

The Met Golfer

EXTRA



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE METROPOLITAN GOLF ASSOCIATION

MGAGOLF.ORG

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April 2014

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This page: Ahh, it's finally that time of the year again. Fresh cut grass, lush fairways, the first tee calling your name...The season has begun! Photo by John DeTemple.



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Bon Appétit

Westchester Country Club Sous Chef Randy Camacho (foreground with tweezers) gets every detail just right on his raw tuna appetizer as Executive Chef Joseph Albertelli (background with glasses) looks on during the 20th Annual Metropolitan Club Foundation Vendor Show held at Glen Head Harbour Club in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Albertelli and his team, along with chefs from other clubs, prepared a variety of dishes for the hundreds of golf industry professionals in attendance. Now in their 20th year, the vendor show is an opportunity to network, experience and learn about the latest trends and products available in the business.



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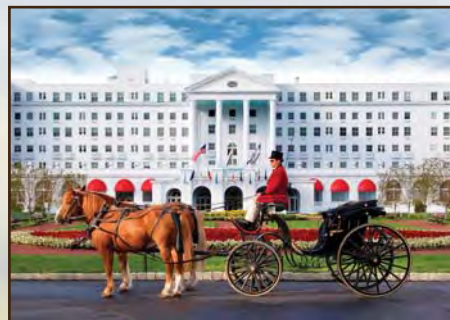
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After a long career with Couples, Lacava is now Tiger's man

LaCava Goes Local

With Tiger Woods on the DL, popular Tour caddie Joe LaCava was out in full force recently at Richter Park Golf Course, supporting the Friends of Richter 3rd Annual Awards Breakfast, that helps raise money for the Danbury, Conn., course. Lacava, 50, grew up in Newtown, Conn., and spoke to a sellout crowd (pictured), sharing his personal background and stories from his 27 years as a PGA Tour caddie. Some tidbits included:

- He started his career on the bag of five-time PGA Tour winner and cousin Ken Green. He spent most of his 27 years with Fred Couples, followed by a short stint with Dustin Johnson before his current gig with Tiger. LaCava has been on the bag for victories by

each of his players, including a Masters and two Players Championships.

- LaCava played varsity football, basketball and golf at Newtown High. He graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a degree in finance and currently resides in Southbury with his wife Megan and children, Lauren and Joe. "I couldn't leave Connecticut with all my family here and all the friendships I've formed."
- It's all about sports for Joe, who is a New York Giants season ticket holder and a diehard fan of the Rangers and Yankees. He's attended several memorable games, including three Giants Super Bowl wins, Wayne Gretzky's final game and Patrick

Roy's all-time wins record-breaking performance. He even believes that he was hired full time by Couples because he was "the only person to know more about NCAA basketball than Fred."

- His best pal on tour is Jim "Bones" Mackay, caddie of Phil Mickelson.
- For each round, Joe prepares four almond butter and apple sandwiches for Woods and carries up to 15 Nike gloves for the world No. 1.
- LaCava plays about 20 rounds of golf each year and carries a Handicap Index of 6.3. Among his favorite Met Area courses are Stanwich, Westchester, Shinnecock and Friar's Head. But he also loves to keep it local at Richter Park and Ridgewood (CT).



PHOTO BY SANDRA WHITEWAY

54 Holes In... Hilton Head Island

BY XXX XXXXXX

Photo courtesy of Sea Pines Resort

The ubiquity of great golf in the United States is astounding, and Hilton Head is one of a handful of destinations that say golf. The two dozen-plus courses on and around the South Carolina resort island obviously help, but this lowcountry outpost is also agreeably middlebrow, a cross between scholarly Pinehurst and raucous Myrtle Beach.

GOLF

- **Harbour Town Golf Links.** A larger-than-life presence in the pantheon of golf course architecture, thanks in part to its red-and-white-striped lighthouse, Pete Dye's Ocean Course design annually hosts the RBC Heritage PGA tournament. It's also a model of conscientious usage of the island's exotic ecosystem.
- **Palmetto Dunes Oceanfront Golf Resort.** Another multi-course resort, the pick here is the Arthur Hills design, which flows over a series of rolling dunes. Other worthy layouts are by George Fazio and Robert Trent Jones.
- **Golden Bear Golf Club at Indigo Run.** More of a parkland layout than others on the island, the course's water features consist of lagoons and wetlands. Nicklaus designed Indigo Run on a tight site, in close collaboration with Bruce Borland, an associate who perished in the same aviation mishap as Payne Stewart.

LODGING

- **Inn at Harbour Town, Sea Pines Resort.** True, there are myriad options in a place like Hilton Head, but there's no better way to soak up the character of the place. Unassuming Southern Hospitality.

OFF-COURSE

- Attractions include the recreational – cycling, deep-sea fishing, dolphin tours – and the cultural, especially the region's considerable Civil War history. Hilton Head Island can certainly be enjoyed as a self-contained destination, but it's also just 20 miles northeast of Savannah, Ga., a singular southern urban environment well worth a visit.

Keeping the Beat

BY HELEN STOCK

Photo by Adam Brzostoski

Vini “Mad Dog” Lopez could be the only caddie in the world who is a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The New Jersey native was inducted on April 10 as a founding member of the E Street Band.

Lopez, 65, was the original drummer and appeared on their first two hit albums, *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.*, and *The Wild, the Innocent and the E Street Shuffle*. He left the band in 1974 after a clash with Bruce Springsteen.

While never actually leaving music behind, he ventured into golf and has been the caddie master at Deal Golf & Country Club and the longtime caddie of Mark McCormick, the head professional at Suburban Golf Club in Union, N.J. Lopez was on the bag for McCormick at the 2012 U.S. Open Sectional Qualifying (pictured) at Canoe Brook, where he helped Mark punch a ticket to golf’s grandest stage – the U.S. Open at The Olympic Club (he also made the trip out west with him).

Lopez still jams to this day with his band, License to Chill, and says he doesn’t have any plans on giving it up.

“I’ll never stop playing,” he told the NJSGA. “Not until I can’t do it anymore. And it’s the same thing with caddying. I’ll do it forever. Those two things go in conjunction together. Those are the things I’ve got to do. They keep me young.”

Lopez playing a show in Asbury Park in 2011



Photo by Joe Valentine



Stroll in the Park

Photo courtesy of Fred Marcus Photography

More than 300 supporters made their way to the New York Athletic Club on April 11 for the 5th Annual 19th Hole on the Park event hosted by The First Tee of Metropolitan New York's Young Benefactors.

The Masters-themed event, presented by Brooks Brothers, raised over \$100,000 (which was then matched by the Heckscher Foundation For Children) for The First Tee's Path to College Program, an initiative designed to aid high schoolers gain insight on the college application process as well as career preparation.

In addition to extensive silent auction items and cocktails, guests had the chance to drain a 50-foot putt that was laid out by custom green builders, Home Green Advantage.

Distinguished guests included First Tee Outstanding Participants Award winners Brittany Ferrante and Patrick Conte, both of whom were awarded scholarships. A special presentation was also made to recognize the MGA's own *Kate Keller*, a co-founder of the Young Benefactors. The Kate Keller Young Benefactors Founder Award will be given annually in recognition of extraordinary dedication and service to TFTMNY's Young Benefactor Organization.

Stroll in the Park

Photo courtesy of Fred Marcus Photography

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Honey I Blew Up the Grips

BY SCOTT KRAMER

What do Jason Dufner, Matt Every, Jordan Spieth, Jason Kokrak and Victor Dubuisson have in common? The obvious answer is that they're all young PGA Tour up-and-comers who have been having successful years so far. But they're also all using oversized putter grips from SuperStroke this year (more than 125 Tour pros have used them).

By barely wrapping your hands around the girth of these parallel-tapered grips, you remove any tension in your wrists and forearms from the putting motion. "The oversize grip helps your arms swing more freely – further enhancing a pendulum putting stroke," says Jon Luna, SuperStroke USA marketing director. It also minimizes tendencies to yip.

The company's new Flatso comes in three models, including a 100-gram standard 1.7-inch-wide version (\$25), the 60-gram Mid 1.4-incher (\$25), and the 82-gram Ultra 1.1-incher (\$20).

Competitor models are selling well, too, such as Winn's WinnPro X (\$25), Lamkin's Jumbo (\$7) and PURE's Big Dog (\$20).



Jersey Boy

BY XX XXXXXX

Arthur “Red” Hoffman was considered a walking encyclopedia of Met Area golf throughout his 50-plus years covering the game as a journalist for the Star Ledger and publicist for renowned architect Robert Trent Jones Sr.

In fact, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Dave Anderson of the *New York Times* once said of his good friend, “You could ask Red anything about Metropolitan Area golf or golf in general; he just knew it, didn’t even have to look it up. He could remember putts from 35 years ago.”

In addition to the many honors he was recognized with throughout his celebrated career (he received the MGA’s Distinguished Service Award in 1990), his legacy is carried alive with the playing of the annual Red Hoffman Cup Matches, an interclub competition that’s celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2014.

What started in 2005 as the “A-Team Matches” (and only consisting of four northern New Jersey clubs), the Hoffman Cup now has 32 clubs that participate every year.

Bob Corbett, a member and team captain of Plainfield Country Club (where Red was named an honorary member), pitched the idea of naming the matches after the man who knew just about everything about New Jersey golf.

“With its great courses and interesting personalities, this region has had some amazing golf stories to tell,” said competition director Kevin Casey. “For over 50 years Red Hoffman was the person who told them. It’s a natural to name these matches after someone who served New Jersey golf so well for so long.”





Cameron's CUP

BY A.J. VOELPEL

Photo courtesy of Anthony Powter

Fresh off the heels of his second collegiate victory of the season at the Western Intercollegiate on April 13th, Cameron Wilson of Rowayton, Conn., was selected to represent the United States on the prestigious Palmer Cup team.

The Palmer Cup, a Ryder Cup style competition that pits 10 of the finest U.S. college golfers against 10 from Europe, will be played on June 26-28 at Walton Heath Golf Club in Surrey, England. While the news will prohibit Wilson, currently No. 8 in the World Amateur Golf Rankings, from defending his Ike championship (he won the last two Ikes), it does put him in the same breath as some of the best to ever tee it up at the collegiate level.

Wilson actually held the No. 1 spot in the Palmer Cup rankings for several weeks and just a day before being officially named to the name, he was recognized as one of the 10 semifinalists for the Ben Hogan Award, annually given to the best college golfer.

GREEN With Envy



It's the dream of every golfer to sink the winning putt on the 72nd hole at The Masters. For several youngsters, that dream was nearly made a reality on the Sunday before the tournament began.

Thirteen-year-old Sean Haselton of Sayville, N.Y. was one of the competitors who advanced through local and regional qualifying to make it to the finals of the inaugural Drive, Chip and Putt competition, which took place on the hallowed grounds of Augusta National Golf Club.

Haselton, who plays on the Sayville High School varsity golf team as an eight grader, drove down to Georgia with his parents and three siblings and finished seventh (out of 11 golfers) in the Boys' 12-13 Division.

"The course was really, really nice," he told Mark Herrmann of Newsday. "You see it on TV, but it's even better in real life.

The Drive, Chip, and Putt Championship was an initiative created by Augusta National, the USGA, and PGA of America, to get more young people involved in the game. For information on next year's competition, [visit their site here](#).

the McMasters

BY XXXX XXXXXX

White Beeches Head Professional Jim McGovern has been one of the most recognizable and accomplished players in the Met Area for the past 30 years. But aside from all his local accolades, there was one week in 1994 that the '93 Shell Houston Open champ won't ever forget...

Here are five things McGovern remembers most about his first trip to Augusta:

- 1** A memorable practice round with Fred Funk on the Sunday before the tournament helped loosen Jim up and calm his nerves. "That's something I'll never forget... we went out at 6 p.m. and had a blast going through Amen Corner. We were just having so much fun."
- 2** Playing conditions in the first round were brutal, as McGovern hit driver, 5-iron into the first green. "That was before they moved the tees back and made a lot of changes." He hit driver, wedge onto the green the following three rounds.
- 3** Jim has a huge family, and all eight of his brothers and sisters made the trip to Augusta. When Jim's dad was notified that they were only given four passes for the week, two-time Masters champ Ben Crenshaw overheard the news and generously provided the McGoverns with extra passes.
- 4** Jim easily recalls every shot he hit like it was yesterday, and he says that's what makes the Masters special. "I don't know if it's a feather in my cap or a nice accolade on my resume but it's something I'll never forget. "It truly was my favorite week in golf."
- 5** Getting a Masters invite wasn't easy, and Jim credits a lot of his success on the PGA Tour to the Met Area courses he grew up playing and to his wins at the '88 Met Open and '89 Met Amateur. "We have the best courses in the entire world in the Met Area."

McGovern hits his approach shot into the first leg of Amen Corner.

