUT THE COURSE: An original Donald Ross design from the mid-1920s, Forest Hills has undergone numerous changes over the years, with several major modern renovations beginning in the 1980s. The course, one of the state's most prominent in its early days before a long stretch as a military facility, was taken over by Augusta College in the late 1970s, with the college's expansion leading to the first major renovation in the mid 1980s. Several holes were completely altered to make room for new dormitories, and those holes, plus others on the course, have undergone a facelift since then. A number of the holes have not changed a great deal in design, but many of the greens complexes have been significantly re-worked, with the putting surfaces featuring considerably more contour than in the past. As the home of the Augusta State golf team, Forest Hills has taken on a more modern feel, with new back tees adding some 500 yards to the layout. The blue tees are a little longer than the former back tees, with the whites comparable in length to the men's tees prior to the new tournament tees. The biggest changes are found early in the round, with the nines reversed from its pre-college days. Holes 2-6 are either completely new or vastly different from their predecessors, with 3 and 5 a pair of lengthy par 4s and the 6th changed from a par 4 to a par 5. The final three holes on the nine are longer with much more movement on the greens, but are not a great deal different from their previous design, as is much of the back nine. The big changes on the former front nine are the par-4 12th and par-3 13th, among the handful of holes with water in play and among the most scenic on the course. From there in, the changes are confined mainly to the greens, with the drivable par-4 18th remaining one of the more entertaining closing holes around. Forest Hills remains a relatively tight course off the tee, with a number of elevated tees effectively reducing the yardage a bit.

The Landing at Reynolds Plantation (Private/Resort)

1031 Cottage Rd., Greensboro • 706-467-1566; www.reynoldslanding.com

STAFF: Bob Mauragas is the PGA Director of Golf; Seth Justman is the PGA Golf Professional.

PAR/YARDAGE: The Landing is a par 72 with four sets of numbered tees: 1 (7,021 yards); 2 (6,373); 3 (5,940); 4 (5,244)

COURSE RATING/SLOPE: 74.4/138 (1); 71.4/131 (2); 69.4/126 (3); 71.0/129 (4).

ABOUT THE COURSE: One of the two original Lake Oconee courses, The Landing at Reynolds Plantation has changed names a time or two, but the quality of its exceptional Bob Cupp layout has never wavered. The club, originally known as Port Armor, joined the Reynolds Plantation family several years ago, and was fully merged with the other Reynolds communities last year. The course is among the strongest in the Lake Oconee area, and has served as host for both the Georgia Open and the 2008 PGA Professional National Championship. This year, the course will be the site of the state Class AAAAA high school boys championship. The Landing is a playable but demanding layout, with its difficulty increasing appreciably when the wind is gusting off Lake Oconee. The lake borders much of the opening nine as well as the appealing finishing hole, where the green has been moved to the right and flipped to make it a mirror image of its former self. The course is relatively open and not especially long by modern standards, although there are several stout par 4s where it is a definite advantage to thump it off the tee. Cupp's greens complexes are among the strengths of The Landing, with the putting surfaces on the small side with plenty of slope. A number of the greens have multiple tiers, and you can expect some perplexing putts and demanding short game shots if you're off by just a bit on your approaches. Be ready to play from your opening tee shot, as the lake makes an early appearance after a strong but dry opening hole. The short par-5 second offers a risk/reward option for longer hitters, with the green fronted by a finger of the lake, which also must be carried on the short, par-3 second. The lake borders the entire left side of the stout par 4-fourth, and protects the green at the fifth short and left, with a particularly evil bunker on the right making for some extremely intimidating sand shots. The inland holes are not quite as penal, but there are few soft touches along the way, as Cupp provides a terrific mix of holes that require some thought and precision to successfully handle. 🏌️

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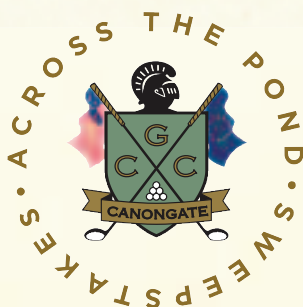
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