

The Met Golfer

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE METROPOLITAN GOLF ASSOCIATION

EXTRA



MGAGOLF.ORG



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August 2016

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This page: Glen Oaks Club provided an immaculate, challenging layout for competitors in the 101st Met Open Championship. Mark Brown of Tam O'Shanter was the sole player to finish under-par, leading to his third Met Open title. Full coverage of this year's Met Open is available on mgagolf.org.

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WINNING

HISTORY BY HAGESTAD

The 114th Met Amateur Championship will be remembered for years to come, for not only the picturesque setting at Country Club of Fairfield but also the record-shattering performance by winner Stewart Hagestad of Deepdale.

The 25-year-old's run began with an incredible 9-under 61, which set a new mark for the lowest 18-hole score in MGA Championship history and both the lowest 18-hole round and lowest 18-hole round under-par in the Met Amateur's on-site qualifying. Even more staggering is the fact that it was Hagestad's first go-around on the classic Seth Raynor layout. He continued to roll during the afternoon round, registering a 6-under 64 en route to a medalist-record score of 15-under 125, and besting the field by 10 strokes—yet another new record—to take the top seed into match play.

Though Friday was an admittedly challenging day for Hagestad, the native Californian—who is competing in his second season in the Met Area—rallied from back-nine deficits in both of his matches to advance. He did the same in his Saturday semifinal, setting up the 36-hole final against 16-year old standout Ethan Ng of Fiddler's Elbow—the youngest finalist in the Met Am's storied history.

The level of play in the championship match made it an instant classic, with a total of only five bogeys made in 38 holes of play. Though Hagestad grabbed a two-hole advantage through 22 holes, the match was squared again through the 25th and eventually was pushed to extra holes. Ng matched Hagestad with a clutch birdie on the par-5 first as the match continued, but another birdie for Hagestad on the par-4 second sealed as much of a wire-to-wire win one could ask for in the match play format.



Girls to the Tee



A bright mixture of pinks and patterned golf outfits flooded the practice facilities at Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y., on August 8, when over 100 girls attended the WMGA Foundation's Girls to the Tee clinic. The free, afternoon clinic is dedicated to growing interest in golf for girls aged 6-18, and was launched in 2008 by the WMGA and Westchester director of instruction Gary Weir. It has been steadily on the rise ever since. This year, 17 area professionals were on hand to lead different areas of instruction, including the full swing, chipping and putting—all in a welcoming format as participants broke into groups based on both age and experience with the game.

“What makes our Girls to the Tee clinic unique is the fact that it is girls only,” remarked WMGA President Valerie DePiro. “When we talk to parents, we hear that their daughters may be the only girl participating in their facility's junior program, and seeing many other girls playing at our clinics is empowering.”

Following years of increasing success at Westchester, the program added a second date at The Ridgewood Country Club in Paramus, N.J., this year, where 75 girls attended the August 22 clinic for the same special experience.



Thanks to many area professionals volunteering their time, participants still receive personal instruction even with a large attendance.



Westchester Country Club has been a gracious host to the Girls to the Tee program.

Golf's return to the Olympics presented a special opportunity for third-year MGA volunteer Joe Calaban. As a longtime walking scorer for professional events, Calaban and several other veteran scorers from the United States were asked to help lead the charge in Rio. Having more than 100 events on his resume—including various USGA and MGA championships and PGA TOUR events—Calaban trained local volunteers on the scoring and was a scorer himself for many of the top competitors, leading to one his most memorable golf experiences.

Extra: *What were your expectations as you were asked to volunteer at the Olympics?*
Joe Calaban: Going into the Olympics, I looked at it as just another major golf competition, but Rio 2016 was beyond all of our expectations as volunteers. They provided brand new accommodations, food, transportation to all venues around the city, and the most comprehensive volunteer uniform package ever.

E: *How did the atmosphere at the Olympics compare to other events you've volunteered for?*
J: Unlike other events I've volunteered for, the golf was only a minor part of the action. There were so many other events going on simultaneously!

E: *Did you notice a difference in the competitors' attitudes compared to when you've seen them at majors?*
J: The players were much more relaxed than at a typical professional event and there was a feeling of brotherhood and pride of country which is greater than any Ryder or Presidents Cup match. If anything, you have to say the Olympics is "not about the money."

E: *You've seen many great courses in your travels, what are some of your favorite characteristics of the Olympic Course?*
J: The Gil Hanse designed course is similar to what he's creating at Streamsong in Florida. You are either in the wide open fairways or the native area off the tee. Talking with Peter Jacobson of NBC, we decided it was kind of "Aussie Pinehurst," to coin a new term. The pros seemed impressed with the course and perhaps it may mature to be one of those bucket list items every avid golfer wants to play.

E: *What did it mean for you to be part of golf's return to the Olympics for the first time in over 100 years?*
J: The Rio Olympics are the highlight of my golf volunteer career. The friendliness of the pros and locals, the unique course design, the great winter weather, along with the beautiful natural surroundings in one world-class sprawling city, made it a fabulous, memorable experience to talk about for years to come.

Scoring for the top players in the final groups, attending the medal ceremony, and chatting with coaches like Gary Player of South Africa and KJ Choi of South Korea were the most exciting parts of the experience for Calaban.

GOLDEN Opportunity



INSTRUCTION

WAKE UP *Your* Left Side

BY ANDREW BOSTROM

Have you ever been accused of casting or releasing the club too early, leading to a slice, a fat shot or a duck hook? Usually this is a result of your right side being *too active too early* in your swing. This urge to hit with your right side is common for most right-handed players who are also right-handed in life. While this is a challenge to overcome, this left-hand only drill will help you feel what it's like to have the left side leading your swing to create more lag, and generate more power and even accuracy.

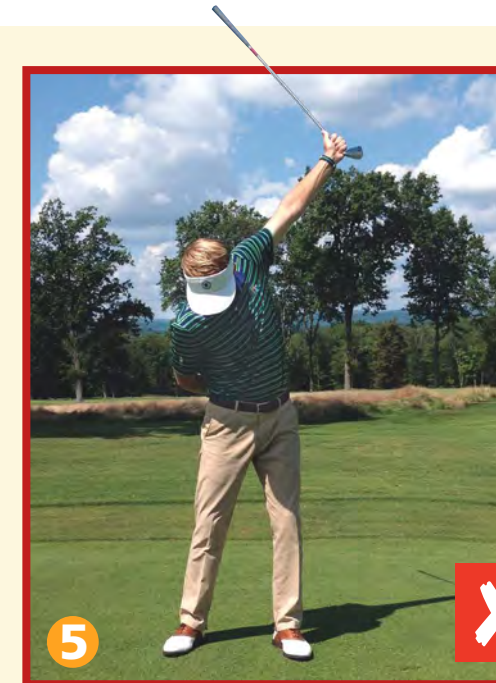
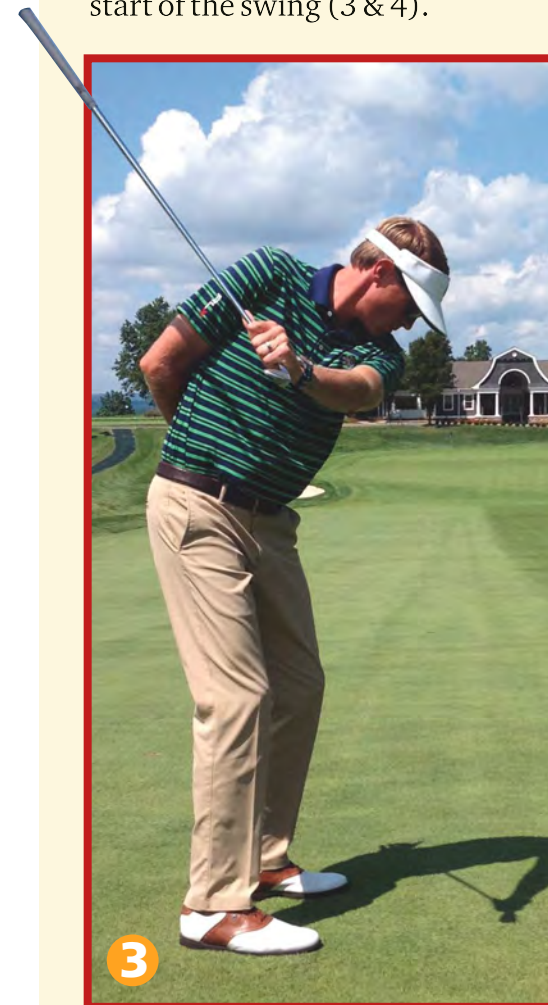


Andrew Bostrom is the Head Golf Professional at Green Brook Country Club in North Caldwell, N.J., host of the 27th MGA Father & Son Net Tournament played this month.

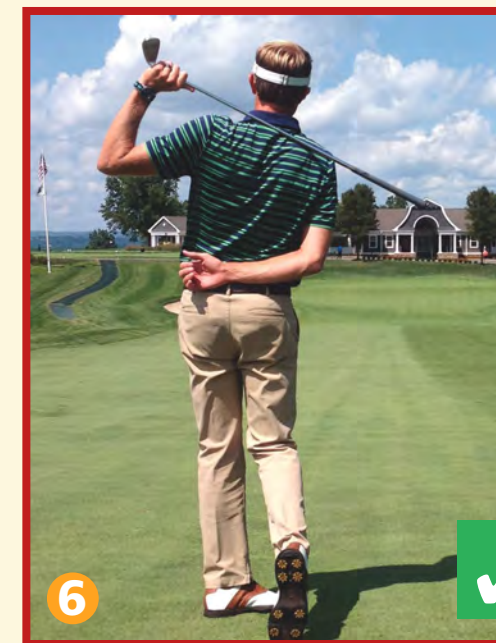


Start by gripping a mid-iron upside down (1) while taking your normal setup position with your right hand behind your back (2). Be sure to keep the grip end above the ground as there is no need to make contact with the ground in this drill.

Next, start the swing with momentum from your left shoulder. Keep this momentum going *WITHOUT PAUSING* at the top of your backswing. The swing should be a continuous motion; this will help you lag the club with your left side. Since the club is upside down, it will feel very light and should encourage this motion. It's okay if your swing feels shorter; this is because you have no right hand getting involved! This drill will also help you find your natural swing plane because the left side is dominating the start of the swing (3 & 4).



As you transition into the finish of this drill, *DO NOT* just swing with your left arm (5), but allow your right foot to come up off the ground and let your left arm fold into a relaxed position where the club rests against the upper part of your back (6).



Groundskeeping Goats

They eat practically all day long. They stay within an area less than an acre in size. They even lie down on the job at times. But, the four-legged help on Whippoorwill Club's grounds crew is getting the job done. Goats turned out to be just the answer as golf course superintendent Paul Gonzalez was looking to clean up an overgrown area on the course's 13th hole. Employing a strategy he had read about, the goats have been not only an effective solution, but also an environmentally friendly one.

Six goats are in place and two more are on the way. With each goat capable of eating more than 20 pounds of foliage a day, Gonzalez says the near acre-sized tract of overgrowth and invasive weeds should be taken care of by the end of September. The area is rocky, covers a hillside, and also includes a pond—making it a perfect landscape for the goats, and the perfect solution as Whippoorwill continues its environmental stewardship by limiting its chemical use.

“The Club has always been proactive when it comes to environmental efforts,” said Gonzalez, who accepted the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award on behalf of Whippoorwill at this spring's Green Chairmen Seminar. In his 10 years at the Club, Gonzalez has been part of an Audubon certification (2009) and a Department of Environmental Protection agreement that developed a water resource protection plan.

The goats—only requiring water as additional upkeep while they're fenced in the area—have quickly taken to the land and are on their way to a job well done. With the work off to a good start, and the membership being fascinated by the visitors, Gonzalez already has a couple more nearby locations in mind where goats may be called upon next season.



Once the goats help clear overgrowth, the area will be replanted with more native species.

LAYOVER TORONTO

BY TIM HARTIN



Boasting outstanding opportunities in theatre, sports, history, cuisine, and more, the options for how one can spend time in Toronto are seemingly endless. But, with 100 golf courses within an hour's drive of Canada's most-populous city, penciling in time to tee it up is a must.

Constructed on an old sand and gravel pit, Eagles Nest is a jaw-dropping layout by Doug Carrick, one of Canada's top golf course architects.

COURSES:

1 Eagles Nest Golf Club – This stunningly crafted links layout debuted in 2004 and was immediately considered among the top public golf offerings in Canada. Fescue-covered faux dunes frame rolling fairways, while two distinct bunker styles (rough-edge and sod-wall) add an interesting contrast. The green contours and sprawling layout over 235 acres will challenge golfers of every skill level.

Nearby: With each of these courses being less than 20 miles from Toronto Pearson International Airport and having multiple options to access the city center, discovering Toronto itself is certainly the thing to do—whether it's overlooking the city from the top of the CN Tower, discovering the Harbourfront Centre, or visiting one of several popular marketplaces.

2 Lionhead Golf Club – If you're up for a test, try out either of Lionhead's 18-hole layouts. The Legends Course is the tougher of the two, as tree-lined fairways give way to small, contouring greens—often protected by bunkers or marshlands. The Masters Course is no pushover either, though it is more forgiving off the tee and features larger green complexes.

3 Copper Creek Golf Course – Laid out within the Humber River Valley, Copper Creek provides a serene setting for a memorable round of golf. The natural terrain is especially impressive on Nos. 4-11, as play winds through forests and marshlands on the lower portion of the course's property. Stunning bunkers and native grasses add to the beauty throughout.

OUTERWEAR: COVER UPS

BY SCOTT KRAMER

When Nike Golf announced it was leaving the club and ball business earlier this month, it didn't exactly leave golfers in the cold. That's because the company is still producing some of the market's more impressive outerwear for the links. Its latest for this fall is the Aeroloft Hyperadapt Jacket (\$230) that's ventilated, giving you lightweight warmth and plenty of mobility as you walk and swing your way through 18 holes. Polyester fill enhances the inner warmth, while tiny pinholes strategically located throughout allow any excess heat to escape—leaving you comfortable. If you're looking for something other than Phil Knight's Swoosh to wear up top, then consider some alternatives that aim to keep you snug on upcoming cool days this fall. PUMA Golf's Elevated PWRWarm ¼ Zip Jacket (\$80), for instance, incorporates thermoregulation technology that helps your body keep its core internal temperature regardless of how frigid things might get out on the course. It's very comfortable, as well. And FootJoy's FJ HydroLite Rain Jacket (\$185) is waterproof, lightweight and breathable—designed specifically to keep you cozy during cool, windy and wet rounds. Outerwear technology from most brands is noticeably more advanced than from even a few years ago—making it a worthy upgrade to your game this autumn.

Nike Aeroloft Hyperadapt

PUMA Golf's Elevated PWRWarm

FootJoy's FJ HydroLite



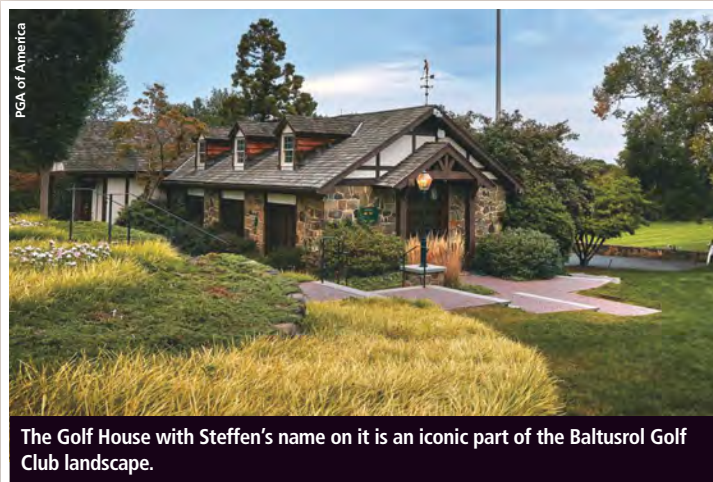
STEFFEN'S FAREWELL SEASON

2016 marks a pretty special year for longtime Baltusrol Golf Club Head Professional Doug Steffen: his club hosted a major championship and he is set to retire at year's end. Steffen first worked as an assistant at Baltusrol in 1977 and went on to work at other Met Area clubs until he was hired as head professional in 1997. While the 2016 PGA Championship was Steffen's second time hosting a major, he also played a critical role in another championship—the MGA Carter Cup.

This year marked the 14th playing of the MGA's junior stroke play event, in which Steffen has played a pivotal role from its inception. Since it began in 2002 in memory of standout junior golfer Michael P. Carter, Steffen has worked closely with the MGA, the Carter family and Baltusrol staff to ensure the success of the event each and every year. Although this year's playing was held at Winged Foot Golf Club due to the PGA Championship at Baltusrol and took place just days after the PGA, Doug and his wife Gina were right there to take part in the event. During the dinner reception, the MGA Foundation presented Steffen with a special framed photo of the championship trophy along with photos of each winner through the years. The MGA and the entire Met Area golf community will miss Steffen's unwavering dedication and service to the game.



Steffen and Mrs. Carter accompany 2016 Carter Cup champion Ethan Ng following this year's championship.



The Golf House with Steffen's name on it is an iconic part of the Baltusrol Golf Club landscape.



Gina and Doug Steffen joined by Phil Mickelson and clubmaker Roger Cleveland at the 2016 PGA Championship as the longtime Callaway Master Staff Professional was presented with commemorative wedges.