

INSIDE GOLF NEWSPAPER

The red rocks of Sedona make for a terrific golf background

There is plenty to like about Sedona, Arizona. Not only is it a tourist destination with swimming, hiking, ATV excursions and more. But there is also golf. And don't forget about the red rocks. Sedona is a place that has it all if you like golf and the surrounding terrain. See inside for more on golfing Sedona and what it has to offer.



WHAT'S NEW IN NW GOLF

Youth on Course gives kids discounted rounds

Ever since it started, the Youth on Course organization has been a boon for kids looking to get into the game of golf. With the price of golf sometimes fairly high, the Youth on Course program has been a way for kids to play a round of golf for \$5 - at a variety of golf courses around the country. The program is quite popular in the Pacific Northwest as many courses offer the \$5 program for youths looking to play a round of golf. Youth on Course has taken away the barriers of cost for kids to play.



Over 100,000 kids, age 6-18, have signed up for the program and have access to over 1,400 golf courses around the country for \$5 or less. The program has subsidized over 1,000,000 rounds of golf for kids and has saved families \$8 million in greens fees. Also, Youth on Course is offering college scholarships - making \$250,000 available every year. For more info, see the www.youthoncourse.org or WAgolf.org/YOC.

Winter time doesn't mean you have to put clubs away

Just because winter has settled in around the Pacific Northwest, doesn't mean you have to put the clubs away. Many courses around are offering ways to stay competitive in the winter with tournaments.

Here's a quick look:

- Rverbend Golf Course in Kent will host a Winter Two-person Scramble on Jan. 16 and a Winter Ball Buster on Feb. 13 - two events to finish off its winter series of events.
- Washington Golf is running a series of events through April including Jan. 15 with an individual stableford at Gold Mountain's Olympic Course; Feb. 5 two-player scramble at the Home Course; Feb. 26 an individual stableford at Fairwood Country Club; March 12 an individual stableford at Kitsap Country Club. See www.wagolf.com for more information.

Rules Quiz

You have played your tee shot offline a bit. Searching for your ball in the area where you think your ball is likely to be you find a ball. Deciding it is unplayable you take relief following the procedure under Rule 19.2c, "lateral relief" in the general area. You drop that ball within two club lengths of where the ball was unplayable no closer to the hole. Your next stroke is onto the putting green and as you mark and lift the ball you discover it is not the ball you played from the tee. Now what? Please see the answer on Page 2.

Don't let winter keep you off the golf course in the NW



Just because Mother Nature says it's winter time in the Pacific Northwest it doesn't mean that you have to put the clubs away until spring. You just need to take the right precautions like the players in the photo above - with the warm clothing, the stocking hats and warm gloves. OK, so snow might keep you off the course for a while (right) but when it melts, it means it could be time to play again. Don't let the weather keep you at home. Winter time is a good time for golf. Just ask Inside Golf's Steve Turcotte who has become a believer. See Page 2.



PGA Tour Champions, LPGA set tournaments for Northwest in 2021

The Pacific Northwest will be the home for tournaments for the PGA Tour Champions, LPGA and Korn Ferry Tours in 2021.

- The Boeing Classic will be held Aug. 20-22 at Snoqualmie Ridge Golf Club, just east of Seattle.
- The Albertson's Boise Open is set for Aug. 19-22 at Hillcrest Country Club in Boise.
- The Cambia Portland Classic will be held Sept. 17-20 at Portland's Columbia Edgewater Country Club.

For more, see inside this section of Inside Golf.



Northwest in the USGA spotlight for 2021 with Four-Ball event at Chambers Bay

The Pacific Northwest will continue to be in the spotlight by the United States Golf Association as Chambers Bay and the Home Course will play host to the 2021 Men's Four-Ball Championship.

The event is set for May 22-26 for a field of 128 two-player teams. Qualifying will be held May 22 and 23 at both Chambers Bay and the Home Course before the match play part of the tournament moves to Chambers Bay for the final three days with the field being cut to the low 32 teams.

The 2020 Four-Ball Championship was set to be held at the Philadelphia Cricket Club, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bandon Dunes played host to the U.S. Men's Amateur last summer, which continued to put the Northwest in the USGA spotlight again.

Chambers Bay and the Home Course have teamed up before, with both courses playing host to the U.S. Amateur in 2011.



Chambers Bay will host the 2021 USGA Four-Ball.

Winter golf in the Pacific Northwest can be done, but it's important to be prepared

A couple of weeks ago, a buddy called up and said let's go tee it up. It was late November and I checked outside while we were on the phone and there was some frost on the ground and the temperature gauge outside the house read 41 degrees. Golf? In November? In 41 degrees? I asked him if he was out of his mind. He said he hadn't played in a few days and wanted to get out. I told him to look outside. He didn't care.

So I went along with this madness. I pulled into the parking lot at Twin Lake Golf and Country Club in Federal Way, looking to see if there were many cars in the lot and if the tee was open. I wondered what I was thinking.

As we stood the first tee, you could see our breath in the chilly air. But you know what, after that first tee shot, it wasn't bad.

Yes, I said that. It wasn't bad.

If you want to play year-round golf in the Pacific Northwest, you need to be prepared - kind of like a Boy Scout. I made sure I was prepared. I had extra layers, warm gloves, a stocking hat and wool socks. And 18 holes later, the score might have not been good but the round was pleasant.

Yes, I said that. It was pleasant.

I have never been a fan of winter golf. If it's cold, the clubs are staying in the trunk. If it's raining and windy, I am going nowhere near a golf course.

But there are ways to play golf in the winter in the Pacific Northwest and make it an experience that just might keep you coming back. I will keep coming back. That was music to my friend's ears as he lightened my wallet that day, knowing I am not a good winter player.

But now, after figuring out a few winter tricks, I might try and lighten his wallet. I bought some Titleist mittens to keep the hands warm. I remembered I had some turtle neck shirts. I had some long underwear to help layer up. I grabbed a stocking hat I forgot I had. And I had some wool socks I forgot I had that were taking up space in a drawer.

Winter golf is now a thing for me. Now, if it rains or snows or the wind is blowing to drop the tem-



perature even more, then we might have another problem.

But for now, bring on the winter golf. It might be cold, but I will be out there.

Steve Turcotte is editor of Inside Golf Newspaper. He can be reached at sdturcotte@comcast.net.



You can stay sharp working indoors in the winter, too.



If you want to keep playing golf in the winter in the Northwest, you need to be prepared with the right clothes.



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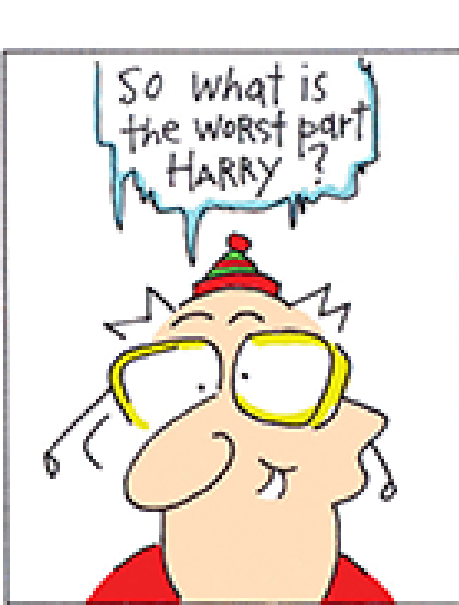
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Double Bogey



Rules Answer

• Answer: Under Rule 19.2 there are three relief options available for a ball unplayable (stroke and distance 19.2a, back on the line 19.2b, lateral relief 19.2c) of the three the "back on the line" and "lateral relief" require you to know where your ball is when taking relief. The known location of your ball serves as the "reference point" for taking relief. Since the ball you dropped was not your ball and you did not know where your ball was when taking that drop the only correct option was stroke and distance back in the "teeing area". This means you played from a wrong place in breach of Rule 14.7a., a two stroke penalty. You could still go back and attempt to find your ball originally played from the tee. Or if you were to opt for going back to the tee you would incur a penalty of one stroke for a lost ball and a two stroke penalty for playing from a wrong place 14.7a.

• Inside Golf would like to thank Paul Lucien for his rules questions each month.



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Boeing Classic back on the schedule for 2021; NW Golfing Gorilla Tom Tuell passes away

PGA Tour Champions announced today the 2021 tournament schedule, featuring 25 events and culminating with the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs in November. The Tour will contest tournaments in Canada, England and 19 states, with prize money totaling more than \$55 million.

The 2021 Boeing Classic is on the schedule for Aug. 20-22 at the Snoqualmie Ridge Golf Club, just east of Seattle. The event was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But tournament officials are excited to be back for 2021 and will be offering a star-studded field.

The 2021 rookie class will be highlighted by three-time major champion Padraig Harrington (turns 50 on August 31), nine-time PGA Tour winner Stuart Appleby (May 1), and four-time PGA Tour winner Robert Allenby (July 12). They will follow a rookie class that tallied eight victories in 2020, including two each by Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els and Jim Furyk.

The Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai (January 17-23) kicks off a schedule that will feature two new tournaments. The Ascension Charity Classic was supposed to make its debut in 2020 but was canceled due to the pandemic, and its long-awaited inaugural event will take place September 6-12 at Norwood Hills Country Club in St. Louis.

Golfing Gorilla passes away at age 70

South Puget Sound native and “trainer” to local celebrity golfer The Golfing Gorilla, Tom Tuell passed away in December after a brief battle with cancer. He was 70.

Tom was a lifelong South Puget Sound resident, attending Washington, Hunt, and Wilson High School. He went on to study and play golf at the University of Washington and then graduated from the University of Puget Sound with a Bachelor’s Degree in Education.

He loved to laugh and he loved people. Tom began “training” The Golfing Gorilla in the late 1970s to

become a trick-shot artist, and went on to speak, teach and entertain fans at celebrity and high-profile golf tournaments and events around the world. His ability to hit a golf ball prodigious distances while wearing a bulky hairy gorilla suit confounded and delighted fans everywhere, and he became a local and national legend. His talent for the long ball included him in the 350 Club, for players who can drive the ball 350+ yards.

WinCo Portland event cancelled

The WinCo Foods Portland Open, the traditional regular season finale on the Korn Ferry Tour since 2014, has been canceled.

A spokesman for the Korn Ferry Tour confirmed the Portland Open is no longer part of its schedule. Portland Open tournament executive director Jeff Sanders wrote in a statement that “We enjoyed a tremendous seven years of PGA Tour level golf with the WinCo Foods Portland Open, but 2020 marked the end of the current multiyear agreement with our title sponsor, WinCo Foods. We thank WinCo Foods for their great support over that time.”

During the tournament’s seven-year run, 175 players left Portland having earned a PGA Tour card to qualify for the big show.

The Portland Open, played at Pumpkin Ridge in North Plains, has been one of the Korn Ferry’s big stops. It was the last tournament for players to earn their way into the Korn Ferry’s top 25 in season earnings and status on the PGA Tour.

Don’t post your scores in the NW

As you may know, Washington Golf and the Oregon Golf Association both observe an inactive score posting season during which rounds played in the area are never acceptable for handicap computational purposes. Most of the golf associations in the Northern areas of the U.S. are seasonal golf associations like WA Golf and the OGA and also observe an inactive score post-

ing period. For WA Golf and the OGA, the inactive score posting period runs from November 14th to the last day of February.

Scores posted on the computer at the home club are never transmitted to GHIN and are automatically deleted by GHIN on March 1 every year. The automatic deletion by GHIN happens to Home Scores only. Other types of scores, Away, Internet, Tournament, Penalty or Combined posted during the inactive score posting period are not automatically deleted by GHIN.

Should a club wish to allow their members to continue to post home scores during the inactive season, the WA Golf staff informs the club, before activating the inactive season posting option at GHIN for the club, that the club should monitor all scores posted during the inactive season and should they find unacceptable scores in a members file, the scores must be deleted by the clubs.

Mitch Runge new head pro at Home Course

The Home Course in DuPont, Wash. has announced that Mitch Runge has been selected as its new PGA Head Professional. Mitch will be working under the direction of Justin Gravatt, PGA general manager at The Home Course.

A lifelong native of the Pacific Northwest, Mitch most recently was serving as interim PGA Head Professional at Tacoma Country and Golf Club. Mitch spent 13 years working at Tacoma Country and Golf Club, working in the bag room before becoming an assistant professional and the interim head professional.

Mitch’s uncle Kris Runge is the PGA Head Professional at Ocean Shores Golf Course on the Washington coast. Runge’s dad Louie Runge was the longtime PGA Head Professional at Willapa Harbor Golf Course in Raymond, Wash. on the Washington coast. Mitch grew up in Raymond, graduating from Raymond High School and then attending St. Martin’s University in Lacey, Wash.

Highlands Golf Course set to celebrate its 90th

The Highlands Golf Course in Tacoma is celebrating its 90th Anniversary in 2021 and the new owners are planning as much excitement as COVID-19 pandemic will allow. If their first year in charge was any indication, look out. Local golfers responded to their many course improvements by playing 11,000 more rounds there than the year before.

That means more than 27,000 rounds were played at Highlands in 2020. It also means that Tacoma golfers have experienced more than a million and-a-half rounds at the “gem” of a par-3 course near the Narrows Bridge since its June 20th opening in 1931. Jack Connelly has been responsible for a “like new” facility at his totally- remodeled course and truly agrees with its motto – “Half the Time – Twice the Fun”. He feels that short courses will play a key role in the future of the golf business.

“Many of today’s golfers don’t have 5 or 6 hours to spend on a golf course on a regular basis,” he said. And there’s a bonus “like working on one’s all-important short game with an opportunity for golf’s biggest thrill on every green – a hole in one.”

A new café, McDuff’s, a new extended patio with an outdoor fireplace and a new fire pit, a remodel of its clubhouse, new sand in every bunker, improvements to all of the greens (many think they are now the best in the state), a new irrigation system (soon to be completed) and lots of attention to the scenic beauty of the course surroundings are examples of the “new” Highlands. So, what’s on the agenda for the 90th celebration?

A renewal of the Washington State Par-3 Championship is planned. A 90th Anniversary celebration will feature a tournament and fun for all. Ownership is dedicated to making Highlands a recreational experience for our seniors and our youngsters as well as a “tune-up” opportunity for golfers who want to remain at the top of their “games”.




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After a fire scare, Oregon’s Tokatee course getting back to normal

by Steve Mims, Special to Inside Golf Newspaper
• Editor’s note: Printed by permission from he PNGA.

One month after Tokatee Golf Club was threatened by the Holiday Farm Fire in the early days of September 2020, the picturesque course along the McKenzie Highway in McKenzie Bridge, Ore. was able to reopen.

Soon after the fire began on Sept. 7, concern spread quickly throughout social media that Tokatee could be in danger. The course was shut down the following day as the fire that eventually spread to nearly 175,000 acres was estimated to have reached to within a quarter mile to the northwest of the property, just outside the second green and third tee box.

“There were far too many sleepless nights,” said Mark Giustina, the operating manager for the course.

As the fire headed west and forced evacuations along the highway all the way into Springfield, nearly 120 firefighters and other emergency personnel began using the golf course as a staging area.

Once the course was spared, concern spread to the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest that provides some of the unique views from the course.

After power was lost at Tokatee, Superintendent Ty Patton was able to get a generator to keep the irrigation system going so the greens, fairways and tee boxes were not damaged. He was also able to aerate the course during its four-week shutdown.

There was still no phone service when the course reopened on Oct. 3, but the structures on site were not damaged. However, more than 400 residences in and around the nearby town of Blue River were destroyed in the fire, along with 24 commercial buildings, including the local post office.

Dan King, who has been the PGA Professional at Tokatee for 25 years, lives in a home just east of the golf course. He had to evacuate to the town of Sisters, about an hour away, in the middle of the night when the fire got close to his property.

“I knew quite early that Tokatee was fine, but what I didn’t know was how my staff fared,” King said. “Seven of my staff members lost their homes and the

whole community has been devastated. My initial feeling was that of survivors’ guilt and ‘How can I help the far less fortunate?’”

Tokatee is in a remote location along a highway that connects the Eugene/Springfield area to Central Oregon. The nearby town of Blue River was essentially wiped out by the fire.

“It was just unsettling and gut-wrenching,” Giustina said. “The fire moved so quickly and we had employees who lost their homes. Our hearts were going out to our neighbors, friends and employees while hoping they could get a line around the fire so there was no more devastation.

“It was a rush of emotions from ‘How did we get so lucky?’ on one side of it to agony for all those people who lost everything. It is such a tight community up there. We are close with different lodging outfits that lost so much. You had people who went from playing golf every day to waking up in the middle of the night evacuated and then when they came back, their house was gone.”

Giustina was one of the first people allowed to drive along the highway to the golf course to visit the Spike Camp set up for first responders.

“It was overwhelming because there was so much destruction,” he said. “The smoke was so thick and there was ash and no rain. The sky was a charcoal grey color.”

Once the highway was reopened to the public, Tokatee was ready to welcome golfers back with online tee times being required. Employees were able to return to work, including those in the restaurant that is serving a limited menu including sandwiches and hamburgers.

While the golf course and structures were not affected by the Holiday Farm Fire, many of the club’s friends and neighbors have been deeply impacted, and thoughts and prayers go out to all of them. Tokatee re-opened on October 3rd. Getting to Tokatee may be interrupted. Tokatee is located at MP 47.5 on Hwy 126. Please visit ODOT’s website for details on its current accessibility.



Tokatee Golf Course, outside of Eugene, had a major fire scare in September but has returned back to play.

“The most difficult experience of opening was the look on the faces and expressions from my customers who just drove up the highway for the first time since the fire,” King said.

Tokatee, which opened in 1966, has been named as one of the “Best Courses You Can Play” by *Golfweek* magazine and “One of America’s Top 25 Public Golf Courses” at times throughout its history. It traditionally closes for the winter in November, but could get an extended run this year.

“It seems like every year we close in mid-November and then we have great weather into December and we

wish we were open,” Giustina said. “I think we will try to push it a bit into early December this year.”

That would be welcome news for area golfers as well as staff members at the course.

“This whole year, with COVID and now this fire, we’ve been ready to turn the page like the majority of people,” Giustina said.

Steve Mims spent the past 21 years as a sportswriter at The Eugene Register-Guard. He was a finalist for Oregon Sportswriter of the Year in 2017 and was honored by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association for Best Sports Story in 2012.



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Destination: Sedona

Just north of Phoenix, Sedona offers some terrific golf and views of surrounding red rock formations

As you wind your way off Interstate-17 in Arizona north of Phoenix and head west, you realize what all the fuss is about Sedona. The terrain turns mountainous and the terrain also turns into a sea of red rocks.

Sedona is a tourist hot spot and for some good reasons. The sights are unmatched with mountains and the red rocks, the winding Oak Creek Canyon provides plenty of hiking opportunities, the ATV experiences are unmatched in the area and the shops and restaurants provide a solid variety.

And then there is the golf.

With two public golf courses and one private course, Sedona is not only a destination for vacation getaways but also for golf getaways.

Sedona Golf Resort and Oakcreek Country Club are two of the best public courses you will find - and both offer something you don't see at other golf courses - the views of the mountains and the red rock background.

The visitors to Sedona can thank Mother Nature for what she has become. The red rock mountains have also been given names such as Bell Rock, Coffee Put Rock, Snoopy and Cathedral Rock. And almost as visible as you play your round of golf.

Sedona Golf Resort, managed by OB Sports, offers a place where the par-3 14th hole is the most photographed hole in the Southwest (see right). At, 6,646 yards it might not seem long but with holes going up hill then downhill, you will need just about every club in the bag. And the mountains provide a great distraction if things aren't going well around the 18 holes - as I found out during my round.

Oakcreek Country Club, a Robert Trent Jones Jr. design, gets your attention early with a long par-5 and then the second hole offers a huge red rock mountain looking like it sits right behind the green. The par 3 holes are all scenic, challenging and tough. It might say



Red rock formations are a sight to see in Sedona.

country Club on the name of the course but this is a place that is open to the public and annually an award winner being ranked among the top courses in the state of Arizona.

Golf is a year-round deal in Sedona, although the temperatures in the winter months might be a little chilly in the mornings. And off the course there is plenty to do as well in Sedona, as the town is home to 40 art galleries and dozens of international acclaimed artists and writers.



Oakcreek Golf Course (top) and Sedona Golf Resort offer some terrific golf as well as some great scenery.

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Sharp, Coston and Prante win awards for 2020 Players of the Year in the NW

Brady Sharp, Jeff Coston and Shane Prante have been named the Omega Players of the Year by the Pacific Northwest Section PGA. All three had terrific seasons, despite limited in play by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sharp was named the Omega Player of the Year for his performances which included a tie



Jeff Coston

for second at the PNW PGA Championship, a tie for fifth at the Muckleshoot Washington Open Invitational, a tie for 21st at the Northwest Open invitational as well as winning the Central Washington Chapter Championship. Sharp, who plays out of Wine Valley in Walla Walla, also qualified for the PGA Professional Championship next spring.

Coston, an instructional columnist for Inside

Golf Newspaper and the director of instruction at Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine, won the Pacific Northwest Senior PGA Championship, captured the Senior Oregon Open Invitational and was second at the Senior Washington Open Invitational.

Prante was named as the Omega Assistant of the Year for winning the Pacific Northwest PGA As-



Shane Prante

sistant Championship, finishing second at the Western Washington Chapter Assistant Championship, finishing in a tie for 11th at the Oregon Open Invitational, finishing in a tie for 14th at the Muckleshoot Washington Open Invitational, finishing in a tie for 36th at the Northwest Open Invitational and tying for 65th at the annual National PGA Assistant Club Championship.

Did you know....

- The Washington Golf Youth on Course program, which provides \$5 rounds of golf at participating courses to kids age 6-18, increased its membership by 60 percent in 2020. It has over 5,600 members, who played an estimated 25,000 rounds in 2020. It is the largest Youth on Course program in the Pacific Northwest. Visit WAgolf.org/YOC for more information.



- The Pacific Northwest Golf Association was founded in 1899, and is one of the oldest golf associations in North America. The PPGA administers the Pacific Northwest Golf Hall of Fame, which was established in 1978, and currently has 69 inductees. Visit thePNGA.org for complete bios of all Hall of Fame members.



Tour Players With Northwest ties

PGA Tour

- Kevin Chappell • Kirkland • 143rd on the list with \$103,914
- Ben Crane • Portland • No events
- Joel Dahmen, Clarkston • 74th on the list with \$320,518
- Robert Garrigus • Gresham • No events
- Scott Harrington • Portland • 139th on the list with \$109,251
- Ryan Moore • Puyallup • No events
- Cheng Tsung Pan • Ex-UW • 48th on the list with \$545,311
- Andrew Putnam • Tacoma • 129th on the list with \$131,440
- Kyle Stanley • Gig Harbor • 88th on the list with \$269,567
- Nick Taylor • Ex-UW • 140th on the list with \$108,510
- Aaron Wise • Ex-Oregon • 85th on the list with \$274,500

Korn Ferry Tour

- Alistar Docherty • Vancouver, Wash. • Finished 236th on the list
- Robert Garrigus • Gresham • Finished 147th on the list
- Andres Gonzales • Olympia • Finished 148th on the list
- Alex Prugh • Spokane • Finished 129th on the list
- Dylan Wu • Medford • Finished 16th on the list, earned PGA Tour card

Champions Tour

- Fred Couples • Seattle • Finished 13th on the list with \$689,933
- Bob Gilder • Corvallis • No Events
- Brian Henninger • Eugene • No Events
- Peter Jacobsen • Portland • Finished 125th on the list with \$2,096
- Kirk Triplett • Pullman • Finished 31st on the list with \$359,885

Mackenzie Tour (Canada -Tour Cancelled for 2020)

- Derek Barron • Puyallup • No Events
- Chris Killmer • Bellingham • No Events
- Cory Pereira • Ex-UW • No Events
- Chris Williams • Ex-UW • No Events
- Eugene Wong • Ex-Oregon • No Events

LPGA Tour

- Carolyn Inglis • Eugene • 93rd on the list with \$65,084
- Jing Yan • Ex-UW • 99th on the list with \$54,719

LPGA Symetra Tour

- Jamie Huo • Kent • 176th on the list with \$404
- Jimin Kang • Seattle • No Events
- Mallory Kent • Seattle • No Events
- Sadena Parks • Tacoma • No Events
- Gigi Stoll • Tigard • 57th on the list with \$7,990
- Kim Welch • Ex-WSU • No Events

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The Lesson Tee: Don't get trapped in a bunker, there are always ways out to save the next shot

I was giving a lesson in the bunker to one of my female high school students. She has taken ownership of her game, practice technique, wedge play, putting and yes bunker play. We stepped in that bunker and she showed me what she had. Her execution made me smile.

Bunker play, if ever considered is an after thought. Golfer's of most levels consider the bunker a trap. Mentally, due to lack of practice and understanding they are trapped. The bunker can be an opportunity. Lets look at a few ways to step out of being trapped in the bunker and into better bunker play.

One essential key to better bunker play is using the bounce of the sand wedge effectively. (photo 1) Splash the sand with the flange or bounce in the leading edge as when striking an iron shot off the grass. An effective way to practice this is by drawing a line in the sand and practice striking on and in front of that line with the club bounce.

The more you open the club face the more bounce is produced. Many golfers do not open the club face enough in the bunker. Next, stand further away from the ball at address. This also produces more effective bounce. Lowering your hands at address will enhance the bounce also.

Lean your upper body to the left with 70% of your weight on your left side. Keep the buttons of your shirt on top of the ball at address and throughout the swing.

Not to the right of the ball as in a regular golf shot. This chest/buttons on top of the ball or even left of the ball will help shipping and pitching also! These principles will enhance your bunker play, besides time in the bunker.

Many times I place a 2 x 4 (wood board) in the bunker level with the sand. I have my students practice striking the board with the bounce of the club. (photo 1) Then I have them put some sand on that board; striking the board and splashing the sand. They do this standing further from the ball



with a wider stance; lower hands and leaning left. Finally, I have them put a golf ball on top of that sand on the 2 x 4. They strike the board; splash the sand and the ball softly lands on the green. This exercise helps train striking the sand with the bounce of the wedge.

When in the bunker we know the club head need actually strikes the ball. The force of the club through the sand propels the sand thus the ball on the green. I imagine a square around the golf ball (photo 2).

No matter the bunker shot, I take out the square of sand around the golf ball. Take out the square! Always! The bounce of the club takes out the square. That's Jeff 3:3. Always the same point of entry. Always the same amount and depth of sand. Just more or less speed.

Just more or less loft of the wedge at address. Always the same set up.

Just a note for experimentation. The wedge will always move the sand. The sand will give in to the wedge. Wet sand is not concrete, it will give. Get down and through the sand with the bounce of the wedge.

Jeff Coston is a 24-time Pacific Northwest PGA Player of the Year. He can reached for appointment at Semiahmoo by calling 360-201-4590. Visit jeffcoston.com.



Photo #1



Photo #2

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Orcas Island GC
Oroville GC
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Peninsula GC (9 holes)

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River Ridge GC
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Riverside GC
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Snohomish Golf Course
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Rules of the Game: What did my ball just hit and now what are the rules you need to follow

A couple of columns ago we looked at what happened when a ball in motion was deflected or stopped both accidentally and intentionally. The example focused primarily on what happened on the course other than the putting green. This time we will look at the situations that could occur on the putting green.

The easiest is two balls that collide when hit from off the green at the same time. Generally, golfers take care to wait their turn, but there are times that you don't have a line of sight to see what other players are doing, and in an effort to respect pace of play, two players can end up hitting at the same time. If the balls collide off or on the green, they are played as they lie, no penalty to anyone.

The status changes when the balls have both been struck from a position on the green and then collide as in the photo.

The balls are replaced and the strokes are replayed. The original stroke is effectively erased from the players' scores. If the players fail to replace the ball on the original spot, and instead play from the new location, they will be playing from the wrong place, which is the general penalty, two strokes in stroke play and loss of hole in match play.

If it is determined that the wrong place is a serious breach (think: one of the balls hangs on the lip of the hole for a tap in) it could result in a disqualification. Worse yet, if the deflected ball is holed and the stroke is not replayed the player will not have completed the hole. Should they tee off on the next hole, they are disqualified.

Any time you face a situation that you really aren't sure what to do, complete the hole with two balls to protect yourself. Report it to the committee



for a ruling to sort it all out.

There are other times that a ball on the green could be deliberately stopped or deflected. If it is by another player, he/she faces the general penalty. Repeated offences could result in disqualification for actions contrary to the spirit of the game. The player replays the stroke with the added advantage of having had a read of the line of play.

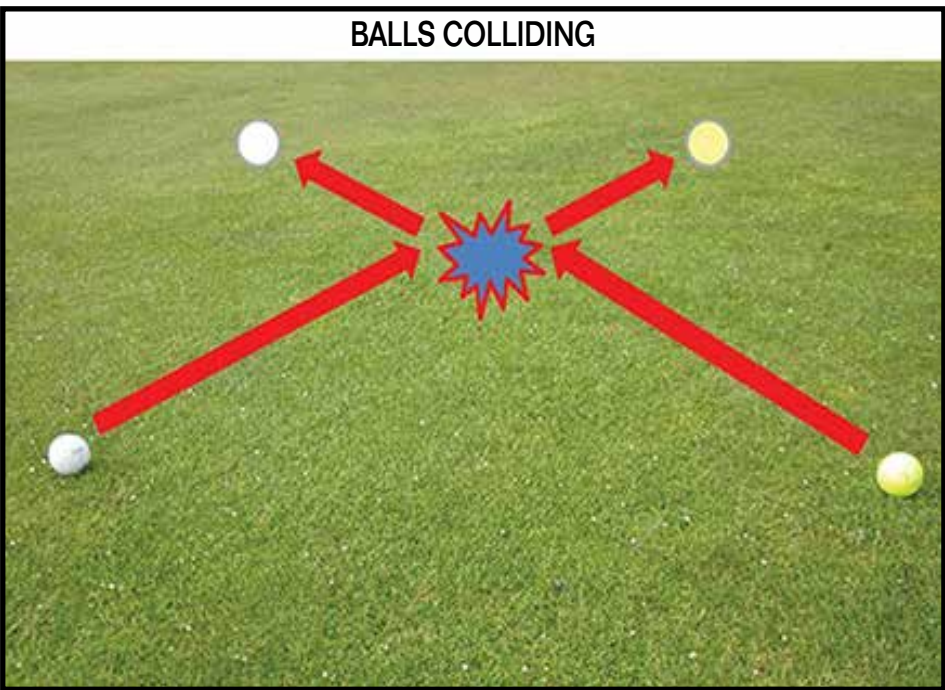
If the deflection or stoppage is by the player him/herself, such as impatiently tapping a moving ball into the hole, the result is the general penalty and the ball is holed.

In the rare occasion that the deflection or stoppage is by a spectator there is no penalty to anyone and again the player replays the stroke.

Once we get back to removing flagsticks, we'll take a look at situations where the ball hits the flagstick or the hole liner or the person tending the flagstick.

Isn't golf the most interesting game that you might ever play?

For more information, check out the rules videos at [USGA/org/rules](https://www.usga.org/rules).



There are rules to follow when golf balls collide on the green. Make sure you know what to do when this happens.

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Dan
Sargent



Mortgage Corner: Shorten your loan or lower payments

Last month we talked about how to refinance. Here is another situation to take a look at if you want to go down this road: Shorten the loan or lower the payments? Many homeowners consider going the refinancing route when interest rates dip. Remember, the purpose of refinancing is not necessarily to get the lowest interest rate possible. The goal tends to be either shortening the life of the loan or lowering monthly payments to free up personal wealth.

Equity can play a powerful role in changing the length of your mortgage from 30 years to 15 years, a move that can be timed to coincide with your retirement or other life factors. Even a slightly higher monthly payment can help achieve long-term goals.

For individuals in need of funds immediately, a refi can quickly free up cash that could be used to tackle a variety of expenses: braces for the kids, a much-needed vacation, or even to help you pay off other debts you might have. You may have to extend the length of your loan a few years, but you can gain peace of mind knowing that today's needs are being met.

• Dan Sargent is a loan officer with Cross Country. He can be reached at 253.297.78423.

Pro tip: To work on those major swing changes, use a mirror or window and take good notes, too

Editor's note: This is part two of Ryan Young's column about working on swing changes during the winter months:

Pro-Tip #1: To help during Phase 1 of major swing changes, work at home in front of a mirror or window reflection. Working on the physical changes and at home drills are more important than actually hitting balls.

Pro-Tip #2: Take notes, journal, and record changes throughout the whole process. Documenting how the swing changes felt versus what actual mechanics changed will help the brain understand and lock in new muscle memory.

Phase 2 – The Sub-Conscious: Right Brain – In Phase 2, the emphasis should be on transferring the conscious mechanical swing changes into the sub-conscious muscle memory. You need to also focus on transferring these changes to the course to understand the new benefits. This phase should take anywhere from one week to two months.

Week/Month Three is dedicated to locking in muscle memory. The goal is to find one swing thought that ties everything together, something more natural and athletic like "smooth tempo" or "stay balanced." Think of these swing thoughts like the glue that holds all your swing changes together.

Then start transitioning to the course. You will need to strategize and manage your new ball striking to help you score better. At this point you should easily understand your typical misses, or even avoid them altogether!

Pro-Tip #3: Don't expect to memorize and implement every single swing change from

Ryan
Young



Phase 1. If some of the changes transfer to the course then consider it a win. It will take more off-season work to implement everything. Like Nike says, "There's Always Better."

Pro-Tip #4: I mentioned it earlier, but make sure you have a PGA Coach available that you trust and communicate well with. You will be spending weeks if not months together. Both of you need to be on the same page based off the goals you lined out from the start.

Pro-Tip #5: Make sure you enjoy the process and have fun! If not, what's the point?

At Chambers Bay Academy, we offer our Winter Game Improvement Package every year during November thru February. We have two in-person packages offering unlimited use of our Academy Practice Center and varying levels of range and on-course playing lessons. We also have a Remote Coaching package where all our communication and swing lessons happen via our coaching app. We'd love to talk about your goals and help you find the best package for you.

Pro-Tip #6: choose PGA instructor you trust and communicate well with. Will spend weeks/months working through each step. Elaborate

from intro.

Pro-Tip #7: Enjoy the process or what's the point.

Ryan Young is the Director of Instruction at Chambers Bay Golf Course. He can be reached at ryoung@kempersports.com.



Ryan Young watches a student during a session at Chambers Bay Golf Course in University Place.

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