



Montana will become a new member of the Pacific NW Golf Association

The Pacific Northwest Golf Association (PNGA) has announced that the Montana State Golf Association and courses like the Wilderness Club (right) will be part of the PNGA starting this month. Montana joins British Columbia Golf, Oregon Golf Association and Washington Golf Association as part of the PNGA. For more, see inside this section of Inside Golf Newspaper.



WHAT'S NEW IN NW GOLF

Players with Northwest connections reach LPGA

Two players with Pacific Northwest connections will be playing on the LPGA Tour for the 2024 season.

Jing Yan, who played her college golf at the University of Washington and Beaverton, Ore. native Gigi Stoll both advanced to the LPGA Tour through the Q Series qualifying.

A total of 104 players were searching for one of 50 cards to play on the LPGA Tour for the 2024 season. The tournament was held in Alabama.

Yan has played on the LPGA Tour before but had to go through the qualifying after not earning enough money to keep her card. The 27-year-old from New Zealand has a best LPGA Tour finish of second place and had six career top 10 performances. Yan finished tied for 17 at the Q Series qualifier.

Stoll had an incredible amateur career before finishing her college career at Arizona. She had career earnings of \$192,254 on the Epson Tour and finished 17th on the list for 2023. Stoll finished tied for 45th at the LPGA Q Series qualifier.



Gigi Stoll

Loomis Trail offers winter ways to keep game sharp

Loomis Trail will be the place if you are looking to play some winter golf events. Loomis Trail has a winter series that started in November and continues through the winter. Next up is the Jan. 6 event with the 3-club Plus Putter Scramble, the Feb. 10 Four-Person Cha Cha Cha, the March 16 March Madness Four Person Scramble and the April 20 Cross Country Scramble. The tournaments are open to everyone and sign up by calling the Pro shop at 360.332.1725. Winter rates are \$50 walking and \$60 riding. Green fees include a sleeve of Srixon Soft Feel golf balls.

Rules question of the month

Question: In stroke play on the putting green without the authority of the player, their caddie marks the player's ball and lifts it. By mistake, the caddie replaces the lifted ball with a new ball. Unaware of this, the player then makes a stroke at the new ball. What is the ruling? See answer on Page 2 of this section.

Dates set for golf shows in the NW

The dates for the Seattle and Portland Golf Shows have been set.

First on the tee will be the Portland Golf Show, set for March 1-3 at the Portland Expo Center. The three-day event will offer free rounds and more when you enter the door. For more information see www.portlandgolfshow.com.

The Seattle Golf Show will be held March 9-10 at the Seattle Convention Center. The Two-day show will feature up to five free rounds with a ticket. For more information see www.seattlegolfshow.com.



North Bellingham: A Northwest winter delight



Winter golf in the Pacific Northwest is always a hit and miss deal, but at North Bellingham Golf Course in Bellingham winter golf is always a hit. With its links-style layout and the wind and sun offering ways to keep the course dry, North Bellingham is always a popular spot for winter golf. In fact, the course did over 2,500 rounds in November alone. There is plenty to like about North Bellingham and if you have not put your clubs away for the winter, this is a must stop. For more, see inside this section of Inside Golf Newspaper.



R&A, USGA will update testing conditions to see about ball performance, changes could be coming

The R&A and USGA will update the testing conditions used for golf ball conformance under the Overall Distance Standard (ODS), which will take effect in January 2028. The decision aims to reduce the impact increased hitting distances have on golf's long-term sustainability while minimizing the impact on the recreational game.

The revised ball testing conditions will be as follows: 125-mph clubhead speed (equivalent to 183 mph ball speed); spin rate of 2200 rpm and launch angle of 11 degrees. The current conditions, which were established 20 years ago, are set at 120 mph (equivalent to 176 mph ball speed), 2520 rpm with a 10-degree launch angle.

The revised conditions are based on analysis of data from the worldwide tours and the game over several years and are intended to ensure that the ODS (whose limit will remain unchanged at 317 yards with a 3-yard tolerance) continues to represent the ability of the game's longest hitters. An analysis of ball speeds among golf's longest hitters in 2023 shows that the fastest 10 players had an average ball speed of 186 mph, while the average ball speed of the fastest 25 was 183.4 mph (the very fastest averaged 190 mph).

The longest hitters are expected to see a reduction of as much as 13-15 yards in drive distance. Average professional tour and elite male players are expected to see a reduction of 9-11 yards, with a 5-7-yard reduction for an average LPGA or Ladies European Tour (LET) player.

The change in testing speed is expected to have a minimal distance impact, 5 yards or less, for most recreational golfers. Research shows an average swing speed of 93 mph for male golfers and 72 mph for female players.

Existing balls approved for conformance in 2027 may continue to be used by recreational golfers until January 2030 to give golfers, manufacturers and retailers additional time to adjust. These decisions are in line with the commitments made by the governing bodies at the project's inception.

A significant portion of golf ball models that are currently in the market – and more than 30 percent of all golf ball models submitted for conformance across the game – are expected to remain conforming after these changes are applied.

“Governance is hard. And while thousands will claim that we did too much, there will be just as many who said we didn't do enough to protect the game long-term,” said Mike Whan, CEO of the USGA.

Pacific Northwest loses a couple of golf gems as Doug McArthur, Doug Schwab pass away

This getting old stuff sucks. Not only is it chore waking up and getting out of bed every day from sore feet to arthritic fingers to bad knees, losing friends as the years go on is never fun.

Doug McArthur was one of the finest people I had ever met in my life. From getting introduced years ago when he was the tournament director for the LPGA's Safeco Classic in the Seattle area years ago to his working with Highlands Golf Courses in Tacoma, McArthur was a person you could count on for golf news and a couple of good stories along the way.

McArthur passed away in December. He was one of the sports leaders in the area - especially Tacoma. If it had to do with sports in Tacoma, McArthur had a hand in it. In fact, the Tacoma Sports Association had a lifetime achievement award named after him.

Where I first got to know Doug was during the days of the LPGA's Safeco Classic at Meridian Valley. He was always helpful with everything from stories to interviews to just some fun stories about the world of sports. In fact, when the tournament was going on Doug would always want a copy of *Inside Golf* to see what we were writing. And like my Journalism 101 professor, he had some red marks on errors in the story. It was great. And we got a chuckle out of it every time.

Doug did a lot of work with the folks and the new owners at Highlands Golf Course. Jack Connelly bought the course and has made some terrific changes. Doug was always on the phone or email with story ideas about how good the course was getting. And he was right in the end - Highlands has become a terrific 9-hole executive course in Tacoma.

The University of Puget Sound even named a basketball event after Doug - the Doug McArthur Classic with several games in the Memorial Fieldhouse.

Doug will be missed. He was an all-timer. I will always treasure the times we had together and the times we spent on the phone.

Another long-time friend passed away in recently. Doug Schwab and I first met way back when the days of Riverbend Golf Course was opening. He was part of the first men's club and I decided to join the club since I liked golf and it was right down the hill from



where I was living.

Right away I knew that Doug was a guy I would like. He was a former manager for the UCLA basketball team during the days of John Wooden. Talk about getting basketball stories - it was non stop and they were

all great. But Doug could also talk golf. Plenty of golf.

The one funny story I remember about Doug was during a Men's Club event at Riverbend and were about to tee off but the fog was so thick you couldn't see more than 15 yards. Doug was running the tournament and comes up to us and tells us we have to tee off or get disqualified. He was serious. We teed off not knowing where the hell our shots were going.

Doug was a great volunteer serving on the WA Golf Board for 20 years and also worked as a rules official. He was the Chair of the WA Golf Championship Committee. Wonder if he made those players tee off in the fog?

I will miss you guys. Like I said before, getting old sucks. But, hey, I will deal with it.

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



Doug McArthur (right) shakes hands with Highlands professional Don Mojean. McArthur was a popular figure in the world of Northwest sports. He was also the first tournament director for the LPGA's Safeco Classic in the Seattle area.



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Subscription rates:
\$18-one year and \$32-two years
(U.S. funds).

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Rules Answer

Answer: Rule 6.3b(3). The ball put into play on the teeing area remains in play until it is lost, out of bounds or lifted or proceeding under a rule that allows "substitution" of the ball in play. When a ball is incorrectly "substituted" during a hole and the player makes a stroke at it the player incurs a one stroke penalty and must complete play of the hole with the "substituted" ball. This is a Rules change as of January 1, 2023.

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






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Jeff Gove earns Champions Tour status; Montana State Golf joins up with PNGA

Pacific Northwest professional Jeff Gove earned finished tied for 12th in the PGA Tour Champions qualifying tournament at the TPC Scottsdale Champions Course.

The 12th place finish earns Gove a conditional status on the tour meaning he can apply for an associate membership which gives him the opportunity to skip one round of qualifying for 2024 tournaments.

Gove is the director of instruction at The Idaho Club.

Montana Golf joins PNGA

The Pacific Northwest Golf Association (PNGA) has announced that the Montana State Golf Association (MSGA) will become one of its member associations, with the new partnership taking effect on January 1, 2024.

Founded in 1899, the PNGA is the fifth oldest golf association in North America.

The current member associations of the PNGA include British Columbia Golf, Idaho Golf Association, Oregon Golf Association and Washington Golf. With the addition of the MSGA as a PNGA member association, these five associations will now serve and

provide benefits and core services to more than 200,000 individual members throughout the region.

In the state of Montana, the MSGA serves more than 20,000 individual members and provides core services to over 100 member clubs and 97 golf courses.

For the MSGA, the partnership means a host of additional benefits for its members, including participation in the PNGA's elite regional championships, subscription to the region's premier Pacific Northwest Golfer magazine (published by the PNGA), collaboration with the marketing alliance created by the PNGA's member associations, and support in providing its core services.

Montana has already played a role in the PNGA's long history. Opened in 1899, Butte (Mont.) Country Club was one of a handful of established clubs in the region during that era. Although Butte CC was invited to attend the PNGA's founding meeting on Feb 4, 1899, the club did not send a delegate, so is not considered one of the PNGA's six founding clubs, but the club would host several PNGA events during the first part of the 20th century.

In 1913, the PNGA Amateur (for men and women), considered one of North America's premier championships, was held at Butte Country Club.

Did you know....

• WA Golf is one of 41 golf associations in the U.S. that recognizes an "Inactive Score Posting Season," which for WA Golf runs from Nov. 14 to the last day of February the following year, and in 2024 that means Feb. 29. If you play golf during their Inactive Score Posting Season in an area outside of WA Golf territory where scores are still being accepted for handicap purposes, you must still post your score.



• For 44 years Bill Yeend was the Northwest's most recognizable voice on the radio, serving as a prime time news anchor for KIRO and KOMO radio. Since 1995, Yeend has also been the face of the PNGA's Hall of Fame banquet, serving as the biennial event's Master of Ceremonies. He was recently selected to receive the PNGA's Distinguished Service Award for 2023. It is considered as the Association's highest honor. Yeend will be honored at a banquet held January 10, 2024 at Mill Creek (Wash.) Country Club.



Tour Players With Northwest ties

PGA Tour

- Kevin Chappell • Kirkland • 191st on the list with #362,455
- Wyndham Clark • Ex-Oregon • 6th on the list with \$10,757,489
- Ben Crane • Portland • not ranked on the list with \$32,973
- Joel Dahmen • Clarkston • 87th on the list with \$1,996,174
- Cameron Davis • Australia (Member at Sahalee) • 36th on the list with \$5,001,208
- Scott Harrington • Portland • 199th on the list with \$300,546
- Ryan Moore • Puyallup • 125th on the list with \$1,244,899
- Cheng Tsung Pan • Ex-UW • 122nd on the list with \$1,272,421
- Andrew Putnam • Tacoma • 42nd on the list with \$4,459,263
- Kyle Stanley • Gig Harbor • not ranked on the list with \$27,700
- Nick Taylor • Ex-UW • 26th on the list with \$6,242,461
- Aaron Wise • Ex-Oregon • 137th on the list with \$1,020,174
- Dylan Wu • Medford, Ore. • 98th on the list with \$1,758,267
- Carl Yuan • Ex-UW • 130th on the list with \$1,167,050

Korn Ferry Tour

- Alistair Docherty • Vancouver, Wash. • 117th on the list with \$45,913
- Joe Highsmith • Tacoma • 51st on the list with \$120,750
- R.J. Manke • Tacoma • 146th on the list with \$27,385
- Andrew Yun • Tacoma • 130th on the list with \$37,490

Champions Tour

- Fred Couples • Seattle • 64th on the list with \$263,968
- Kirk Triplett • Pullman • 57th on the list with \$341,211

LPGA Tour

- Carolyn Inglis • Eugene • 118th on the list with \$125,792
- Charlotte Thomas • Ex-UW • 139th on the list with \$78,414

LPGA Epson Tour

- Kathleen Scavo • Ex-Oregon • 29th on the list with \$54,543
- Gigi Stoll • Tigard • not ranked with \$4,233
- Jing Yan • Ex-UW • 111th on the list with \$8,708



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British Columbia players headline PNGA Players of Year

The Pacific Northwest Golf Association (PNGA) has announced the region's Players of the Year for 2023. Those honored include Men's Player of the Year, Cooper Humphreys of Vernon, B.C.; Women's, Lauren Kim of Surrey, B.C.; Men's Mid-Amateur, Zach Foushee of Portland, Ore.; Women's Mid-Amateur, Gretchen Johnson of Portland, Ore.; Senior Men's, Tom Brandes of Bellevue, Wash.; Senior Women's, Lara Tennant of Portland, Ore.; Junior Boys', James Lee of Whistler, B.C.; and Junior Girls', Lauren Kim of Surrey, B.C.

The PNGA Player of the Year candidates are nominated by the state and provincial golf associations that comprise the PNGA (British Columbia, Idaho, Oregon and Washington), and are selected by a vote of the PNGA Championship Committee.

• Men's Player of the Year: Cooper Humphreys – Vernon, B.C. Having previously won a national title in Canada, Humphreys added to his collection in 2023 by winning the 121st BC Amateur by six shots over the second-place finisher. He also qualified for the U.S. Amateur, finished 39th in the Canadian Men's Amateur, and finished 10th in the Toyota Junior World Cup. Humphreys has committed to play for Oregon State University in the fall of 2024.

• Women's & Junior Girls' Player of the Year: Lauren Kim – Surrey, B.C. Not since 2008 has one person been named PNGA Player of the Year in two categories in the same year. Kim had a great year in 2023, winning the Canadian Women's Amateur, making the round of 32 in the U.S. Women's Amateur, and was a semifinalist in the U.S. Girls' Junior. She had three top-5 finishes in AJGA events and won the Jackson T. Stephens Cup. Kim was selected for Team Canada at the World Amateur Team Championship, where she finished tied for eighth individually. Competing against professionals, she received a sponsor's exemption to play in the CPKC Women's Open held at Shaughnessy G&CC, competed in the U.S. Women's Open at Pebble Beach, and had a top-10 finish in the Mizuho Americas Open. Last year, Kim was named the PNGA Junior Girls' Player of the Year. She is now

a freshman on the University of Texas women's golf team.

• Men's Mid-Amateur Player of the Year: Zach Foushee – Portland, Ore. In 2023, Foushee won the Callaway Invitational and the OGA Tournament of Champions, with his most impressive win coming at the 114th Oregon Amateur. On the national stage, Foushee qualified for the U.S. Amateur and the U.S. Amateur Four-Ball. He had top-10 finishes at the Oregon Open Invitational, competing against the region's PGA professionals, and also at the Oregon Mid-Amateur. Foushee tied for 11th at the Pacific Coast Amateur.

• Women's Mid-Amateur Player of the Year: Gretchen Johnson – Portland, Ore. This is the third time Johnson has received this award, having previously been named in 2018 and 2019. In her home state, she was a quarterfinalist in the Oregon Women's Amateur, and finished fourth in the Oregon Women's Mid-Amateur. On the national stage, she was a semifinalist in the U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur, and finished second in the LPGA Mid-Amateur.

• Senior Men's Player of the Year: Tom Brandes – Bellevue, Wash. This is now the ninth time Brandes has been named Player of the Year. In 2023, he won the Washington Senior Men's Amateur and the Washington Senior Men's Champion of Champions. He finished second in the PNGA Senior Men's Amateur, made the round of 16 at the PNGA Master-40, and continued his streak of being named to every PNGA Lamey Cup since it began in 2006. He was also medalist at a qualifier for the U.S. Senior Amateur. In 2015, Brandes was inducted into the PNGA Hall of Fame.

• Senior Women's Player of the Year: Lara Tennant – Portland, Ore. Tennant won three titles in 2023 – the Oregon Senior Women's Amateur (for the seventh year in a row), Oregon Senior Women's Stroke Play, and the OGA Tournament of Champions. She was the medalist at the U.S. Senior Women's Amateur held at her home club of Waverley Country Club, where she made it to the round of 16. She also made the round of 64 at the U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur, and played in the U.S. Women's Amateur. This is now the fifth time she has

USGA, R&A announce an update to World Handicap System for 2024

The USGA and The R&A have announced the first update to the World Handicap System™ (WHS™) as part of an ongoing review of the Rules of Handicapping™ and Course Rating System™ with a continued emphasis on accuracy, consistency and equity. The latest revisions will go into effect beginning January 1, 2024. Many countries have seen significant increases in the number of scores being submitted for handicapping purposes since the WHS was introduced in January 2020, reflecting golf's broadening appeal. More than 100 million scores have been posted each year, unifying millions of golfers through a standard measure of playing ability. The 2024 update leverages the performance data gathered from around the world, in addition to feedback received from many of the 125 countries now using the system.

Significant updates to the WHS include: Inclusion of Shorter-Length Golf Courses Within the Course Rating System: The overall length requirements for Course Rating in the WHS will be significantly reduced. A set of tees on an 18-hole course may be as short as 1,500 yards [1,370 meters] to be eligible for a Course Rating and Slope Rating®, and a set of tees on a 9-hole course may be as short as 750 yards [685 meters]. This change is intended to expand the WHS to thousands of shorter length courses, including par-3 courses, and enable more golfers to obtain and use a Handicap Index.

Use of an Expected Score for a Hole Not Played: Improvements have been made to the method used to handle holes not played, which will now be based on a player's expected score rather than a score of net par. This new method will produce a 9-hole or 18-hole Score Differential that more accurately reflects a player's ability. As golfers across the world are playing more 9-hole rounds, an expected score can also be used to convert a 9-hole round into an 18-hole Score Differential. For some countries, this means that 9-hole scores will be considered in the calculation of a player's Handicap Index immediately after the day of play, rather than waiting to combine with another 9-hole score.

Playing Conditions Calculation Adjustments Made More Frequent: The Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) has been modified to increase the likelihood of an adjustment for abnormal playing conditions. National associations were given discretion, beginning in July 2022, to introduce this revision within their computation platforms, which will be complete by April 1, 2024.

Enhanced Guidance on Conducting a Handicap Review: The role of the Handicap Committee is vital to the success of the WHS and the Rules recommend that a Handicap Review is conducted regularly, or at least once a year to ensure a Handicap Index® remains reflective of a player's ability. New reporting tools have been developed that national associations can incorporate into their handicapping software to assist Committees in conducting the review process effectively and consistently.

been named Player of the Year. Tennant was inducted into the PNGA Hall of Fame in 2022.

• Junior Boys' Player of the Year: James Lee – Whistler, B.C. In 2023, Lee saw success throughout Canada and the western U.S. He won the NCGA Junior Championship and the BC Junior Boys' Champion-

ship. He finished second in the Canadian Junior Boys' Championship, and in the Bayonet Amateur. He also had top-20 finishes at the NextGen Selection Camp and the Canadian Men's Amateur. He finished 26th at the Pacific Coast Amateur, and strong showings at five other elite-level events.



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North Bellingham Golf Course: Looking for a winter place to keep your game sharp, this is it

Back in July of 1995, it was like Scotland came to Bellingham, Wash. when North Bellingham Golf Course opened for play. Designed by Ted Locke, the course featured a sprawling layout, with very few trees and a feel of playing in Scotland.

Not nearly 30 years later, nothing has changed at North Bellingham Golf Course. It is still the terrific links-style golf course it has been since that days it opened and has improved with age through the years.

And with the Pacific Northwest in the midst of winter and the whatever Mother Nature might throw our way, North Bellingham is a course that can deal with it. If you are looking for a course that holds up well in the winter, this is it. The drainage through the years has improved, giving North Bellingham Golf Course good conditions in the winter - and year-round for that matter. The course's Frostbite League during the winter is always a popular deal.

North Bellingham was opened on old farmland, formerly known as the Wilder Ranch and had a solid design by the veteran Locke, who also a handful of courses in the area. . OK, so the course might not be the total links course that you see across the pond, but with the lack of trees, occasional wind throughout the course and some pot bunkers you must negotiate, it still feels very Scottish.

And along the way you will have some views of Mount Baker, which might distract you when you stand over that 90 yard wedge shot.

The course has five sets of tees - and is playable for all levels. It can be stretched to 6,793 from the back tees, which might not seem long but when the winds start whipping, the course plays longer.

Winter rates are \$40 on Monday through Thursday, \$46 on Friday and \$54 on Saturday and Sunday. Seniors are \$36 for 18 on Monday through Thursday while juniors get 50 percent off the rates.

For information call 360.398.8300.

North Bellingham Golf Course

- **Where:** Bellingham, Wash.
- **Architect:** Ted Locke.
- **Head professional:** Nathan Vickers.
- **Course facts:** North Bellingham opened for play n 1995 and features a Scottish-style links layout. There are five sets of tees with the yardage playing from 5,157 yards to 6,793 yards.
- **Course website:** For information see www.northbellinghamgolf.com.
- **Phone:** 360.398.8300.



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Rules of the Game: It’s the time of year to play winter rules in the Pacific Northwest, but do you know what that really means?

It's wintertime and players everywhere are playing winter rules! I've heard players call it winter rules, or playing the ball up—but what exactly does that mean? The players know it is a term that means they get some form of relief from soggy, muddy, or wet conditions.

However, the parameters of what relief looks like were often varied. If you are out playing in the soggy conditions, you may want to confirm what type of relief may be available. You won't find your answer about winter rules in the current edition of The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf (2023 Edition). It does not include the term winter rules as it did in the past. However, there are other Model Local Rules potentially available to account for when conditions on the golf course interfere with fair play. Check the scorecard for casual play to ensure you and your friends are taking the same type of relief, or your notice to players in tournament play to avoid potential penalty!

When I hear players ask if we are playing the ball up, or winter rules I know there needs to be a clarification to keep play consistent for all players. The USGA has two model local rules that can be used in situations when merited. The Cleaning the Ball Local Rule is an option for when conditions may cause mud to stick to the ball. If Cleaning the Ball Model Local Rule is in effect, a ball may be marked, lifted, cleaned, and replaced on its original spot. Since this rule requires the ball to be replaced on its original spot, a ball may not be substituted. Pay close attention to the details of the Local Rule, as the committee may allow use in the general area, or just in specific parts of the course.

The other option for a Local Rule the committee may use is Preferred Lies. This is the option that until 2023 was referred to as "Winter Rules."



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A preferred lie Local Rule allows a player to take free relief by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing from this relief area:

- Reference point: spot of the original ball
- Size of Relief Area measured from Reference Point (this can vary from 6 inches, to a scorecard length, club length, or other measurement specified by the committee)



Do you know the right time when you get free relief when your ball becomes embedded during a round of golf.

Remember to check carefully on when a Preferred Lie can be used as some committees will limit it to a specific hole, General Areas cut to fairway height or less, or another described area of a course. Also, note that a Preferred Lie rule allows the player to choose the spot to take

relief (as prescribed in the relief area) and only allows the player to set the ball down once. If a player then proceeds under a Rule that also allows relief, the Preferred Lie may be used again. So when you see the sign at your course that reads "Winter Rules" make sure you clarify what that means! Happy Winter and enjoy that winter golf when you are out there.

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The Lesson Tee: Don't feel like you are 'trapped' in the bunker because there are many ways out

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.

Well done.
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. Let's 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. 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 chipping and pitching also! These principles will enhance your bunker play, plus spend some time practicing.

Many times I place a 2 x 4 (wood board) in the bunker level with the sand (photo1). I have my students practice striking the board with the bounce of the club. 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 the 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 never 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 multi-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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The Fitness Corner: Winter is the time to get in golf shape for 2024 season

As we move into the winter and the weather turns, the golfing season is coming to an end for many golfers.

The winter is the perfect time to get into training for next year.

If you are like most of us, you probably wish you could have hit that drive a little farther, kept your swing a little smoother and just maybe, knocked a couple of strokes off your handicap.

You can do all that and more next season if you focus on your mobility.

- The areas that need to be improved for golf are:
- Balance
 - Flexibility
 - Posture
 - Core Stability
 - Strength and Power
 - Cardiovascular Fitness

The first key to priming your body for golf season is focusing on muscles that haven't been used much in the past few months.

Golf is a physically demanding game that requires explosive power, all at the same time.

Not only can you improve your golfing performance, but by getting your body golf ready, you can improve your overall health too.

A lot of examples for training for golfers are available on the web, but there is no substitute for a physical trainer. Having a professional involved in your training can not only get quicker results, but will improve your overall physical health and give you a road map toward improvement that you can use the rest of your life.
Fitness trainers and instructors typically do the following: Demonstrate or explain how to perform various exercises and routines to minimize injuries and improve fitness. Watch clients do exercises to ensure that they are using correct technique. Provide options during workouts to help clients feel successful.

If you're just getting started with a fitness routine, or if you've been working out for a long time but have lost some steam, a personal trainer can help get you

Golf is a physically demanding game that requires explosive power, all at the same time. Not only can you improve your golfing performance, but by getting your body golf ready, you can improve your overall health too.

back on track.

Studies show that working with a personal trainer can motivate you in a way that working out on your own does not.

What is the difference between a fitness coach and a personal trainer?

The main difference between fitness coaches and personal trainers is that fitness coaches don't train people while they're working out but instead help them create a workout routine that's sustainable outside of the gym, so it doesn't interfere with other aspects of life.

A personal trainer helps you stay accountable to

your fitness goals by providing regular check-ins, tracking progress, and offering motivation and support throughout your fitness journey.

You benefit from their extensive knowledge and expertise in fitness, as they guide you through proper form, technique, and exercise selection, maximizing your results while minimizing the risk of injury which could cause your golf season to be delayed.

Personal trainers help you improve your overall health by targeting various aspects such as cardiovascular endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance, contributing to enhanced physical well-being and overall quality of life.

Now is the best time to start training for next year

HAVE MORE ENERGY! HIT THE BALL LONGER!

We are into the off season and it is the perfect time to get into training for next year. Not only can you improve your golfing performance, but by getting your body golf ready, you can improve your overall health too.

I can help you increase your consistency, accuracy and power through an innovative program that also keeps you pain free throughout the year.

Get a free week of my one-on-one personal coaching at my private gym in Tacoma. Yes, that's right! One free week of my time where you will learn unique techniques for getting your body golf ready and help you feel healthier and pain free every day.

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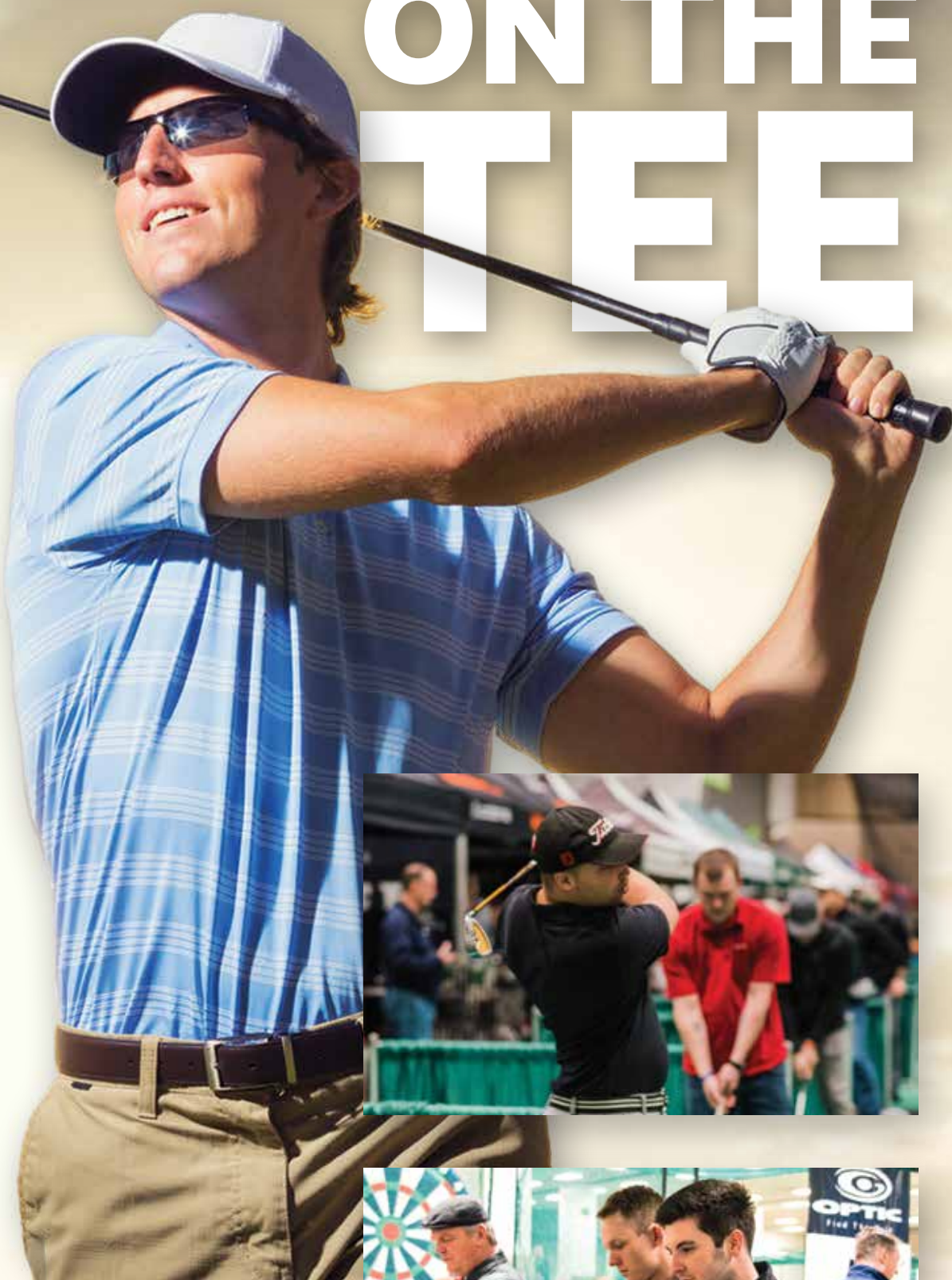
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