

The Met Golfer

EXTRA



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE METROPOLITAN GOLF ASSOCIATION

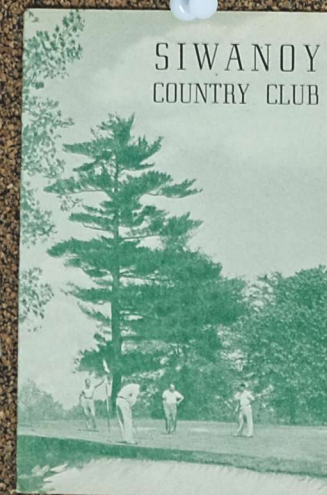
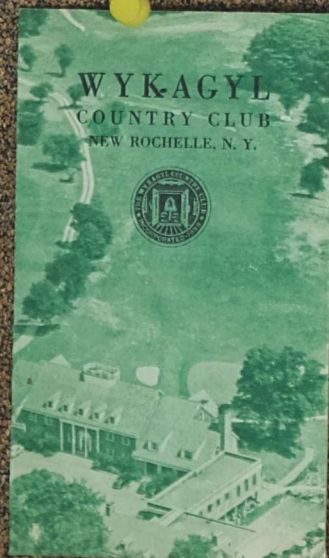
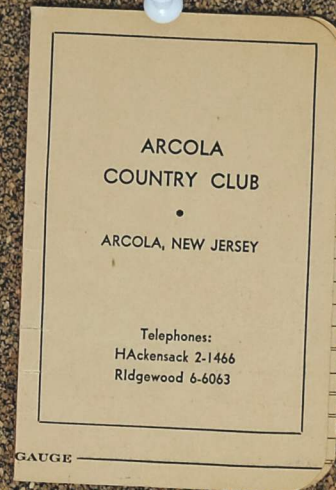
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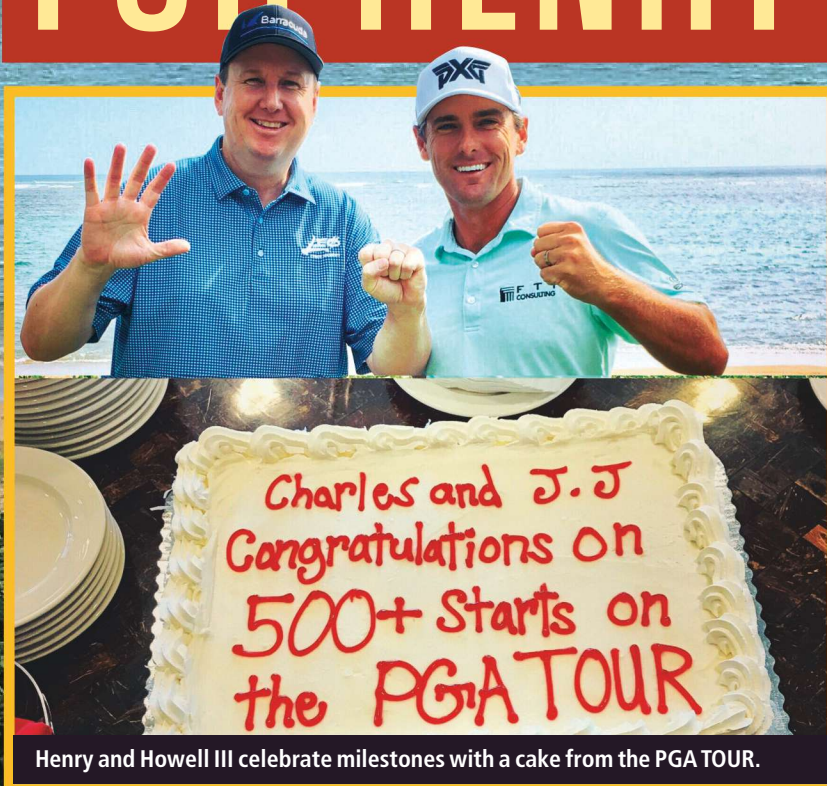
January 2018

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This page: What do these character-filled, throwback scorecards have in common? Each of these clubs will host a MGA championship in 2018! Check out the full 2018 schedule on mgagolf.org.



500 FOR HENRY



Henry and Howell III celebrate milestones with a cake from the PGA TOUR.



Then MGA President John C. Baldwin congratulates Henry on a runner-up finish in the 1994 Met Amateur at Hackensack Golf Club.

What's better than starting the new year with a milestone celebration? That was just the case for three-time PGA TOUR winner and Fairfield, Conn., native J.J. Henry, who made his 500th career PGA TOUR start at the Sony Open in Hawaii.

According to the PGA TOUR, Henry, 42, is one of just three active players under the age of 45 to have reached the distinct mark, joining Stewart Cink (44 and 544 starts) and Charles Howell III (38 and 502 starts). He is the 145th player in TOUR history to have reached 500 starts.

"Longevity and consistency in whatever you choose to do is what we all strive to accomplish," wrote Henry in a Tweet prior to his 500th start. Having grown up playing at The Patterson Club, Henry was a finalist in the 1994 Met Amateur and also finished as runner up in the 1997 Ike. After attending Texas Christian University, Henry first played a full season on TOUR in 2001, already with four official starts under his belt. Through the 2016-17 season he's averaged nearly 29 starts per year.

Henry's memorable month even closed with a highlight, as he fired an incredible 59 at Arnold Palmer's Tradition Golf Club in La Quinta, Calif., prior to finishing tied for 23rd in the Farmers Insurance Open.

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Metropolitan Golf Association
49 Knollwood Road, Elmsford, NY 10523 •
914-347-4653 www.mgagolf.org •
mgagolf@mgagolf.org

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CEO & Publisher: Richard K. Summers

COO & Art Director: Peter J. Sansone

President: Brian Folino

Production/Pre-Press: Frederick Yantz

Design: Jim Gerhard, Matt Hulnick, Steve Higgins, Marina Kohls

Advertising Production Manager: Julie Yuen

General Manager, Digital Operations: Matt Frey, PGA

Operations: Tom Gauss, Katelyn Leer, Sean Schreiber

Accounting: Mary Beth Bidwell, Larisa Kotlyar, Stacy Lombardo

Advertising: For information, please contact: Tim McGovern at 914-347-4653, ext. 345, or Brian Folino at 623-337-5802 (office or 661-312-6412 (cell))

Executive Director, Travel & Real Estate: Mike Agee

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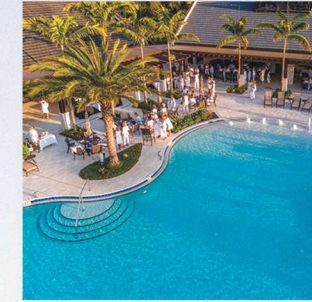
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Controlled CONTACT

Eric Manning is a PGA Professional at CLAY Health Club + Spa in Port Chester, N.Y., which uses the advanced GEARS system for three-dimensional golf instruction and club fitting.

BY ERIC MANNING

Knowing the location of the bottom of the golf swing can help amateurs in creating consistent, crisp contact with the golf ball. Though the winter months may not encourage practice, this drill is simple to practice indoor (with or without the use of a golf ball) and can help players be ready to go once the season returns in the spring.

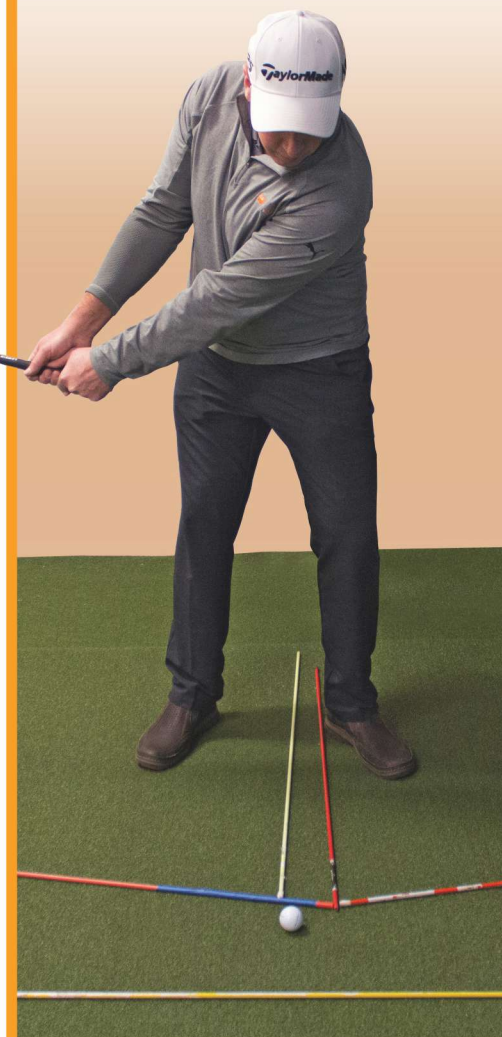
Setup:

To encourage hitting on a downward and outward strike, position the ball two to three balls back from your left (or lead) shoulder at address.



Takeaway:

The orange alignment rods represent the arc of the golf swing. Create a short backswing by moving the left shoulder downward and inward, following the arc of the swing. Notice that the head does not move left or right. This will help keep the weight relatively centered.



Impact:

At impact, feel as if you have slightly more weight ahead than you would at address (approximately 60% at address, and 75-80% at impact), keeping the handle slightly forward of the clubhead to, once again, encourage a downward and outward strike and also control contact with the ground. The low point in the swing should come after contact with the ball.



Through Swing:

On through swing, focus on turning your body 90 degrees to the address position, placing 90 percent of your weight on the left (or forward) foot, and having your arms and the club parallel to the ground.



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Though Lance admits he likes golf more than skiing (he competes in slalom, giant slalom, and Super G), he enjoys taking his mind off golf during the winter.



REACHING THE PEAK

The third time of Drive, Chip and Putt qualifying was certainly a charm for Lance Hollingshead of Basking Ridge, N.J. After advancing to sub-regionals in 2015 and regionals in 2016, Hollingshead claimed the top spot for the Boys 12-13 division in 2017's regionals at Winged Foot Golf Club. He's now looking forward to competing in April's National Finals at Augusta National Golf Club, but not until first turning his focus to another sport during the winter.

Extra: Which parts of your game have improved most over the last year?

Lance: My chipping is much better and I have a better putting routine.

E: What do you think was the key to your performances and consistency throughout the Drive, Chip and Putt qualifying rounds?

L: I made sure to keep my mind on every shot I played and not stressing about it by talking with my friends while I waited for my turn at the next station.

E: How did you stay focused during Regionals at Winged Foot?

L: The night before I got stressed, so I worked with my coach Debby Murphy and she helped me get my swing under control and I felt confident. On the day of regionals, my dad made sure everything was stress free so I could have fun and focus on my golf.

E: What is your earliest golf memory?

L: Playing in my backyard with my plastic golf set, which had three clubs.

E: What will your practice look like leading up to April's National Finals?

L: I am a competitive ski racer in the winter which takes up most of my weekends, so that only allows me limited time during the week for work on a simulator. I will need to end the championship ski season short so I can take the weeks leading up to the Nationals and go down south to practice and play.

E: Do you have any goals set for your game this summer?

L: I would like to focus on better ball striking, and maintain a good attitude when things aren't going my way. I will also work hard on hitting more fairways and proximity to the hole.

E: What are you looking forward to most about competing in the National Finals at Augusta National?

L: That's easy, driving down Magnolia Lane and putting on the 18th green.

Lance celebrates with his father, Don, after topping the Boys 12-13 division at Winged Foot Golf Club last fall.

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Next Up on the Tee

BY SCOTT KRAMER

2018 is already a great year to upgrade your driver. Nearly every major manufacturer debuted their new models at the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando – promising golfers enhanced distance, forgiveness and feel. Consider these fresh options. Callaway's Rogue (\$500) sports two hourglass-shaped titanium bars behind the thin clubface to stiffen the crown and sole, thus promoting fast ball speed and distance. Officials at aerospace behemoth Boeing helped redefine the club's leading edge geometry to improve airflow for more clubhead speed. PING touts the 460cc G400 Max (\$435) as its most-forgiving driver ever – thanks to a high moment of inertia. Extreme tungsten weighting, a forged clubface, low CG and thin crown help generate long drives that more commonly find the fairway. Internal ribs fine-tune the impact sound. Four “power hole” slots around the clubface of Wilson's Staff C300 (\$400) help minimize contact between the body and face, creating a large sweetspot that flexes more at impact – generating lengthy tee shots. Its loft and sole weights are adjustable. TaylorMade's M4 (\$429) features a “Twist Face” clubface that helps counteract where golfers most commonly make impact on misses. It is open with more loft on the high-toe to counter hooks, and closed in the low heel, to correct slices.





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Mike Miller



Balin sank a five-foot putt to win the first event of the PGA Tournament Series.

Throughout the winter months, Florida's warmer weather beckons club golf professionals from all over the country, not only for some offseason work, but also for competition. In December, Westchester Country Club's Danny Balin finished as the top earner in the PGA Tournament Series. The former Met Open champion opened with a victory on PGA Golf Club's Dye Course before logging a pair of runner-up finishes and two more top-20 finishes as he raked in more than \$12,000 in winnings. Frank Bensel of Century, Josh Rackley of Tam O'Shanter, and Adam Rainaud of Winged Foot all finished among the top-20 earners in the six-event series.

Meanwhile, two-time MGA Player of the Year Mike Miller produced a dominating run on the Minor League Golf Tour, earning back-to-back wins in December and producing seven top-three finishes in his eight starts over the last three months of 2017. While Miller has racked up more than \$28,000 in winnings on the MLGT since 2016, he has a long way to go to catch former MGA/MetLife Boys champion Sunny Kim, who has earned 45 wins and more than \$200,000 since he started playing on the MLGT back in 2006. Luke Graboyes, Ryan Snouffer and Max Buckley are among additional Met Area locals furthering their professional experience on the MLGT.



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Located in the heart of the Miami, the resort boasts 643 luxurious guest room and suites, situated within eight elegantly designed villas in a tropical setting. Each feature a classic, gold-leaf Spanish Revival sophistication, paired with luxurious amenities. Polished to the highest standards, all accommodations are complimented by a spacious marble finished bathroom and private balcony or lanai with

awe-inspiring golf and garden views.

The pinnacle of golf offers 72 holes of distinct championship golf for golfers planning the ultimate golf vacation. The iconic Blue Monster, home of the PGA TOUR for over 55 consecutive years, along with the Golden Palm, Red Tiger and Silver Fox course are conveniently located on property.

The Practice Facility at Trump Doral features a state-of-the-art Musco LED lighting system to allow guests to practice late into the evening. The newly designed short game area, located adjacent to the driving range, features a sprawling 8,500 sq. ft. green that is designed for chipping, pitching and bunker practice. True Spec Golf is committed to providing golfers an unparalleled club fitting experience. The new Rick Smith Golf Performance Center brings world-class instruction to South Florida's premier golf destination. Serving players of all abilities, the academy provides private lessons, multiday golf schools, small group clinics, on-course playing lessons, video analysis and juniors programming.

For a pre-round meal or a 19th-hole cocktail, enjoy the upscale American fare at Champions Bar & Grill. No visit here is complete without an evening at BLT Prime—a modern American steakhouse offering dry aged steaks, fresh seafood and panoramic views of the Blue Monster.

The resort's unparalleled golf experience is even further enhanced by the extensive retail offerings throughout the property. The 7,000 square foot golf shop, a leader in both fashion golf brands and equipment, is the crown jewel of retail at Doral. As one of the pioneer shops in the nation, the golf shop carries the most classic golf apparel to the new cutting-edge fashion brands, geared to those golfers who want to make a statement with more than just their score. Guests will find limited edition merchandise and specialty items along with the largest collection of golf clubs, junior and women's apparel. The Blue Monster shop, the only location on property to get the famed Blue Monster logo, is a perfect spot for traditional golf apparel, accessories and gifts. The expansive Royal Palm Pool complex features a family-friendly zero-entry pool, a serenity pool for adults, a 125-foot slide, Kids Camp program and 18 poolside cabanas. Guests can rejuvenate at the state-of-the-art fitness center featuring Technogym equipment and Kinesis Workout Systems, or play on Four Har-Tru tennis courts. A newly refreshed spa offers a tranquil retreat for pampering and relaxation with an array of spa treatment options for women, men and junior. Located in the heart of the City of Doral, the legendary landmark is now poised to be the most spectacular golf destination, forever befitting the name Doral in all its past, present and future glory.

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LAYOVER FLORIDA'S EMERALD COAST

BY TIM HARTIN

Stretching nearly 100 miles from Pensacola to Panama City Beach, Florida's Emerald Coast is home to some of the most striking beaches in the United States. Though the region used to primarily serve as a fishing or spring break destination, the establishment of more golf properties certainly puts it on the map for golf getaways.

At Bay Point, the signature par-four 5th hole on the Nicklaus Course plays out to an island fairway for spectacular views of St. Andrews Bay.

COURSES:

- 1 Bay Point Golf Club** – In Panama City Beach, Bay Point offers options for all levels of skill between its Nicklaus Course—the only Nicklaus design in Northwest Florida—and Meadows Course. Water, marshlands, waste areas, doglegs and a few surprising elevation changes highlight the challenging Nicklaus Course, while the Meadows Course is a more straightforward layout with gentle doglegs and bunker-protected greens.
- 2 Windswept Dunes** – Halfway between Destin and Panama City Beach—and slightly inland—Windswept Dunes creatively melds with the sandy landscape. The player's eye will focus on towering sand dunes, waste areas and bunkers, though the course features wide, gently rolling fairways and large greens. Think you're a big hitter? The back tees stretch to more than 7,700 yards!
- 3 Sandestin** – At the sprawling Sandestin Resort in Miramar Beach, Raven Golf Club stands out among three public offerings, with the Robert Trent Jones Jr. layout carving through marshes and among towering pines. Water is seemingly ever-present at The Links Golf Club, which weaves around lakes and has five holes along Choctawhatchee Bay, while Baytowne Golf Club provides a forgiving layout with generous landing areas.



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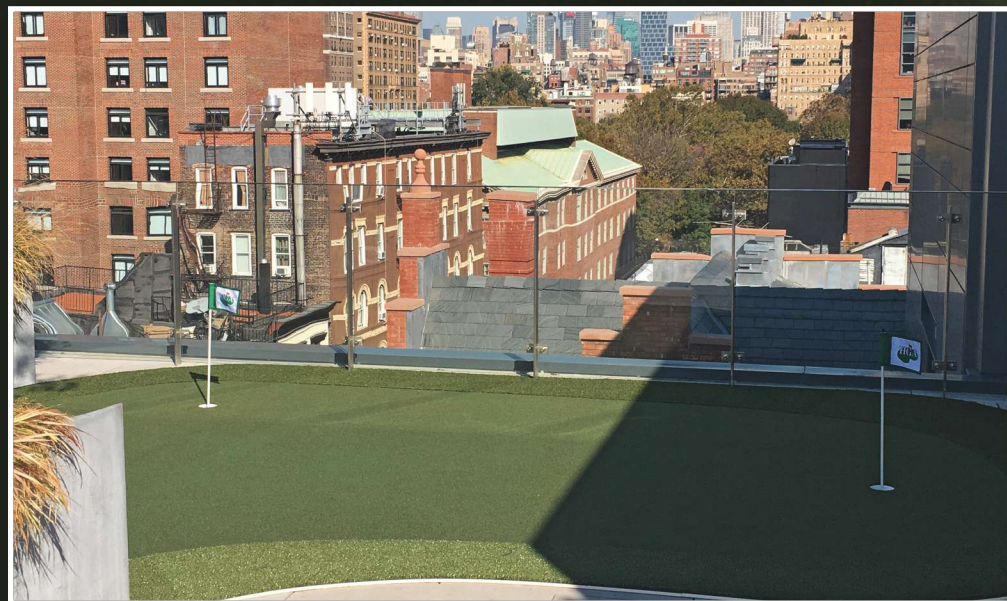
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GREENS of Envy

You'd think someone who creates backyard golf masterpieces for a living would have grown up with golf running through his veins. That's not the case with Michael Lehrer, the founder of Home Green Advantage who moved to Armonk, N.Y., in 1993 and picked up the game through a neighbor. After building his own bentgrass green in his yard to practice more, other neighbors showed interest and he knew he was on to something. Lehrer began to research synthetic turfs for easier maintenance, installed several more greens, then left the accounting world in 1995 to fully launch Home Green Advantage.

Since then, Lehrer has completed more than 700 synthetic green projects in the Met Area and beyond—Florida and Hawaii even! Each project allows Lehrer to get creative, whether it's a single 500-square-foot green that takes just a few days to complete or a much larger, multi-green facility with bunkers and teeing areas that takes several weeks. For cost, Lehrer says prices run around \$15-\$20 per square foot, though many additional factors (such as ground preparation and use of bunkers or tees) are unique for each design.

Lehrer approaches every project with a keen eye for detail and high standard for quality—factors that no doubt have helped his client base boom by word of mouth. His creations feature multiple synthetic turfs to create a true look and feel, whether it's the tee, green, collar, or rough. He's sure to design and build greens that accept shots from a wide range of angles, allowing clients to get the most out of the space. Take his own backyard for example: while demand and work keep Lehrer busy year-round, he may have hit as many shots as the avid golfer in the last year. It's easy when you just have to step out your back door.



Backyards may serve as the usual project locations, but no site is off limits for Lehrer, who has completed greens on New York City rooftops, alongside the ocean, and in offices and basements.

