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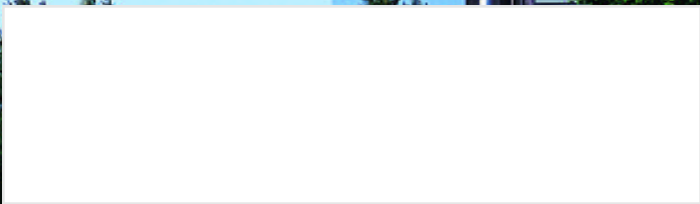
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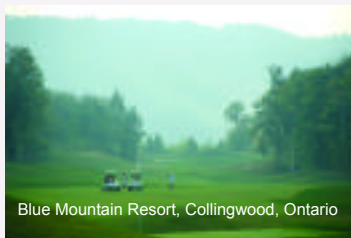
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About the cover: Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, photo courtesy of Grand Traverse Resort and Spa

Guest Editor: Jack Saylor

By Jack Saylor

A moment of panic struck when the e-mail first arrived from the Hon. A. McCafferty, asking that I serve as Guest Editor for an upcoming edition of *Michigan Golfer*. Me? How did this happen? Could I answer this clarion call? Was I prepared to direct an entire staff - such responsibility! Well, my answer came when I read on to the second sentence of the e-mail in which A.M. pointed out that "You don't have to do anything." A-ha, this was an assignment for which I was incredibly prepared. Doing nothing is what I've been doing most of my life - or, at least, that's what I've been accused of. Before considering that I just ended a sentence with a preposition - which is no where as good as a proposition - I assimilated the rest of the Bossman's e-mail. He said: "Just write about anything you want to write about." This took more time than just "not doing anything."

What in the world should I discuss? Let's see: I could regale readers with tales of the notables with whom I have played a round of golf - from Fred MacMurray to Night Train Lane to Jack Nicklaus, Tom Weiskopf, Hal Sutton, Craig Stadler and a host of other pro stars (well, at least three or four). Plus, there's a laundry list of Lion coaches from Joe Schmidt, Monte Clark, Daryl Rogers, Rick Forzano, plus Marty Mornhinweg, who won the flip on the tee and let me hit first (OK, just kidding). Then there are a gaggle of great stories from titanic matches on the links while vying against such giants of the media world as Larry Adderley, Vartan

Kupelian, Greg Johnson, Jack Berry, Jack Ebling, Terry Moore and assorted others . . . a couple of which I even won. These ideas were quickly discarded as frivolous so I moved to the possibility of deeper subjects. Like, perhaps a discussion of the first female member at Augusta National Golf Club - would it be Sandra Day O'Connor, Nancy Lopez, Lucretia Borgia, Martha Burk, Tanya Harding?

Better yet, a new season is upon us and the world is waiting to see which two majors Tiger Woods will win this year and who will end his grand slam bid in which event. But, after considering all possible agendas, it should be remembered that this is, indeed, *Michigan Golfer*, and the upcoming editions of

this journal will provide a feast of information for Michigan golfers and those who love golfing in our great state. The operative word is "Michigan." Our wondrous state has become a treasure trove of golfing venues. Certainly, some have gotten a little pricey over the years, but this ultimately should boil down to a case of supply and demand. Besides, there are bargains all over the place if you seek them out. It amazes how the Wolverine State has emerged in such a relatively short time frame to its present exalted spot in the golfing hierarchy. It was not all that long ago that players fought for tee times on a few crowded munny or public courses, with the breaks rare, indeed, to travel "up north." It was there that the late, great Everett Kircher had induced Robert Trent Jones Sr. to provide the folks at Boyne a little employment and perhaps a buck or two, to tide them over between skiing sea-

"A-ha, this was an assignment for which I was incredibly prepared. Doing nothing is what I've been doing most of my life - or, at least, that's what I've been accused of."

sons. Voila! Michigan resort golf got connected and took off. The idea spread elsewhere. New spots popped up. Other established venues expanded and advertised.

It was an idea whose time had come. Shanty Creek mushroomed. Ron Otto expanded Garland. Harry Melling bought Treetops, begat Rick Smith, and another dynasty evolved. Stan Aldridge, of Indianwood Golf & CC fame, bought Lakewood Shores at Oscoda and another set of class courses emerged. Golf stretched across the northland from Lake Michigan to Lake Huron and family-oriented spas like Crystal Mountain near Frankfort and Jack Matthias' Thunder Bay Resort near Hillman made their

mark, the latter spawning the Sunrise Side movement. Metro Detroit responded to the challenge as more and better courses sprouted and offered more and varied play, a veritable drive-and-a-wedge from home for those in the Metro area. The landscape became dotted with new courses from Plymouth and Novi to Milford, Rochester, Oxford, Auburn Hills as players flocked to a revitalized Fox Hills, Links of Novi, Pine Trace, Mystic Creek, The Majestic at Lake Walden, Boulder Pointe, The Orchards, Twin Lakes, Shepherds Hollow, etc.

Even better, for those who still regard property from Traverse City or Gaylord northward as the Promised Land, devoted golfers can work - or play - their way northward with quality rounds enroute to a preferred destination from any direction. From golf-rich western Michigan, north-bound players can head from Grand Rapids with stops at St. Ives and Tullymore, Mt. Pleasant, with The Pohlcat and Bucks Run, on to The Emerald at St. Johns and the Leelanau Peninsula before moving onward. From the metropolitan Detroit area, interim stops are rewarding from Bay Valley, hard by Bay City; Frankenmuth for chicken and The Fortress; Saginaw (Apple Mountain and Sawmill); West Branch (The Dream); Houghton Lake (The Quest), Roscommon (Forest Dunes); Grayling (Fox Run); Tawas City (Red Hawk) and Atlanta (Elk Ridge). Beyond that, golfers couldn't be better located than rabbits in a carrot patch. They are in the heart of the Lakewoods, Garlands, Treetops, Otsego Club, Michaywe and the rest of the fabled Gaylord Golf Mecca, not more than an hour removed from Shanty and the Boynes and nifty neighbors like

Hidden River, Little Traverse Bay and the like. If you're even struck with more wanderlust, it is no trick to continue to Mackinac Island or venture over Big Mac to The Rock at Drummond Island, Wild Bluff at Bay Mills or other U.P. outposts. The sky is the limit. Bottom line, the key ingredient to Michigan Golfer is Michigan, the best golfing state in the nation. The material therein should keep the MG staff and future Guest Editors busy for a long time.

P.S. - You were right, Arthur . . . I didn't really have to do anything. **MG**

Jack Saylor writes about sports for the Detroit Free Press.

From the Publisher

By Art McCafferty
Publisher

As the publisher of Great Lakes Sports Publications, I have witnessed a number of firsts in our 25 years of existence. We created the first online golf and running publications in the world in 1995. We demonstrated our new product at the Michigan Golf Show that year. They each have met with success with the online reader, as more than half a million readers logged on in 2002 to spend an average reading time of 10 minutes with us.

At the 2001 Michigan Golf Show, we launched the world's first Internet television show about golf. Bill Shelton, now President Emeritus of Eastern



Michigan University and my former boss, became our online host. Bill was not quite sure what he was getting into at that time, but he currently hosts the most widely-watched weekly golf show on the Internet. We followed that launch with the Michigan Runner TV show, with host Jennie McCafferty and the Michigan Skier TV show with host Jim Neff. Finally, we launched the Michigan Travel TV show this past summer, to allow us to work more closely with Michigan's convention and visitor bureaus.

Last year, we attracted 140,000 viewers and this year, we anticipate a quarter of a million. The average time spent by these viewers on our site is a little over 15 minutes.

Frankly, it has been a blast. With our Michigan Runner Show we have covered the Durango, Chicago, Detroit and Walt Disney World Marathons, as well count-

less Michigan road races and high school and collegiate cross country events. Our Michigan Skier covered this year's Jeep King of the Mountain series at Boyne Mountain and we have given our viewers a look at such ski resorts as Treetops, Crystal Mountain, Blue Mountain and the Otsego Club. Our Michigan Golfer show has presented interviews with Bill Newcomb (our first show), Robert Trent Jones Sr., Bradley Klein, Arnold Palmer, Mike Husby, Steve Kircher, W. Bruce Matthews and many others. We have done special shows on The Preserve, The Tribute, Wild Bluff, Michaywe Pines and The Natural. We have covered Michigan

Internet exactly as you see it here. It will be available in PDF format and will allow the reader to turn pages with the click of a mouse. In addition to the PDF format, we will be making the publication interactive. Basically, you will be able to click on areas of the publication for additional articles on the subject. In addition, our advertisers and readers will not only be able to see our publication's advertisements, but will be able to click on them and go directly to those advertisers' Websites.

Finally, we will be bringing a video component to the page. When viewers are reading about the caddies at French Lick, they will be able to click onto a show about the caddies. In the Golf School and Academies story by managing editor Kelly Hill, readers will be able to click on to a video shot at the United States Golf Academy.

This step will have ramifications on the print side. Beginning with our May issue, The *Michigan*



PGA tournaments and spent a week at Brimley putting up daily coverage of the Bay Mills Open. With our Michigan Travel Show we have visited Mackinac Island on Halloween, the Park Place Hotel for the holidays, the Meadowbrook Wine Festival and Art in the Park at Crystal Mountain. We have some great shows planned this year as well.

The year 2001 also saw the start of our highly successful newsletters. Our four newsletters are sent to an average of 50,000 subscribers each month.

With this issue, we are introducing a totally integrated *Michigan Golfer* magazine. This entire issue will appear on the

Golfer will rely more on the Internet to carry expanded stories. The combination of our print and online readership will more than fulfill our commitment to our advertisers. Our online readers will now have a publication that is rich with photos, advertisements and video.

As a publisher who is in constant contact with readers, viewers and, very importantly, advertisers, we have continually tried to stay in the forefront of publishing technology. This year, more than ever, advertisers have said that they are moving away from print publications and utilizing the Internet as an e-commerce tool for their marketing. As a company whose goal it is to become more of a mindfil than a landfill publication, we could not be happier. **MG**



Traverse City Offers a Diverse Round of Golf.

By Mike Terrell

You won't find a more diverse location for a golf vacation than Traverse City. Located at the bottom of pristine Grand Traverse Bay, it offers golfers and their families a wide choice of beautiful links, beaches, woods and water; it's all the things you need for a great summer vacation.

"I look forward to vacationing in Traverse City every summer," said avid Indianapolis golfer Mark Johnson. "I love all the golf choices I have, and my wife and two daughters can always find a variety of things to do."

Golf magazine rated Traverse City among the six top golf spots in the nation as recently as 1999. From the monster 7,000-yard, Jack Nicklaus-designed Bear at Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, to the very playable, family oriented 2,200-yard Bay Meadows Golf Course with its stunning bay views, there's something to accommodate every golfing taste.

Above: aerial view of holes 15 and 16, The Bear, Grand Traverse Resort. Photo courtesy of the Grand Traverse Resort.

Following are a few of the "don't miss" courses and golf resorts scattered around both sides of Grand Traverse Bay.

A-Ga-Ming Golf Course, overlooking beautiful Torch Lake, has started construction on The Torch, a new 18-hole tract designed by Jerry Mathews. It's slated to open in 2004, according to general manager and part owner Mike Brown.

"Play had reached a point on the Ming during our peak summer periods where we needed another course, and the land for this new course is beautiful," he enthused. "It's rolling orchard land with wooded

pockets and limited views of Torch Lake."

A new clubhouse, which will offer more restaurant seating and a bigger pro shop, is also scheduled to open next year. A-Ga-Ming will once again be offering the Traverse City Triple Play golf package, which includes two nights' midweek lodging and 18 holes with cart at the Ming, High Pointe and The Chief starting at \$179 per person for spring packages. For more details call (877) 678-0124 or click on <http://www.a-ga-ming.com>.

Heading back into Traverse City, we see the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa



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which will again be hosting the Michigan Open on the Bear in June and featuring the Jim McLean Golf School, according to golf operations manager Tom McGee.

GTR&S is looking at the possibility of hosting a 2004 LPGA tournament on the recently opened Wolverine, but no tentative dates have been announced at press time. The Gary Player-designed course, at a little over 7,000 yards from the tips, can offer all you can handle, but from the forward tees, is a very playable course for the average golfer. For more information on golf packages at GTR&S, call (800) 748-0303 or click on <http://www.grandtraverseresort.com>.

Overlooking the city from southern hills ringing the bottom of the bay, Elmbrook, which is the oldest public, 18-hole course in the area, offers a gentle, walking-style links with wonderful views. Riding, of course, is an option, but the course, which was laid out in the early 1960s, reflects the walking style of that era.

"To reflect the history of the course and reaching back to the roots of golf, Elmbrook will be hosting a Heritage Classic in June, which will feature play with wooden clubs," said owner Carolyn Olson. "We want to make it a fun event with a serious side. The public is wel-

Photo above: The Leelanau Club at Bahle Farms by Terry W. Phipps.



come, and we hope to have wooden clubs to rent for the tournament." The late June tournament date had not been determined at press time, but for more information, call (231) 946-9180 or click on <http://www.elmbrook.com>.

On the west side of Grand Traverse Bay, the Leelanau Club at Bahle Farms and Sleeping Bear Golf Club, which includes Arnold Palmer's King's Challenge Golf Course, have joined forces with The Homestead Resort, home of the Mountain Flowers Par Three, to offer the Links of Leelanau play and stay packages.

"Starting at \$89 per person the package includes 54 holes of golf and lodging," said Chuck Olson, part owner of the Leelanau Club and head pro at King's Challenge. "We think it offers some great golf and exceptional lodging packages. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Lake Michigan and nearby quaint villages offer lots of choices for the family."

A new practice facility and driving range will be ready at the Leelanau Club this summer, and, back by popular demand, the Steak-Haus at King's Challenge will again be offering Steak and Play nights.

Photo above: the Homestead Resort's Mountain Flowers Par Three, courtesy of the Homestead Resort.

**Rated one of America's
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-Golf Magazine, June 2001.

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For more information on the Leelanau golf packages, call (231) 228-7400 or click on <http://www.kingschallenge.com>.

It's a veritable smorgasbord of choices. Traverse City, with its numerous lodging, shopping and fine restaurant choices, makes a wonderful destination for a golf vacation.

Michigan Golfer TV

Traverse City Golf

<http://michigangolfer.tv>

Above left, Elmbrook, photo courtesy of Elmbrook. Above right, Sleeping Bear Golf Club photo by Terry Phipps. Below, King's Challenge photo by Terry Phipps.

For a complete list of choices, golf courses and things to do in the area contact the Traverse City Convention and Visitors Bureau at (800) 940-1120 or click on <http://www.mytraversecity.com>. **MG**



2003 Camps, Schools and Academies - More Means Less

By Kelly Hill
Managing Editor

Golf, by its nature, is ironic. Less is more. More is less.

In the world of sports, how many games or matches are won by the player or team with the lowest score? Sports judged by the clock obviously are won by the player or team with the lowest times, but can you name a sport that does not use a clock and in which the lowest score wins?

Maybe that's what is so intriguing about golf. Maybe that's also what's frustrating about golf. Less is more. More is less.

But in order to achieve less, more is necessary.

In order to record fewer strokes on your scorecard, more time must be spent practicing. In order to record fewer strokes, more strokes must be taken. In order to record the fewest possible strokes, more time must be spent practicing proper swing technique.

If you are ready to record fewer strokes, and willing to invest the necessary time, perhaps a camp, school or golf academy will help you achieve your golf goals. Here is a sampling of the instruction available this season:

*Photo of Elaine Crosby and Brad Dean
photo courtesy of Crystal Mountain
Resort.*



Academy Golf Schools

A Midwest-based school whose mission, for the past 16 years, has been to provide the finest instruction at affordable rates, Academy Golf Schools offers student-to-teacher ratios of 3:1 or 4:1 and that instructor is never anyone but school founder Rick Davenport.

Contact: (705) 445-0231 or
<http://www.bluemountain.ca>.

Boyne

Imagine playing as much golf as you would like, for five days, on the Boyne Courses in the northern Lower

The first Michigan stop of the season is slated for the week of April 28 at the Oaks and Park Inn International in St. Joseph. Three-day, two-night sessions with 10 hours of instruction range from \$395-\$550 while extended stays with up to 40 hours of instruction range from \$650 to more than \$1,000. The April week in St. Joseph will be available for \$475.

Several schools of varying length, at various courses throughout the Midwest, will be available this season.

Contact: (800) 677-2527.

Blue Mountain

The Monterra Golf Club, at Blue Mountain Resort in Ontario, is one of Canada's leading resort courses. It also is home to a variety of instructional options and has been home to the Georgian Bay Golf Academy, which in previous seasons has offered private and group lessons, weekly instructional clinics and junior golf camps.

Peninsula. Included are the courses at Boyne Highlands, Boyne Mountain, and Bay Harbor.

That is what's included in Boyne's popular Super-Five Golf Weeks. Proclaimed as America's best golf value, this instruction program is directed by the player, rather than the instructors. "Unlike other golf instruction schools, Super Five weeks let you call the shots," says Boyne's website. "You can play as many holes of golf a day as you like on Boyne's championship courses." Boyne also offers one-, two- and three-day academies ranging from \$258-\$699.

PGA pro Brian O'Neil directs the instruction programs at Boyne. A graduate of Ferris State University's Professional Golf Management program, O'Neil was the 2000 Michigan PGA pro-am champion. His teaching philosophy focuses on positive communications and the use of drills to create an exciting learning opportunity.

Contact: (800) GO-BOYNE or <http://www.boyne.com>.

Crystal Mountain

More than 80 instructional programs - all under the direction of Brad Dean, Crystal Mountain's Director of Golf and the 2002 Michigan Section PGA Professional of the Year - will be available this season. These programs include weekend, midweek, women only and junior schools, as well as full-swing and short-game clinics.

All programs are held at the Crystal Mountain Golf School, which has been named one of *Golf* magazine's Top 25 Golf Schools.

New for the 2003 season are an Alumni Golf School, which is open to any previous Crystal Mountain Golf School student; expanded junior camps, which are overnight camps that were extremely popular last season; and new "Brad Dean Short Game Clinics."

Dean, who also was the Michigan Section PGA's 1998 and 2000 Teacher of the Year, and his staff work to improve each student's full swing by applying pre-swing and in-swing fundamentals. Video analysis and extensive use of teaching aids and drills are used to enhance the learning process. Half of the instruction time is spent concentrating on the short game, since this is where most golfers can improve their scoring opportunities.

Contact: (231) 378-2000 or <http://www.crystallmountain.com>.

Garland

The Midwest's only AAA Four-Diamond golf destination, Garland will offer a series of ten 90-minute Ladies Clinics on Wednesdays beginning in early May and concluding in mid-September.

Michigan Golfer TV Guide

The Michigan PGA at Grand Traverse Resort

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show20/>

Mike Husby on Wild Bluff GC at Bay Mills

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show6/>

Mississippi Golf

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2003shows/show2/>

The Caddies of French Lick

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2003shows/show3/>

Golf Schools and Academies

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2003shows/show4/>

Michaywe Pines with Don White

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show14/>

The Natural at Beaver Creek Resort with Larry Bowden

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show13/>

Rick Robbins Talks about the Tribute

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2001shows/show33/>

Quail Chase GC in Louisville

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show2/>

Judy Mason and the Treetops Golf School

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2001shows/show14/>

Crystal Mountain Resort and Art in the Park

<http://michigantravel.tv/2002artpark/>

The cost of each session is \$20 and the sessions will cover chipping and putting, pitching, bunker shots, specialty shots, uneven lies, the full swing, playing in the rough and putting.

Garland also has scheduled a series of eight one-hour Junior Clinics on Sundays, beginning in early June and concluding in late September. These sessions will cover aspects of the game similar to the ladies clinics.

Contact: (877) 4GARLAND or <http://www.garlandusa.com>.

Indiana Golf Academy

Steve Bonnell, a graduate of Ferris State University's Golf Management Program is the director of the academy located in Monticello, which sits on Lake Shafer in northwest Indiana, next to that state's largest amusement park, Indiana Beach. "Our instructors teach methods that allow you to quickly grasp the mechanics of the golf swing," Bonnell said. "We guarantee to help you develop a better golf swing."

Bonnell's staff, which includes Dean of Instruction Bill Planck and Greg Shidler, the head instructor at Pine View, has over 200 years of combined teaching experience. With student-to-teacher ratios no greater than 4:1, sessions are available for those who have never played, beginners, intermediate and advanced players. The academy also features

54 championship holes, including the newest course, Mystic Hills, in Culver.

"This is a program tailored for your personal golf game," Bonnell said, "guaranteed to produce lower scores. We also guarantee you'll have a great time." The academy also features video analysis, on the first and last days.

Contact: (800) 972-9636, <http://www.indianagolfacademy.com>, or <http://www.pvresort.com>

Jim McLean Golf School at Grand Traverse Resort & Spa

For the sixth year, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme has been selected as the Midwest resort location for the Jim McLean Golf School. One of the nation's premier instruction programs, the school offers players of all abilities the opportunity to improve their game by taking advantage of renowned teaching methods and top-rated instructors.

The 1994 PGA National Teacher of the Year, McLean has worked with almost 200 PGA, LPGA and Senior PGA Tour players over 20 years. He also hosts an instructional program on *The Golf Channel*, is a teaching editor for *Golf Digest* and has published over 10 top-selling books, videos and CD-ROMs.

Available at Grand Traverse Resort and Spa this season will be one-, two-, three- and four-day programs as well as

specialty lessons for women and juniors, plus private instruction and group clinics scheduled from May through September. The acclaimed Junior Elite School, a weeklong program of instruction, game management and tournament competition, which is designed to prepare aspiring young players for competitive golf at the high school and collegiate levels, also will be presented this season.

Rates range from \$540 for a one-day school to \$2,325 for accommodations and the 45 hours of instruction provided by the Junior Elite Program. All schools include a Jim McLean bag tag, hat and/or shirt, personal video analysis, unlimited use of the private practice range, student workbook, 25 percent greens fees discount, breakfast and lunch.

Contact: (231) 938-3775 or by e-mail at mcleangtr@aol.com.

The Meadows at GVSU

The site of last year's NCAA II Women's National Golf Championship, The Meadows at Grand Valley State University in Allendale also hosts the David Leadbetter Golf Academy. Leadbetter's commitment to the facility was tentative at press time.

As in previous years, Lady Lakers' coach Lori Stinson will host a Ladies' Weekend, this year scheduled for June 6-8, and a Girls' Golf Camp, scheduled in

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Contact: Stinson at (616) 331-3082; (616) 895-1004 for private or group lessons; or <http://www.gvsu.edu/meadows/>.

Mulligan's Golf Center

The world's largest golf dome, in Auburn Hills, has now been joined by a second Mulligan's location, at Hock Acres in South Lyon. "We currently have six teaching professionals on staff," said PGA pro and general manager Don Cece. "Our staff is qualified to work with students of all ages and skill levels. We specialize in ways of communicating our knowledge with a simple, easy-to-understand presentation."

Rates range from \$45 for a single private lesson with a PGA teaching professional, to \$320 for a series of eight sessions with the Director of Instruction. All lessons include range balls and video tape analysis is available for an additional \$10 fee.

Contact: (248) 332-GOLF or <http://www.mulligansgolfcenter.com>.

Nike Golf Schools at FSU's Katke Golf Course

Teaching golf as a fun and exciting game that provides lifelong enjoyment is the philosophy of the Nike Golf Schools presented at Ferris State University in Big

Rapids. Three graduates of Ferris' Professional Golf Management program - Mike Hodgins, Kevin Tucci and Brad Bedortha - present the sessions which feature commuter and residence plans.

"We have designed the camps to be goal-oriented, which provides players of all ages skill levels a positive learning environment," Hodgins said. Six weeklong junior camps are scheduled to begin June 22 and run through early August. Rates are \$475 for commuters and \$585 for residents. Adult weekend golf camps are planned although the schedule has not been finalized. They will be offered at a cost of \$525 for residents and \$425 for commuters.

Contact Hodgins at (800) 645-3226 or <http://katkegolf.com/camps/>.

Jim Norgart Golf Academy

Player Development Schools, Full-Day Development Schools and Junior Player Development Camps are offered at three of southeast Michigan's premier golf courses, Pine Trace Golf Club in Rochester Hills, Cherry Creek Golf Club in Shelby Township and Shepherds Hollow Golf Club in Clarkston.

"We will work with you to develop a personal plan to improve the flight of your golf ball," said Norgart, who has more than 25 years of experience and who has studied under teaching legends David Leadbetter and Hank Haney. Private instruction and state of the art video technology also is available.

Contact: (248) 343-3675 or <http://www.jimnorgartgolfacademy.com>.

Trevor Parkinson Golf School

Former European Tour player Trevor Parkinson, a native of Liverpool who turned pro in 1967, offers indoor instruction at the Trevor Parkinson Golf School and Promotions Division in Rochester Hills and outdoors at Twin Lakes Golf Club in Oakland. Parkinson's indoor facility features seven hitting areas, each one equipped with a visual communications system

(ASTAR) that provides instant feedback.

"It excels in communications to help students visualize and better understand the basic to the most intricate part of their golf swing," Parkinson said. "This state-of-the-art system accelerates the whole understanding and learning process of the golf swing for every golf enthusiast."

Contact: (248) 608-9634 or <http://www.trevorparkinson.com>.

Red Fox Run Golf Academy

Master PGA Professional Frank Guastella will offer three three-day sessions this season, one of which will be for ladies only. The tentative dates are July 16-18, July 30 through Aug. 1 and Aug. 13-15. The middle of those three sessions will be for ladies only.

"The Red Fox Run Golf Academy will strive to help you reach your maximum potential by improving your existing skills and by presenting a means to more completely understand your golf swing," Guastella said.

The instruction sessions are offered at Red Fox Run, which is located in Gwinn on the site of former K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base. Sessions were \$225 last year. Also available this year are Learn-to-Golf classes, private lessons, a junior golf program and clinics for adaptive students.

Contact: (906) 346-7010 or <http://www.redfoxrun.com>.

Thousand Oaks

A new, 10-acre short-game practice facility is scheduled to open this spring at this Rees Jones-designed course in northeast Grand Rapids. The new facility, located adjacent to the course's practice range, should offer more options for golf schools and private instruction programs.

"We've had a much greater call for instructional programs than we ever anticipated before the club opened a few years ago," said director of golf Gary Smithson. "Now that we have more instruction capacity, not only can

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Treetops

Selected by *Golf* magazine as one of America's Top 25 Golf Schools, the Rick Smith Golf Academy at Treetops just east of Gaylord offers exceptional practice facilities, some of northern Michigan's best golf courses and luxurious accommodations.

Instruction at the academy covers the full swing and short game with a maximum of six students to every three instructors. Students may participate as commuters, or register for package programs which include golf, two meals each day and lodging.

The Henry Young Two-Day, Half-Day Masters program is two half days of instruction which concentrates on the full swing and video analysis of the short game. This is offered at \$675 for commuters or \$845 in the package program. The Henry Young Weekend Workshop (\$925 or \$1,265) is a three half-day school that covers the full swing as well as selected aspects of the short game. The Three-Day, Full Day Classic (\$1,375 or \$1,745) provides

time for a more complete and detailed curriculum along with on-course instruction.

Contact: (888) TREETOPS or <http://www.treetops.com/ricksmith/>.

The Indiana Golf Academy

Steve Bonnell, owner of the Indiana Golf Academy, runs one of the most respected golf schools in Indiana. The academy has an 18-hole course, all types of practice areas and on-property lodging for those two- and three-day golf schools that are so popular. Steve brings a lot of people from Michigan to his schools because of their excellence, close proximity and the favorable temperatures that allow students to start working on their game earlier in the season.

Contact: <http://indianagolfacademy.com>

Tri-State University Golf Academy

"The Tri-State Golf Academy is characterized by its commitment to personalized and individual instruction and care," said new camp director Scott Alexander, who also serves as the university's men's golf coach. The academy,

which is more than 30 years old, is located at the school's Zollner Golf Course in northern Indiana. Alexander takes over as camp director from Bill SanGiacomo who is stepping down after 30 years.

In previous seasons the academy has offered weekend, three- and five-day schools for adults and three- and five-day sessions specifically tailored to younger players.

Contact: (219) 665-4204 or <http://www.tristate.edu>.

United State Golf Academy

Mike Hulce, says things really couldn't be better. Swan Lake Resort has new owners who have brought money, energy and vision to this storied resort. The Resort's new owners have had a significant impact on the United States Golf Academy, which is housed there. Students not only can avail themselves of the excellent instruction of the school, but also can enjoy newly added amenities. Swan Lake Resort offers a new pool, workout room, sports restaurant, conference center and pro shop. It is really a spectacular property. For additional information, check out a video of the school with Mike Hulce at <http://michigangolfer.tv>.

Contact: <http://slresort.com> **MG**

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The Many Faces of Double JJ Resort



By Mike Terrell

Is it a golf resort or a dude ranch? Bob Lipsitz, who along with his wife Joan own and operate the popular Double JJ Resort, don't really care what you call it, "Just call," he chuckles. The truth is the Double JJ, home to the Thoroughbred Golf Course, is an immensely popular family dude ranch, and one of the few golf resorts—with lodging—in the southwestern corner of the Lower Peninsula. The Lipsitzes bought the resort in 1988. It was then, as Bob Lipsitz describes it, "an adult dude ranch, the original Club Med."

"It had been operating as an adult dude ranch since the late 1930s, and it was our intent to make it more family oriented," he explained during breakfast at the Chuck Wagon, a large barn-like building that serves guests staying at The Ranch and the Back Forty. "When we first took over the guest allocation use to be about 70 percent female, and most had children with them. Dads were off on separate golf vacations. We wanted to offer something that would attract the whole family," he said while greeting guests, some of whom had been coming to the Double JJ for over 50 years. "We

Above: Photo of the Thoroughbred Golf Course courtesy of Double JJ.

decided to build the golf course, and the combination has worked well. It's one of the few golf resorts that truly caters to families. Most of the time mom and the kids won't care if Dad is out golfing all day. They have plenty of activities to keep them more than busy."

The Thoroughbred Golf Course opened in 1993, and was quickly followed by 24 condo units, the 32-room Loft Hotel and a large conference center, which houses the Sundance Saloon and Steakhouse, overlooking the golf course. That just takes care of the golfing guests.

Double JJ is actually three properties in one. Each is sequestered in its own area. There is also The Ranch, which was the original adult dude ranch, which is still operating as an exclusive adult area, and the Back Forty Family Ranch, which was opened in 1998. "We are the largest dude ranch in the nation," the former builder proudly pointed out. "With the property we've added over the years, it stretches for three and a half miles along U.S. 31 and is two miles wide. We can put a lot of horse trails in that much land."

What about another golf course to go with the award-winning Thoroughbred? "I've routed a couple of other courses" but we're just in the discussion stage at this time," Lipsitz

said. "I'm not sure what type of course we want to build at this time. It would have to complement the Thoroughbred."

The Arthur Hills-designed course has a reputation for being one of Michigan's most challenging courses. It's not for the timid, but if you want a course that's got bite and beauty, this is a "must play" course. And, for women, it's a *Golf Magazine* Top 10 Women's Course. Laid out through a hardwood forest, there are elevation changes and a few forced carries, although none for women. Water

Double JJ continues on p. 18.

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Formula for the Perfect Winter Escape: Golf Luxury at Innisbrook

By Kelly Hill
Managing Editor

The very name of the course evoked trepidation.

Some golf courses would probably be better avoided by those whose writing of golf is undoubtedly better than their playing of the game. But, those of us who attempt to be objective when reviewing other people's strokes, often lose all objectivity when discussing one's own game. So, we brazenly accept the challenges posed by courses that evoke trepidation while still 1,000 miles distant.

An island is thus designated for only one reason. A piece of land is not an island but for the presence, often the overwhelming presence of one of the four mythical elements of nature.

An island is not an island without water. So, when your clubs could double as divin-

ing rods, a course called "The Island" is probably best avoided. But, before I had even left Michigan for Florida late last summer, I knew that - given enough golf balls - I was up to the challenge.

So I departed for the Westin Innisbrook Resort, located on the west coast of Florida, in Palm Harbor, a leisurely 25-mile drive from Tampa International Airport. By the time I arrived at the resort, which is situated on over 1,100 acres of rolling hills, the friendliness of the staff had brushed aside my trepidation.

Upon my arrival at the condominium - one of 600 guest rooms, suites and condos on the property - which I called home during my brief stay, I had almost forgotten that I would awaken the next day to what could become my worst Gilligan impression.

The Island was the original Innisbrook course, designed by Lawrence Packard of Chicago and opened late in 1970.

Measuring as much as 7,063 yards and, as I quickly learned, demanding more accuracy than that to which I am accustomed, The Island has been named one of America's Top 50 Resort Courses by *Golf Digest*, and in 2000 was ranked by *Travel & Leisure Golf* the 15th-best course in Florida.

The Island quickly became my favorite Florida course after pars on the first two holes, but even after not accomplishing that feat in the remainder of the round, The Island remains my favorite of the four championship courses at Innisbrook.

The resort's signature course, Copperhead, was the site of the PGA Tour's Tampa Bay Classic during my visit. Also designed by Packard, Copperhead, which

measures 7,280 yards and has a course rating of 75.6, opened in 1972. It has been ranked No. 4 among Florida's finest courses. Winding through pine and oak trees, and featuring 10 water hazards and 72 bunkers, Copperhead is a challenge that few can master. Just as well for my psyche that the course was unavailable for play by the resort guests during my visit.

Having been rescued from The Island, I headed the next day to Innisbrook's Highland South Course, a 6,768-yard, par-71 gem that, despite featuring the longest golf hole in Florida, was much more forgiving than the Isle. Resort personnel assure guests that it is strictly coincidence that Florida's longest hole - a 650-yard, par-5 - is No. 13 on Highlands South. I hit a terrific tee shot and a pair of 3-woods I dare not even dream of repeating, and came up five yards short of the green. A lousy pitch onto a relatively small green and two putts later, I walked away content with a bogey.

The Highlands South, at 6,515 yards, is the shortest of Innisbrook's four courses. Located amidst tall pines, Highland South features undulating greens and rolling terrain. The greens on the Innisbrook courses are strictly Bermuda, but are well maintained considering the amount of play they receive. The greens were relatively slow, which is common with most resort courses. Once their speed was judged and adjusted to, I putted better than I had in years. With the Troon Golf Institute, 11 tennis courts, a fitness center, six swimming pools, a nature reserve and, if necessary, three conference halls featuring 65,000 square feet of meeting space, Innisbrook is the ideal place to get away and pamper yourself and your game.

The resort's 600 accommodations are located in 28 lodges surrounding the golf courses. Serving the resort's guests are four specialty restaurants, as well as available room service. While the late summer weather conditions were a bit stifling, Innisbrook is an ideal escape in late autumn, winter or spring.

The resort's extremely informative website - <http://westin-innisbrook.com> - offers more details on accommodations, dining options and even offers a virtual tour of all 72 holes.

With transportation available from Tampa International Airport and non-stop, complimentary shuttle transportation available throughout the resort, it is extremely easy to do nothing but relax and play golf at Innisbrook. **MG**


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"For Better For Worse"

By Marilyn Kacy

When my husband Dennis and I married 20 years ago, he was into sailing and motorcycling and I was into tennis and show horses. A few years later we decided to learn the elusive game of golf and because we were really hooked, we gradually dropped the other sports. We have had many lessons, attended clinics and golf schools, and hacked around for years with both of our handicaps hovering around 20.



The Naples News, learned of the story and called us for an interview. After I picked up Dennis at the airport, a front-page story

appeared about our selection. By the time we got to the driving range to hit balls in preparation for the big day, all of our friends at Wyndemere, our golfing community, had heard the news. We were really excited but we had no idea what we had gotten ourselves into.

One morning last January we were reading a paper at a restaurant in Naples, Florida and saw that the *Golf Channel* was in town offering one person 10 lessons from Rick Smith, to be filmed and shown on T.V. "What an opportunity," we thought, so we grabbed our clubs and went to their location. We were interviewed by the camera crew from the *Golf Channel* and after hitting a few balls for them, they thanked us and we were finished. The next day I drove Dennis to the airport for a flight to Detroit.

I had almost forgotten the whole thing. Then, a few days later I got a call from the *Golf Channel* saying that we had made the short list of five finalists. They wanted to know if we were available the next Sunday in the event that either of us were chosen. I said "Yes, although I wondered how Dennis would be able to take more time away from his law practice to come back to Florida. I needed not to have worried since he was ready to hop on a plane in a minute for what he called "An opportunity of a lifetime."

The rest is history. The Golf Channel said that after they saw the interaction between the two of us they decided to change the format from one person to a couples feature called "For Better or Worse".

Meanwhile, the local newspaper,

Above: Rick Smith, Marilyn Kacy, and Dennis Kacy pose for the Golf Channel's cameras. Photo courtesy of Marilyn and Dennis Kacy.

We went to the Rick Smith Academy at Tiburon Country Club in Naples to meet Smith and the *Golf Channel* producer to discuss the format. Then we went out to hit balls, meet the camera and sound crew, and get microphones wired. We were becoming nervous and Dennis said I looked like deer in the headlights. I wondered if we could even swing a club with all of the people watching. We then began an 18 holes "from hell," with Smith following along and making comments to the cameras but not saying anything directly to us. We were worse than awful. Dennis had a three-foot putt on the second hole, slammed it six feet past the hole and proceeded to five-putt the green. I felt like every club weighed 20 pounds. Of course the crew delighted in filming the entire thing. Dennis said that it was like having his annual physical on national T.V.

But that wasn't the end of it. Smith said, "Now we go to work". We did drills, hit balls, and got taped for hours. The camera crew was packing up and Smith was still talking and teaching, trying to get me to comprehend a technique. What an amazing and patient man.

Every two weeks Dennis would fly to Naples for a lesson, stay a few days to practice and then fly home to Detroit. The weeks of lessons that followed encompassed some of the most rewarding moments that either of us would remember. We found that we had similar problems with our swings which is not too surprising considering that we have practiced

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and played together for years. Most amateurs tend to cast or come over the top and Dennis and I fall into that category. Smith used many stations to help us get the feeling of a correct swing and when it worked it was great but it has been a continuing challenge. One of the most frustrating things that we had to deal with was our tendency to practice incorrectly. I love to practice and spend a lot of time on the range but often I would not grasp the concept correctly. Consequently, I found myself practicing an incorrect swing, until Smith would see me at the next lesson and straighten it out. The really great thing about going through this whole experience together was that Smith taught us how to watch for and correct each other's faults.

I always thought that Dennis and I were quick studies and it would be easy to change the old and adopt the new. Not so. We know so much more about the swing and what he wanted us to do but sometimes our 50-plus bodies didn't want to cooperate. Many years of swinging incorrectly had taken a toll. Smith was very patient but I noted that there were a few more gray hairs on his head when we were finished with the series.

The lessons culminated in a match between Dennis and I. We were feeling confident and really didn't think that the cameras, sound people, production crew, and newspaper coverage would bother us since we had become used to the frenzy. I was wrong. I was back to being a deer in the headlights. Dennis played remarkably well and handled the stress like a veteran. I guess all of the courtroom drama that is in his daily life prepared him well for this day. He bettered his original score by 21 strokes. I bettered mine by nine. **MG**

Double JJ continued from p. 15

and marshland comes into play on nine of the holes. More than a couple of the tees allow you to bite off as much as you can chew. With the risk and reward layout, it's the type of course you will want to play again as you learn the lay of the land.

Hills is best known for his Bay Harbor 27-hole layout near Petoskey, which was ranked one of the top 100 golf courses in the United States by *Golf* last year. "We get a lot of repeat business. People have been coming back here for years. They don't seem to get tired of it," said Lipsitz. "We package with other nearby area courses, so if a group wants a variety of courses, we can accommodate them."

Fox Hills: Course of the Year



Kevin Schaum, Director of Golf, Kathy Aznavorian, Sandy Mily and Richard Apodaca, General Manager, accept the National Golf Course Owners Association Course of the Year award.

Congratulations go to sisters Kathy Aznavorian and Sandy Mily for envisioning their new course, The Strategic Fox. The course, plus overall excellence at their entire Fox Hills Golf Course facility, led to their recognition with the National Golf Course Owners Association Course of the Year Award.

The recently opened Ravine, an Arnold Palmer layout, is located south on U.S. 31 near Saugatuck, and a little farther south, in South Haven, is Hawkshead, another terrific Hills layout with many Pine Valley touches. It winds through sandy dunes and protected game areas.

Lipsitz just finished building 16 new two-bedroom cabins that are located on the Back Forty, which also handles golfing families. "The Back Forty is really geared towards the kids and families with lots of activity areas and the Western theme. There's something for every member of the family," he stressed. Horseback riding is king here. It's what got the place started in 1937. Horses still have the right of way on

the golf course, and, as you will note when playing the Thoroughbred, riding trails crisscross throughout the fairways and rough. It's one of the most unusual golf resorts—teamed with a dude ranch—that you will find anywhere, or is it one of the most unusual dude ranches that include a championship golf course?

Whichever you choose to call it, you will find it enjoyable and refreshing. You do, by the way, get a free drop off the horseback trail.

For more information on Double JJ Resort and the many programs that you can experience, call (800) DOUBLE JJ or click on <http://www.doublejj.com>. **MG**

Indiana and Kentucky Golf Preview

By Art McCafferty
Publisher

We invite our readers to visit our website for over 40 Indiana course reviews. We revisited a number of properties this year including old favorites Sultan's Run and French Lick, two spectacular courses in Southern Indiana. Sultan's Run is flat-out spectacular and challenging, much like the Jones course at Treetops. French Lick offers golfers the opportunity to golf on the courses of two of America's most honored and prolific golf architects, Tom Bendelow and Donald Ross. French Lick is very much like The Jewel at the Grand Hotel.

On Michigan Golfer TV's 2003 Indiana Golf Preview - <http://michigan-golfer.tv> - you can meet Joe Hager, Director of Golf for Sultan's Run. In an absolutely delightful show, you can relive the grandeur of French Lick as we chat with host pro Dave Harner and a group of caddies who have carried clubs for some of America's rich and famous.

While in southern Indiana, we encourage you to cross the river and check out Louisville golf. The flagship course is Quail Chase, a *Golf Digest* favorite of 27 holes. Some other courses in the area to look at are the Bull, and Hidden Creek, both of which are back across the river in southern Indiana.

Our northern favorites include the ever popular Juday Creek (<http://juday-creek.com>), just south of the Michigan border in Granger. It is just south enough and close enough to shoot down and get in some spring rounds, while our greens are still white. We visited the new Swan Lake Resort and were astounded by the makeover that has occurred there. Located near Plymouth, it is a sparkling new resort (<http://slresort.com>). We will feature the resort in our June issue. **MG**



Left top: Quail Chase Golf Club clubhouse; left middle: Clark Fenimore of Quail Chase GC, Jennie McCafferty, Thad Gutowski; left bottom, 10th hole, Donald Ross course, French Lick Springs Resort and Spa; above: 18th hole, Sultan's Run. Photos by Art McCafferty



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2003 Ontario Golf Guide

By Art McCafferty
 Publisher

One of the most memorable highlights of a recent visit to Epcot Center at Walt Disney

World was a visit to the Canadian pavilion. They have an absolutely delightful eight-minute film they show as part of their presentation. The film, with its aerial photography is filled with spectacular images of Montreal,

Ottawa, Toronto, Jasper National Park and Vancouver. At Jasper, the plane swooped over the incredible Banff Hotel revealing the golf courses that were designed by the late Robert Trent Jones and recently reported on by Jack Berry in our Nov./Dec. online issue. We are fortunate to have such a beautiful and always thoughtful neighbor to our north.

We are made aware of the splendid and affordable golf opportunities available to the north and on occasion south of our borders by attending the Michigan, London or Toronto Golf Shows. Their message of late, has been to point out the

excellent value that you can receive just over the border. Perhaps, the most vocal proponent of this is Phil Winch of the Sarnia Lambert Convention and Visitors Bureau. Phil represents the courses in the Sarnia area, tracts that include the Oakwood Inn Resort located in the beautiful Grand Bend area or Sawmill Creek, the exceptional course that owner Bill Gerrits developed five years ago. Other courses in their inventory include Bonnie Doon, Arkona Fairways, Indian Hills, Widder Station, Ironwood and Mooretown.

Another course of note in the area is Forest Golf and Country Hotel. Forest has a huge following in Michigan, primarily because of their 27 holes, lodging and newly improved conference facilities. Quite a few Michigan companies book the complex for corporate in-service programs, retreats or outings.

The Windsor golf scene will change substantially this year with the summer opening of the new Seven Lakes course. Seven Lakes rises above its relatively flat surroundings with some spectacular mounding put there by the

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highly imaginative Michigan architect W. Bruce Matthews III.

On top of my list each year, is a visit to Blue Mountain Resort in Collingwood. While Blue Mountain is probably better known for its great skiing, it is increasingly getting recognition for its Monterra golf course. This award winning course, designed by Thomas McBroom, a leading Canadian architect, is currently ranked on the Top 10 list of Canadian resort courses.

The course is played in the shadow of Blue Mountain. McBroom must have a little Pete Dye in him in that he has named No. 15 the Coffin, No. 14 Silver Lining and No. 10 Stage Fright. The course has bent grass fairways and greens, razorback mounding and spectacular elevated tees to go with its 129 slope and 6,581 yards. Blue Mountain also offers great lodging, water slide rides for the kids, tennis, kayaking, hiking, biking and the beach. Green fees are in \$70 range in the summer, but drop to the low \$40s in spring and fall.

Border crossings have become less of a hassle in the past year, but



©Art McCafferty

remember to take your passport. They also do random searches at the border. I was selected a year ago and the search was quite thorough. **MG**

Facing page: Blue Mountain Resort, photo by Schuller Photography; above: Hole No. 9, Forest Golf and Country Club, photo by Art McCafferty.

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The Mississippi Gulf Coast— Golfing, Gaming, and Good Fishing!

By Bill Shelton

The Mississippi Gulf Coast has been referred to as the “Playground of the South.” Along the 26 miles of sandy beaches on the Gulf of Mexico, visitors can experience great golf, casino gambling, charter boat fishing, and some of the best seafood in the world! Steeped in the history of the Antebellum South, the Gulfport-Biloxi area has always been known for its colorful, bawdy, and often unconventional character. And today, to borrow a phrase from a part-time resident of the area, Emeril Lagasse, they have “turned it up a notch.”

Recently the Gulfport/Biloxi area was rated among the best golf areas in the US by *Golf Digest* magazine in its “Metro Golf Rankings.” Categories considered in the ratings include climate, number of courses, average green fee, and course quality. Ranked in the top 20 percent, the area features courses designed by such notables as Donald Ross, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Davis Love III.

More than 280 holes of golf are available along the coastline of the Magnolia

State and play is year round. Offering perhaps the best combination of affordable, high quality golf packages in the country, golf tourism in the State increased by 60 percent from 1999 to 2001. Today the Mississippi Gulf Coast could easily be labeled as the Golf Coast.

Golfing the Gulf . . . and Philadelphia

In 1945, Bryon Nelson and Sam Snead completed regulation play in the PGA’s Gulfport Open tied for the lead. Nineteen holes later in one of golf’s most historic play-offs, Nelson conceded Snead’s putt giving the Slammer the title and golf spotlight for the moment. Later that year, Nelson amazed the golfing world by winning 11 consecutive tournaments, a record that still stands.

The classic match was played on Mississippi’s oldest golf course, the Great Southern Golf Club, designed by Donald Ross in 1908. Today you can play the picturesque 6200-yard course featuring square greens, gentle breezes, and beautiful vistas of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Gulf Hills Golf Club, a Jack Daray course built in 1927, was a favorite hang-

out for many movie stars, gangsters and “members of the upper crust” according to Kevin Drum, Executive Director of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Golf Association. “The Pink Pony Lounge at the club was frequented by notables such as Elvis Presley who would play the piano for other guests. At one time, the course was so popular that tee times were auctioned off to the highest bidder!” The 6300-yard trek has been totally renovated and is maintained in pristine condition year round.

Mississippi National and Diamondhead are two other older, traditional courses open to the public along the coast. Stretching almost 7000 yards, Mississippi National was designed by Earl Stone while Diamondhead features two championship courses designed by Stone also. As with all of the coast’s courses, the courses are playable all year with reduced rates from November through February.

Among the newer courses on the coast are The Bridges and Shell Landing. Opening in 1997, The Bridges is part of the Casino Magic Resort in Bay St. Louis. The Arnold Palmer-designed facility includes a 6900 yard championship course,



21 cart bridges over wetlands, an 11-acre lighted practice area, and full clubhouse amenities. The course has hosted the NGA Hooters tour and has been a Buy.com tour stop. In 1999 it was ranked as the Number #1 course on the Mississippi Gulf Coast by *Golf Digest*.

Shell Landing, a Davis Love III signature course, opened in 2000 and has quickly been recognized as one of the best new golfing venues. The championship, 18-hole, par 72 layout was ranked No. 5 in the category of "Best New Public Upscale" courses by *Golf Digest* in 2002. Tall pines, marshes, bayous, and wetlands reflect the character of the area and the challenge of this outstanding facility. A southern styled clubhouse with an expansive porch provides a comfortable place to relax after a round on this new addition to the Gulf Coast.

Two other courses provide challenging championship layouts open to the public. Jack Nicklaus designed the Grand Bear, a 7200 yard trek rambling over 650 acres in Saucier and part of the Grand Casino complex. The Oaks, located in Pass Christian, is operated by Landmark National and features perhaps the toughest finishing hole in the State.

Photo on facing page: the Dancing Rabbit 18th Hole. Above: The Bridges Golf Club of Casino Magic, photo courtesy of Casino Magic Advertising.

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Although the Mississippi Gulf Coast offers more than enough golf for even the most avid player, it would be a travesty if you failed to schedule time for a trip to Philadelphia, Mississippi, for one of America's greatest golfing experiences. The Pearl River Resort, a project owned and operated by the Choctaw Indian tribe, is the home of the Dancing Rabbit Golf Club. Tom Fazio and Jerry Pate teamed up to create two courses, The Azaleas and The Oaks, that have garnered the attention of the international golfing community.

The Azaleas, opened in 1997, was recently rated as the 25th Best



ResortCourse in America by *Golfweek* magazine. It has also been cited in *Golf Digest's* "Top Ten New Upscale Public Golf Courses," *Golf and Travel's* "Top 11 International Hidden Gems," and *Golf* magazine's "Top Ten Courses You Can Play." Awards aside, it is one of the most beautiful and challenging golf courses in America. The Oaks course opened in 1999 and is sure to capture golfing accolades also. The huge clubhouse facility set amid tall pines is as close to Scarlet's Tara as imaginable. Dancing Rabbit is one golfing experience that you will never forget and definitely worth the 4-hour drive from the Gulf Coast. Two casino/hotels adjacent to the courses offer attractive stay and play packages.

From the Greens to the Games

Gambling has been a part of the Mississippi Gulf Coast for about as long as anyone can remember. But, in 1990 the State legislature made gambling legal with one significant stipulation: it had to be on water. With the muddy Mississippi on its western border and the Gulf of Mexico forming the southern boundary, legalized gambling quickly sprung up near Memphis on the river and along the Gulf coast.

Twelve major casinos on the coast offer a Las Vegas style glitz and glitter to the area and have brought a significant boost

to the economy of the State. And, these are first class gaming facilities including Grand Casino, Casino Magic and Beau Rivage. Headliners such as Bill Cosby, Jay Leno, Joan Rivers, and many others appear at the casinos regularly.


With over 18,000 guest rooms, nightlife on the coast is bustling. Accommodations from every price range are available from the low-end chain motels to the four-diamond luxury suites of Casino Magic and the Beau Rivage with in-room amenities such as Jacuzzis and wetbars. Golf packages are available and special deals on dining and entertainment are common.

Speaking of dining, the Gulf Coast has some of the best seafood found anywhere. Biloxi was once known as the "Seafood Capital of the World." Shrimp, crabs, oysters, and the freshest catches of the day make eating an "all consuming experience." From the local restaurants located by the marinas to the buffets of the casinos, seafood is in abundance at a very



affordable price. If you seek elegant dining, the Pier 4 restaurant at Casino Magic and Mary Mahoney are well worth the extra bucks.

Facing page: The Oaks; above: Marina, photos courtesy of Golf Mississippi.



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Above: Shell Landing, No. 2, photo courtesy of Golf Mississippi.

For the sports minded, dinner at Favre's on the Bayou in Pass Christian is a must. Owned by Bret Favre's family, on any given night you may be greeted by his mother and father, served by his sister or

brother, and find everyone in the place is a relative! Plus, the food is excellent.

Going South

Getting to the Mississippi Gulf Coast is relatively easy and inexpensive. Several major airlines including Northwest serve the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. Most flights are connections from Memphis or Atlanta and the fares are typically less expensive than flights to Florida. Although the weather in the winter is cooler (average highs from December through February are in the low to mid 60's), golf is played year round. Most golf packages offer cheaper rates during these months and tee time availability is good. Most courses overseed the dormant Bermuda with a winter rye that makes a nice visual contrast between the fairway and rough. Summer temperatures can climb into the 90's but the Gulf breezes provide some relief.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast may have been overlooked as a golfing destination but that is changing quickly. It is an easily accessible, affordable, quality alternative to Florida and Arizona. Additional information on golfing packages can be found at "<http://www.visitmississippi.org>" and <http://www.GolfCoast.com>". Most courses and casino/hotels also maintain websites. Maybe its time to schedule a trip to the "Playground of the South." **MG**

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SLICE OF LIFE



By Terry Moore
Editor Emeritus

As one annually afflicted by Winter Golf and Sunlight Deficiency (aka WGASD), I found it imperative for my health and well-being to consult my physician.

And even though he's an Ear, Nose, Throat & Wallet specialist, I trust him completely with both his diagnosis and his instructions. Observing my sluggish behavior and surly demeanor over the winter months last year in Michigan, the Good Doctor knew strong and quick medicine was needed. "Go to Florida; play some golf," he urged. With that serving as full medical disclosure required by this magazine whenever a senior writer participates in a winter golf trip to some sunny clime, let me tell you how I got better, in Palm Beach, Florida.

Background: Palm Beach County is one of the largest counties east of the Mississippi encompassing 2,578 square miles. It's an area larger than Rhode Island or Delaware. (Note: remember for Final Jeopardy question.) Averaging 78 degrees annually, it features more than 150 public and private golf courses. And it's home to some world-class golf resorts. (Visit www.palmbeachfl.com)

Day One Stretching: Enrolled in a superb sampling of The Academy of Golf. This being the PGA, I wasn't surprised at all to receive excellent instruction. My teacher quickly sized up my swing and gave several useful tips, including how to increase my extension through the hitting zone. Easier said than done, right?

Day One Exercise: Played 18 holes at PGA National Resort & Spa. Home of the PGA of America, the resort and spa has been host to an array of major international and national events. It sports five courses of varied playability: The flagship Champion course just completed a \$4.1 million renovation so expect it to reclaim its reputation as one of the best tests of golf in the area.

Day One Holistic Medicine: The Spa at PGA National is four-star quality. I started to feel much better about myself and my health following a one-hour massage and a post relaxing dip in one of four mineral pools. Not to be missed if you're a Resort guest.

Day Two Stretching: Took a walking tour (and a step back in time) of the venerable and classy Cloister Inn, with its colorful Spanish-Mediterranean

motif, the original structure of the famous Boca Raton Resort & Club. Opened in the Florida land boom and railroad heyday of 1927, it was touted at the time as "the greatest resort in the world." Now 76 years hence, the resort with its 1,000-plus rooms more than lives up to its slogan of "the elegant place to play."

Day Two Exercise: Played golf at the Boca Raton Resort & Club's resort course, the centerpiece of a \$10 million enhancement for the course, clubhouse and short game school. This is an old-time resort course, shoe-horned into limited property that has been nicely restored. Not long even from the back tees (6,253 yards) it'll still bare some sharp teeth with the prevailing winds and the tight, water-laden fairways and greens.

Day Three Stretching: Grand Rapids native and acclaimed PGA instructor Todd Anderson offers more expert instruction at his Golf Academy at The Breakers. You won't find a nicer and more astute golf teacher than Anderson, who counts among

his lucky students Canadian Open winner John Rollins and Today's Matt Lauer.

Day Three Exercise: Worried about fatigue, only played nine holes at the re-designed Breakers Ocean Course, the state's oldest 18-hole course. Built in 1896, The Ocean Course should be played just for the sake of history and tradition. In 2000, architect Brian Silva thoughtfully completed a redesign of the grand dame and he did a superb job. He toughened up the old gal while still preserving the classic attributes of the original course. Best enjoyed on foot with a caddie.

On my last morning in Florida, I sadly packed my bags to prepare for my flight back to Michigan and the gloomy winter. Looking over one of the local tourist brochures, I read a curious historical note. 85 years ago, it explained, Palm Beach locals described the railroads as "hauling sick Yankees" to its warm, sunny beaches. So no doubt my doctor was just prescribing tried and true medicine.

Hey, does anyone have any extra frequent rail miles? **MG**

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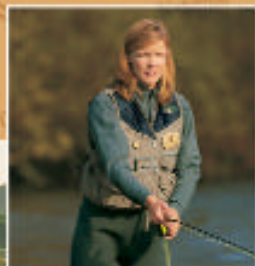
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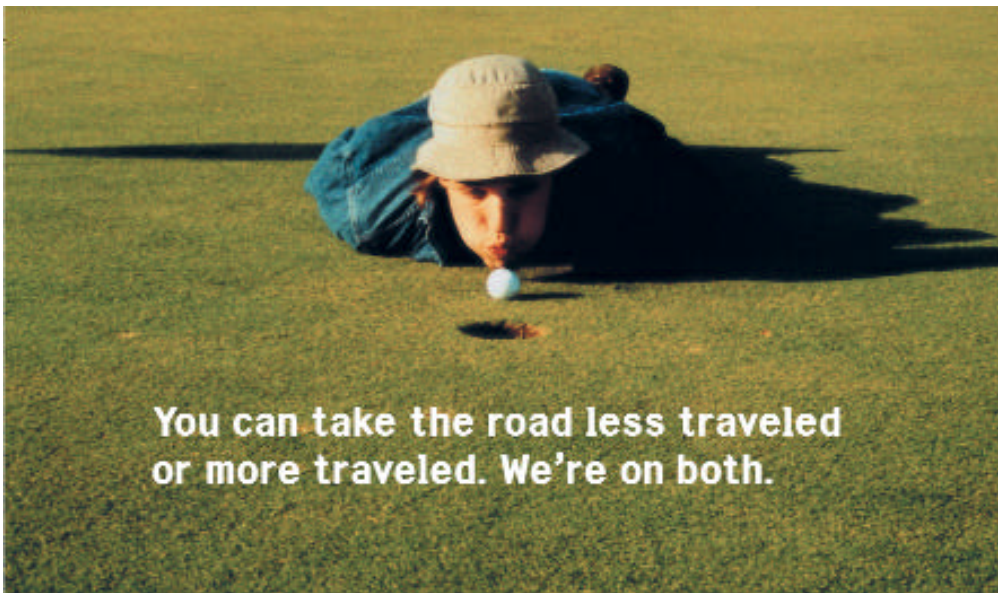
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906-632-0111

Comfort Inn
4484 1-75 Bardonia Spar
906-632-1111

St. Ignace
Comfort Inn
577 N. State St.
906-643-7722

St. Ignace
Clarion Hotel
100 Main St.
616-362-7400

Troy
Sleep Inn
1402 US-24 N.
231-829-4422

Troy
Sleep Inn/Ann Arbor
5529 US-24 N.
231-829-7000

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231-945-3040

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