

Dustin Johnson makes history at Autumn Masters 2020 p36

MONTHLY

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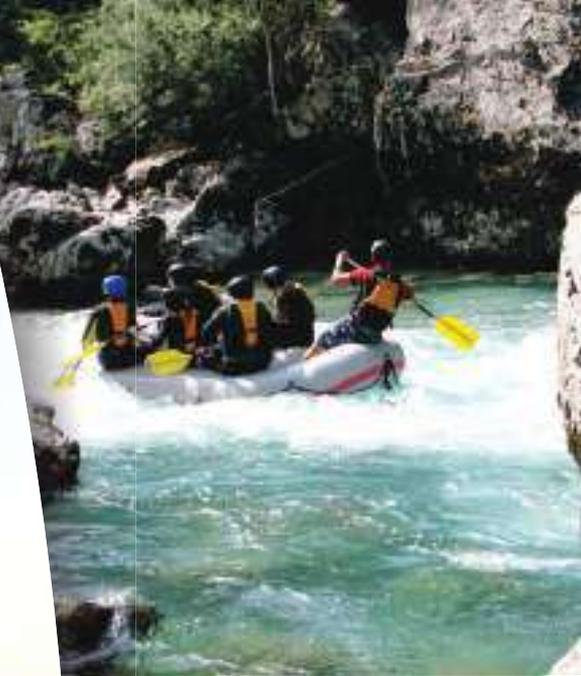
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Contact Details:  
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## HAPPY GOLF YEAR!

Perfect practice makes a perfect golfer!

**T**he current year has been the 'Disruptor' year with the Covid19 pandemic bringing our lives as we know it to a standstill. The year saw disaster management of epic proportions since the second world war. With survival on everyone's mind everything else took a back seat. While we are still reeling under the impact things are limping back to normal. Fortunately the golf courses are open for play and we are back enjoying our favourite pastime.

The absence from golf has been a blessing in disguise. Over the years each one of us has picked up some bad swing habits which have stuck with us. Not playing golf for 4 months has helped in pressing the reset to 'Factory Settings' for most of us, breaking the bad habits. Talking of habits, I would like all our readers to treat the new year as the 'Golf Year' and resolve to do all things new to play better golf.

First of all, we must practice regularly and correctly to enjoy our game. We must include in our practice regime all kinds of shots, use all kinds of clubs and practice for all kinds of situations. The practice should be as similar to the playing routine as possible.

Secondly we must make specific goals on what we would like to achieve from our practice. While it is ok to say that you will play a 'good round' it is better to work on goals like chipping

better by making better contact, maintaining rhythm while hitting your driver shots, keeping your head steady while chipping and putting and so on.

Thirdly, we must remember that golf is a sport and it provides a more satisfying experience to those with an athletic approach to it. Following an exercising routine to enjoy golf should be the buzz word.

Fourthly follow a stoic approach to the game of golf, keep a cool head in adversity and a down to earth approach in prosperity! Remember always, that golf is a great leveller.

The final goal for everyone should be to go with the latest equipment. Discard that shoe if you are not comfortable, upgrade those irons with the latest. Let this apply to your turnout too, get those great looking accessories.

While the Chinese Virus has taught us about life, the lesson for a golfer would be 'Perfect practice makes a perfect golfer'.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Golfplus team!

Editor-in-Chief  
editor@golfplusmonthly.com



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**Editor-in-Chief:** Anil Dev

**Editorial Board:**

Amit Luthra  
Col. R. Dewan (Retd.)

**Contributing Editors:**

Brandon de Souza  
Digraj Singh  
Farzan Heerjee  
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Michael Wilson  
Raja Danish Aman  
Randy Williams  
Ridhima Dilawari

**Deputy Editor:**

Charu Dewan  
Ferry Monné

**Creative & Newsdesk Team:**

Deepak, Pushpendra & Akansha

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Noida 201301 (U.P.), India  
Tel.: +91-120-4570554

**Marketing Department**

Shalini Tomar: +91-98114 57878  
E-mail: marketing@golfplusmonthly.com

**News Desk:**

newsdesk@golfplusmonthly.com

**Subscription:**

subscription@golfplusmonthly.com

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# Amazing Thailand Golf Paradise

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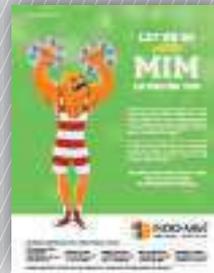


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Disclaimer: The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various authors and contributors in this issue do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the publication.

**This Month**



**Yogen Sethi** (in red T-shirt) with his group at Noida Golf Course



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# THE STAGES OF DEATH AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHRADDH

RANKED AMONGST THE FIFTY MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN INDIA, SADHGURU IS A YOGI, MYSTIC, VISIONARY AND A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR SADHGURU HAS BEEN CONFERRED THE PADMA VIBHUSHAN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN 2017, THE HIGHEST ANNUAL CIVILIAN AWARD, ACCORDED FOR EXCEPTIONAL AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE.

SADHGURU ISHA FOUNDATION

**Questioner:** I wanted to know, what is the importance of doing shraddh (rituals for the deceased)?

**Sadhguru:** In India, if someone close to you dies, you are supposed to sit and watch— no one leaves a dead body alone. If you keep the body for over two to three days, the hair will grow. If it was a man and he used to shave, you can see this from the facial hair. The nails will also grow. Therefore, in countries where they preserve the dead bodies for a longer time, the undertakers clip the nails and shave the beard. This is so because of the way life manifests. For the sake of understanding— there is fundamental life and physical life. Physical life energy, which is generally referred to as prana, has five basic manifestations. These are called samana, prana, udhana, apana, and vyana.

## The Stages of Death

Within 21 to 24 minutes from the moment when a doctor would declare a person as dead, samana starts exiting. Samana is in charge of maintaining the temperature in the body. The first thing that happens after death is, the body starts cooling down. The traditional way of checking whether someone is dead or alive is to feel the nose – they would not check the eyeballs and other parameters. If the nose has gone cold, they concluded that he is dead.

Somewhere between 48 to 64 minutes after someone is considered as dead, prana exits. Between six and twelve hours after, udhana exits. There are tantric processes through which we could revive the body before udhana exits. Once udhana has exited, it is practically impossible to revive the body. Then, somewhere between eight to eighteen hours, apana exits. Subsequently, vyana, which is the preservative nature of prana, will start exiting and may continue to do so for up to 11 to 14 days if it is a normal death— that is if someone died of old age, because life

became feeble. For that period of time, certain processes will continue in the body; there will still be some element of life. If someone died in an accident, when the life within was still vibrant – unless the body is totally crushed – the reverberations of this life will continue somewhere between 48 and 90 days.

During that time, there are things you can do for that life. Your experience of death is that someone is gone, but the experience of that being is that he or she has exited the body. Once they have exited the body, you have no business with them anymore. You cannot recognize them anymore, and if they came back, you would be terrified. If people you love died and would pop up again, there would be terror - not love, because your relationship is with their body or with their conscious mind and emotion. Once someone dies, those two aspects are left behind.

The mind is just a bunch of information that has natural tendencies which find expression in a certain way. When someone dies, there is no more discernment, no more intellect. If you put one drop of pleasantness into their mind, this pleasantness will multiply a million fold. If you put one drop of unpleasantness, that unpleasantness will multiply a million fold. It is a little like with children- they go out to play until they are exhausted and cannot go on anymore, because they do not have the necessary discernment as to when it is time to stop.

After death, discernment is completely absent, even more than in a child. Then, whatever quality you put into the mind, it will multiply a million fold. This is what is being referred to as heaven and hell. If you go into a pleasant state of existence, it is called heaven. If you go into an unpleasant state of existence, it is called hell. These are not geographical locations – these are experiential realities that a life which has become disembodied is going through.

## Death Rituals

How well or how ridiculously it is done today is a different matter, but there is a whole science of what to do at different steps. One of the first things people traditionally do if someone dies is, they will tie the big toes of the dead body together. This is very important because it will tighten up the muladhara in such a way that the body cannot be invaded by that life once again. A life that has not lived with the awareness that “this body is not me” will try to enter through any orifice of the body, particularly through the muladhara. The muladhara is where life generates, and it is always the last point of warmth when the body is cooling down.

The reason why traditionally, we always said that if someone dies, you must burn the body within an hour-and-a-half or a maximum of four hours is because life tries to get back. This is also important for the living. If someone very dear to you died, your mind may start playing tricks, thinking that maybe a miracle will happen, maybe God will come and bring them back. It has never happened to anyone, but still the mind plays up because of the emotions that you have for that particular person. Similarly, the life that has exited the body also believes that it can still get back into the body.

If you want to stop the drama, the first thing is to set fire to the body within one-and-a-half hours. Or to be sure the person is dead, they have stretched it to four hours. But the body should be taken away as quickly as possible. In agriculture communities, they used to bury, because they wanted their forefathers' bodies, which are a piece of soil, to go back to the soil that had nourished them. Today, you buy your food from the store, and do not know where it comes from. Therefore, burial is not advisable anymore. In earlier times, when they buried in their own land, they always put salt and turmeric on the dead body so that it quickly



dissipates into the soil. Cremation is good because it closes the chapter. You will see that when there is a death in the family, people will be crying and wailing, but the moment cremation happens, they will become quiet, because suddenly, the truth has sunk in that it is over. This does not only go for the living but also for the disembodied being who has just exited the body. As long as the body is there, he or she is also under the illusion that he can get back.

There are many rituals to see that you can somehow put a drop of sweetness into such a non-discerning mind so that this sweetness will multiply many fold and they will live comfortably in a kind of self-induced heaven. That is the idea behind the rituals – if they are done properly.

### Runanubandha

I am sure most of you have heard of runanubandha, which indicates a physical relationship. Whenever you touch someone - either because of blood relationship or sexual relationships, or even if you just hold someone's hand or exchange clothes—these two bodies will generate runanubandha, a certain commonality. When someone dies, traditionally, you are seeing how to completely obliterate the runanubandha. The idea of putting the ashes in the Ganga or in the ocean is to disperse them as widely as possible so

that you do not develop runanubandha with one who has departed. For you to continue your life, you must properly break this runanubandha. Otherwise, as it happens in modern societies, it will affect your physical and mental structure. Children up to eight years of age are immune to these things – nature has given them that protection, but adolescents will suffer immensely when we do not take care of the dead properly, because the energies of disembodied beings are always there and the first ones that they go after are adolescents because they are the most vulnerable. You see in the world today how much upheaval people are going through during adolescence.

One of the reasons why adolescence is more of a struggle today than it was in previous generations is that we are not properly taking care of those who have departed and these runanubandhas are all over the place. It is like loose software everywhere, and it always affects adolescent life most.

**Questioner:** But what to do? How do you grind your emotions into powder and sprinkle it? I don't think it is possible to cut off your emotions.

**Sadhguru:** Emotions are a different, secondary aspect to life. It is the physical sameness, the runanubandha with the dead that you want to eliminate, because this can cause sickness and mental derangement,

**“The reason why traditionally, we always said that if someone dies, you must burn the body within an hour-and-a-half or a maximum of four hours is because life tries to get back. This is also important for the living.**

among other things. Emotion by itself is not damaging. If you had a beautiful relationship with someone and now the person is no more, it is healthy to cherish the beauty of that relationship rather than suffer. But if the runanubandha is there, it weakens your body and your mental structure in such a way that instead of cherishing all the beautiful things that happened between two people, you are suffering, and not only that – it will lead to a certain derangement of life. To avoid that, we try to destroy the physical memory alone. It is not only that you cannot forget the emotional and psychological memory, you should not forget it either. Someone who meant so much to you – why should you forget them? You must cherish that relationship forever. **GP**

# 37 DAYS, 9477 MILES, 19 STATES

## SADHGURU SHARES EXPERIENCE OF EXPLORING SPIRITUAL AMERICA

**B**esides being a yogi, mystic, and a New York Times bestselling author, Sadhguru is also quite known for his passion for motorcycles. He has been on countless bike trips that go back decades. But after a 37-day adventure-packed journey, riding through 19 states, and covering a staggering 9477 miles, this was indeed a “journey like no other” for the founder of Isha Foundation.

Sadhguru and his convoy of 16 fellow travellers travelled across the United States to discover spiritual America in order to get a better understanding of the history, culture and traditions of Indigenous Peoples.

Millions of people had already inhabited the country before the arrival of European explorers and conquerors. More than 10 million Indigenous Peoples lived in the US at one time. But the people were subject to enslavement and subjugation for centuries. There are currently fewer than 3 million Indigenous Peoples living in the country, according to estimates.

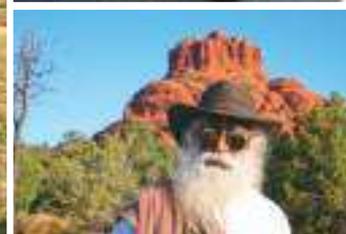
For Sadhguru, this journey was about recognizing the contributions of the largely ignored cultures of Indigenous Peoples who have lived in the Americas for millennia.

“Not that anybody can fully experience native American culture in 37 days because at one point they were more than 500 Nations. But we can at least make them visible again in the world. While you can’t fix the past, you can carve out a way for the future. Our gratitude goes to the Native American people who interacted with us.”

From the scenic views of the Zion National Park in Utah and the Mississippi River in Missouri, to iconic monuments like the Mato Tipila in Wyoming and Crazy Horse in South Dakota, Sadhguru explored the picturesque landscapes and witnessed the profundity of the Native cultures. He also traversed through the majestic Meramec Caverns (Missouri), Old Faithful Geyser (Wyoming), Eternal Flame (Cherokee Nation) and other notable landmarks.

“For the last 40-45 years or so, I’ve continuously been travelling, but this has been a journey like no other. This particular trip was scheduled for 21 days, but it went on for 37 days. Our team of 16 people operated like one organism. What we’ve seen and experienced is very

**“For the last 40-45 years or so, I’ve continuously been travelling, but this has been a journey like no other. This particular trip was scheduled for 21 days, but it went on for 37 days. Our team of 16 people operated like one organism.”**



difficult to articulate. It’s the pain in the land, which brought me here,” says Sadhguru.

The spiritual leader also spent Indigenous Peoples’ Day on October 12 in conversation with Black Eyed Peas’ Taboo, a rapper who is also of Mexican Native American origin. Sadhguru also met Hollywood star Will Smith at his home and met with his family. “Sadhguru is in town. I have been following him for a while. He wrote a wonderful book called ‘Inner Engineering.’ I want my family to meet spiritual people, to start interacting with people who are not hooked on the material world,” Will Smith said in a behind-the-scenes video shared by Sadhguru on Instagram.

Sadhguru interacted with legendary boxer Mike Tyson ahead of his much-anticipated return to boxing. Sadhguru also featured in “Nas Talks”, hosted by Israeli vlogger Nuseir Yassin, who is popularly known for his Nas Daily vlogs. [GP](#)

# HONMA ANNOUNCES NEW TOUR RELEASE PRODUCT LINE

HONMA Golf officially announced the release of its all-new Tour Release product line for the Indian Subcontinent, said Touché Golf, the exclusive distributors.

**T**he new TR20 and TR21 line includes two different drivers and three sets of irons, with fairways and hybrids. These products provide fast, tour-level performance with uncompromising HONMA craftsmanship.

The new TR20 drivers are easily HONMA's most technologically advanced product to date, featuring a nearly total carbon body and a light titanium frame. An ultra-lightweight ET40 carbon crown from Toray Composites is combined with a carbon sole and placed on a titanium frame to remove as much weight as possible from the driver's construction. This saved weight is then used to optimize CG location and launch conditions.

TR20 features two new drivers in two different profiles. TR20 460 is a beautiful, full-profile driver with three movable weight ports to adjust for MOI, low-spin and draw-biased launch conditions. TR20 440 features the same movable weight ports but is built with a slightly smaller profile for golfers who like to work the ball.

Both drivers also feature HONMA's Non-Rotating Hosel which allows the club to move +/- 1.5 degrees in face angle and +/- 1 degree in loft without changing the perfectly-spined HONMA Vizard shaft.

"TR20 drivers are a feat of engineering from our incredibly talented teams in Sakata / Japan and Carlsbad / U.S.A. Combining this innovative carbon construction with the legendary craftsmanship of our craftsmen in Japan is something we're very excited for golfers to experience," said HONMA President.

Also announced were two new sets of HONMA irons called TR20V and TR20P. TR20V is a true player's iron forged from soft S20C carbon steel and features a modern cavity back design. Built with a better player-preferred blade length and topline, TR20V is the ideal forged iron for shot makers. A recessed, electroform HONMA mole logo is added into the cavity as a nod to the forged irons of HONMA's past. TR20P is a player's distance iron built with the same design language as TR20V to allow golfers to blend TR20V and P sets into their golf bags. TR20P features a forged S35C steel body with an L-cup face for more forgiveness on shots hit low off the face. A pocket cavity with tungsten weighting



creates high MOI for added forgiveness and a low center of gravity for a higher launch.

**The TR20 series is launched promoting "SPEED" and "Trajectory control", and the TR21 FW/ UT has 4 additional concepts:**

#### 1. NON-ROTATING SHAFT SYSTEM

Honma's distinct Non-Rotating Shaft System has already been widely used in drivers and is now being introduced to all TR21 Fairway Woods and the Utility.

#### 2. ADJUSTABLE SOLE WEIGHTS

Adjustable weights in the sole make it possible to control trajectory, with specific tungsten weights best positioned for each number.

#### 3. TITANIUM HEAD FAIRWAY WOOD (3wti)

For extra distance with a Fairway Wood, there are two 3W's, one of which has a titanium head.

#### 4. MULTIPLE OPTIONS TO MAXIMIZE THE FLEXIBILITY OF CLUB SET-UP

Introducing a new number 4 Wood (16.5°) and developing the 3wti/3w/4w/5w/7w FW's will enable more golfers to meet their club set-up requirements and optimize their course management.

TR21 X Iron is a hollow iron beautifully shaped to maximize distance with control. Tungsten weighting and a high repulsion face are all designed to deliver for forgiveness and exceptional distance. This is a new era model which delivers a high-level performance for competitive golfers and those who aspire to play a tour model, but also for amateur golfers looking for extra distance.

"The new TR20 and TR21 Driver, Fairway, Utility and Irons are expertly shaped and crafted by some of the most skilled clubmakers in the world. Everything we know about golf club technology and design has been poured into this product line," said Rathan Kumar, Founder & CEO of Touché Golf. "Alongside Rustam Yadu the Country Manager, Romit Bose will be the TR20-21 Business Head in India and has set up a nationwide network of club fitters to custom fit these clubs to the specific requirements of each golfer."

TR20 products will be available from November 2020. For more details visit HONMA official website [www.honmagolf.com](http://www.honmagolf.com)



## WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

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As the Authorised Association in India, the IGU’s role is to implement and administer the Rules of Handicapping within our territory and carry out all responsibilities that have been delegated to the IGU. In order to be able to port your Handicap Index, across golf courses, globally and in India (including in another course in your hometown), you will be required to obtain a WHS, handicap index.

### SO, JOIN UP, IT’S EASY:

1. For existing GHIN, IGU affiliated Club members, your data has been transported to the system. You will receive an URL by e mail, which please access and make your payment of INR 1000 + GST, as annual (Jan-Dec) fee, through the payment gateway made available (small charge applies)
2. For all other IGU affiliated Club Members, please log into our website [www.indiangolfunion.org](http://www.indiangolfunion.org) , click on the WHS ® link and register yourself by making an annual (Jan-Dec) payment of INR 1000 + GST. Once registered, you will receive a WHS number, access the WHS portal (or APP), enter your last 20 scores and you will receive your handicap index.
3. For existing GHIN, non IGU Club members and new sign ups, please follow step 2 above and pay INR 2500 + GST, as annual (Jan-Dec) fee.  
FOR ABOVE CATEGORIES, A 3 YEAR PAYMENT OPTION IS ALSO AVAILABLE
4. For Juniors (below the age of 18, on the date of registration to WHS), please follow step 2 above BUT pay only INR 500 + GST, as annual (Jan-Dec) fee. Please be sure to e mail your birth certificate to us at [info@indiangolfunion.org](mailto:info@indiangolfunion.org), failing which your registration will lapse in 24 hours.

You will receive an IGU-WHS card, which will identify you as an IGU WHS Member, with your home Club (if you have one) and your unique WHS number. As this system will provide a daily handicap index, no HI will be mentioned on the card.

Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact any of the undernoted key resources at the IGU for any assistance.

Ishwar Achanta	Chairman-Technical Committee	+91 98410 20626
Tusshar Malhotra	GM -Golf Ops	+91 98189 93825
Manu Shukla	Tech Support	+91 96348 20524

Happy Golfing,

**Issued by:** The Indian Golf Union, New Delhi, INDIA  
Date: 24th December, 2019





# WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

## DO

Submit your card when the round is played:

- In an authorised format of play;
- Over a minimum of 13 holes OR 2 – 9 Hole rounds;
- By the Rules of Golf;
- With at least one other person;
- On a course with a current Course Rating and Slope Rating;
- During an active season;
- Certified in accordance with Rules of Handicapping;
- Submit your score as soon as possible on the day of play, after completion of your round and before midnight (local time);
- If you already have a HI, record a net double bogey as the maximum score if you start, but not complete a hole.
- If you don't have a HI, record a score of par + 5 strokes if you start, but not complete a hole.

## DON'T

Submit your card if you play:

- Foursomes (also known as Alternate Shot);
- Scrambles;
- When practicing or being coached;
- When the score cannot be verified by another player;
- When using non-conforming equipment;
- When the minimum number of holes (13) have not been played;
- If you don't play by the Rules of Golf.

<b>Inclusive &amp; Accessible</b>	The new World Handicap System welcomes everyone to compete or play socially with anyone on a fair and equal basis, helping to make golf a more enjoyable game.
<b>Consistent &amp; Portable</b>	The World Handicap System provides a consistent method of measuring skill-level and produces handicaps that are portable from course to course, country to country.
<b>Modern &amp; Adaptable</b>	The World Handicap System is modern, adaptable across golfing cultures and easy to use.





## WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

Dear Club Administrators,

This notice details the amended WHS fees for Clubs based on a slab system and is further to our notices dated 24th & 28th December, 2019 on the implementation of WHS in India,

For those Clubs wishing to register their members, en bloc, with WHS (as opposed to members individually registering on the IGU website), please contact Mr. Manu Shukla on +91 9634820524 or [manu.shukla@indiangolfunion.org](mailto:manu.shukla@indiangolfunion.org) for assistance.

### The process will be as follows:

1. An Excel file will be mailed to you which is to be filled with the required member details and mailed back to IGU.
2. Club to remit the required fees to IGU by RTGS/NEFT/IMPS.
3. At the IGU back end, we will upload these details, create the WHS ID for each member and activate the membership.
4. The slab system, based on total number of members registered from each Club is:

No of Members	Rate in INR/Member
1-200	1000
201-500	900
501-750	800
751-1000	700
1001-1500	600
1501-3000	500
>3001	400
Non Club Members	2500
Club Member Registering directly	1000

Note: All above rates are subject to GST @ 18 %

Best wishes to stay safe & healthy.

Issued by: Chairman, Technical Committee,  
The Indian Golf Union,  
New Delhi, INDIA

Date : 3rd October, 2020





The Indian Golf Union

The governing body for Golf in India

# The Indian Golf Union



## HITAASHEE BAKSHI

EXCLUSIVE Q&A

### GP: Who prompted you to take up golf out of all the other sports?

HB: My initiation to this great game was by my grandfather, Col AK Bakshi (ret'd), who was a keen golfer with scratch a handicap. From the very first day my true love was found. Subsequently, Head Coach Anitya Chand sir took me under his wings and rest as it is said is history.

### GP: How do you manage your time between golf and studies?

HB: I wake up in the morning and practice late into the evening, get back home and then study for one to two hours every day without fail. Here I would like to thank my School APS, Dhaula Khua and especially the principle who went out of their way to encourage me and facilitate me in pursuing Golf with studies. Also, my parents always had my back and motivated me.

### GP: What has been the role of IGU?

HB: The Indian Golf Union provides me with a constructive feedback mechanism and allows me as a sportsperson to grow, both in

terms of skills and mindset. The experience provided by IGU in numerous National and International competitions was extraordinary and went a long way in shaping me.

### GP: What are your future plans?

HB: I want to turn professional and enter the LPGA Hall of Fame. Further, along with my sister, I would like to encourage young budding golfers by providing them guidance, support and exposure so that one day golf would be as famous, if not more, than any other support in India.

### WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG?

**Wedge:** Titleist SM6 K (60), Titleist SM6 Grind (54), (W, PW)

**Balls:** Titleist Pro 1X

**Irons:** Titleist 716 AP 2 (6,7,8,9)

**Hybrid:** Titleist 816 H1 (25o, 21o,19o), Titleist 816 F2 (150)

**Putter:** Anser Ping Sigma G

**Driver:** Titleist 917 D2

### GP: Favourites:

**Food:** Afghani Chicken and potatoes in any form especially if cooked by my mother.

**Book:** Golf is Not a game of Perfect by Bob Rotella

**Golfers:** Rickie Fowler and Lydia Ko

### GP: How have you been coping with the new Normal?

HB: This unforeseen time has provided me with a perspective that made me think about the other aspects of the game and an actual chance to work on them. The support provided by DLF Academy and my school in dealing with the situation was immense.

### GP: What's your assessment of yourself after you joined the course after this long break?

HB: The DLF Junior Excellence program of The DLF Golf and Country Club was instrumental in motivating me to transform a debilitating situation into an opportunity for growth and development. The lockdown provided me with time, which I used to direct towards mental and physical well-being. I intensified my workout regimes, and took online sessions to remain guided. We also had online coaching sessions. I also finished reading books in golf and its psychology, thenceforth learning to apply it on the field and in life.

### GP: How are the conditions at the golf course and your thoughts on the field?

HB: The course is excellent as always with lots of golfers concentrating on the game. The general atmosphere is optimistic and positive with a hope for better future. I am now much more confident and optimistic and have been able to play my best golf with a joyful, confident and cheerful attitude.

### GP: Fitness is really important. Tell us about your day-to-day fitness regime?

HB: I start my day with a three km run followed by some isometric and strength building exercises. After practice we have a two hours session with Ms Anjali, Physical Trainer at DLF Golf Academy, wherein we concentrate on endurance and strength. After returning back from the Golf Course I again go for three km run. A proper rest and I am good to go the next day. This schedule is followed by me six times a week. 

## LEGENDS TOUR ANNOUNCES INITIAL PART OF 2021 SCHEDULE

The Legends Tour announced the first part of its International Schedule for 2021, marking the return of over-50s professional golf in Europe following the cancellation of the Tour's 2020 season.

It follows the ground-breaking joint venture between Staysure Group CEO Ryan Howsam and the European Tour earlier this year, when Howsam acquired a controlling stake in the Staysure Tour which was rebranded as the Legends Tour, placing golf's most iconic names at the forefront of the brand.

Some of those iconic names, including Major Champions, former World Number Ones and Ryder Cup Captains, will host Legends Tour events in 2021 where amateurs will be able to tee it up alongside their golfing heroes in the innovative Alliance Pro-Am format.

The season will begin in Austria when the Riegler & Partner Legends takes place from May 7-9 at Golf Club Murhof, with the Tour returning to the venue for the second time after its first appearance on the schedule in 2019. The Italian Senior Open will take place a week later from May 14-16 at a venue to be confirmed, before the first Senior Major Championship of the year, the KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship at Southern Hills Country Club, Tulsa, Oklahoma, from May 27-30. **GP**

## CZECH MATE AS LIESER SCOOPS GRAND FINAL AND RANKINGS DOUBLE

**Tournament:** Challenge Tour Grand Final

**Venue:** T-Golf & Country Club, Mallorca

Ondrej Lieser made history by becoming the first Czech player to win the Road to Mallorca Rankings as he secured his second title in as many starts at the Challenge Tour Grand Final.

The 29-year-old produced a closing three under par round of 68 to reach 11 under par and clinch an emotional victory at T-Golf and Country Club. His win saw him climb five places to the top of the Road to Mallorca Rankings and become the first Challenge Tour Number One to hail from the Czech Republic.

He earned a narrow one-stroke victory in Mallorca, with Sweden's Christofer Blomstrand, Germany's Alexander Knappe and Spain's Santiago Tarrío finishing in a tie for second place on ten under par on a tight day where several players held the lead at various points in the day.

Lieser's victory is his second in as many Challenge Tour starts after winning the Andalucía Challenge de España last time out and after spending a week at home to gather his thoughts before travelling to Mallorca, he dedicated his life-changing victory to his wife, Michaela.

"It's really emotional for me," he said. "The two putts I holed on 17 and 18 were unbelievable. In those circumstances, with that amount of pressure, I don't even know how I did it.

"I spoke with my wife already, I was crying at the time. Four years ago, when I met my wife, my life just turned around. I was close to stopping playing, I wasn't going to play anymore. With her and with the girls at home, it just turned around. It's not even my win, it's mostly her win. She gives me the strength, especially mentally, to hold it together. **GP**



## ANGLES REIGNS IN SPAIN

**Tournament:** Andalucía Challenge de Cádiz

**Venue:** Iberostar Real Club de Golf Novo Sancti Petri, Spain

Pep Angles claimed an emotional maiden victory on home soil by winning the Andalucía Challenge de Cádiz at Iberostar Real Club de Golf Novo Sancti Petri.

The Spaniard posted a closing three under par round of 69 for a 14 under par total, one stroke clear of his final round playing partners Alfredo Garcia-Heredia, his countryman, and England's Matthew Baldwin, who finished in a tie for second place on 13 under par. Garcia-Heredia was the overnight leader and he still held a one stroke advantage as Angles made the turn on one under par, two off the lead, but a run of three birdies in a row for the 27-year-old catapulted him to the top of the leaderboard and he subsequently held on for a first European Challenge Tour victory.

"I've been down the valley of darkness and I came up a little bit, so I'm very happy," he said. "What you guys see on the golf course is just the tip of the iceberg.

"I've been working on different aspects; mind, soul and body to get here and have the calmness inside of me and be able to perform when I need to. It's not only reps of golf, it's everything else, it's very important.

"I'm feeling great. I'm feeling first of all grateful, for my team and for the people who make it possible for me to play the game I love. I'm feeling really proud of myself and also for how my intentions and attitude were today."

The Barcelona native made an important bogey-save on the 17th hole to ensure he had a one-stroke lead with one to play and he reflects on that as a pivotal part of his round. **GP**



## BOB'S BIRDIE BLITZ SEALS MAIDEN VICTORY

**Tournament:** Aphrodite Hills Cyprus Showdown

**Venue:** Aphrodite Hills Resort, Cyprus

**Prize fund:** €1,000,000



**R**obert MacIntyre claimed an emotional maiden European Tour title at the Aphrodite Hills Cyprus Showdown, where a seven under final round 64 earned the Scot a one-stroke victory in a thrilling shoot-out finale.

The 24-year-old carded eight birdies in the final showdown of the exciting new format, in which the 19 players who had progressed to the final round began the day from a clean slate in a sprint to the finish - with the lowest round of the day sealing victory.

It was a closely-fought contest until the final furlong but MacIntyre, who won last year's Sir Henry Cotton Rookie of the Year Award with an 11th place finish in the Race to Dubai Rankings presented by Rolex, almost holed a remarkable ace at the par three 17th before tapping in for birdie to take a share of the lead.

A fearless drive down the par five 18th presented a golden opportunity to seal victory outright and so it transpired as a perfect second shot and a facile two-putt earned him his first title, elevating him from 57th to 24th in the Race to Dubai Rankings presented by Rolex and copper-fastening his path to the season-ending DP World Tour Championship, Dubai - the fourth and final Rolex Series event of the campaign. **GP**

## SHINKWIN CLAIMS MAIDEN TITLE AFTER PLAY-OFF VICTORY IN CYPRUS

**Tournament:** Aphrodite Hills Cyprus Open

**Venue:** Aphrodite Hills Resort, Cyprus

**Prize fund:** €1,000,000

**C**allum Shinkwin defeated Kalle Samooja in a play-off to win his first European Tour title after a dramatic final day at the 2020 Aphrodite Hills Cyprus Open.

The Englishman was two shots behind the Finn as he stood on the 17th tee in regulation and while a birdie there edged him closer, his chances of victory

looked slim when he found rough off the tee at the par five last.

His second shot over the water took him to the edge of the putting surface and he holed an incredible 54-foot putt for eagle to take a one shot lead at 20 under par after a closing course-record 63.

Samooja left himself an eagle chance from almost exactly the same spot but a two-putt birdie meant it was extra holes at Aphrodite Hills Resort.

Shinkwin found the greenside bunker with his second shot at the first trip back up the last but got up and down for a birdie, with Samooja's three putt from the fringe sealing Shinkwin's first win in his 112th European Tour event.

The victory heralds a return to form for the 27-year-old, who lost his card in 2018 after coming close to becoming a Rolex Series winner the previous season, missing out in a play-off to Rafa Cabrera Bello at the Aberdeen Standard Investments Scottish Open when a par on the 72nd hole would have handed him the title. **GP**



## PENNY AVIS APPOINTED TO THE BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN TOUR



**T**he European Tour announced the appointment of Penny Avis to the Board of the Tour as a Non-Executive Director with immediate effect.

The former Deloitte corporate finance partner will bring considerable Board experience to the European Tour in addition to a wide appreciation and understanding of business and governance matters, from a career which has taken her across Europe, the Americas and Asia.

In addition to current NED roles at law firm Howard Kennedy and Cifas, the UK's Fraud Prevention Service, she is also the Senior Independent Director at UK Athletics, the National Governing Body for Athletics in the UK.

European Tour Chairman David Williams, said: "I am delighted to welcome Penny to the Board of the European Tour. Her Board experience and reputation for providing measured and clear opinions based on her time at Deloitte will be an important asset to us as we continue to develop the European Tour."

Penny Avis said: "I am very much looking forward to joining the Board of the European Tour. I have

watched the impressive progress the Board and the Tour as a whole has made in recent times and I look forward to helping in any way I can to maintain that momentum." **GP**

## TIGER WOODS AND SON COMMIT TO PNC CHAMPIONSHIP



**T**iger Woods has revealed he will team up with his son Charlie and compete in the PNC Championship at the Ritz-Carlton Golf Club Orlando (Grande Lakes) from Dec. 17-20.

Formerly known as the Father/Son Challenge, the PNC Championship brings together top PGA TOUR and LPGA major-winning talent and a family member to compete as a team.

Woods, the 82-time TOUR winner, will make his tournament debut with Charlie, his 11-year-old son who has already established himself as an accomplished junior golfer in Florida.

“I can’t tell you how excited I am to be playing with Charlie in our first official tournament together. It’s been great watching him progress as a junior golfer and it will be incredible playing as a team together in the PNC Championship,” Woods said in a statement.

The 44-year-old Woods has been spotted at various junior tournaments acting as Charlie’s caddie. Outside of the odd sighting on social media videos, this will be the first time for fans to see the young Woods in action.

This is in direct contrast to the profile the elder Woods had at the same age. Taught by his father Earl, Woods had made numerous appearances on television as a prodigy from as early as age 2. **GP**

## ZALATORIS ACCEPTS PGA TOUR SPECIAL TEMPORARY MEMBERSHIP

**W**ill Zalatoris has accepted Special Temporary Membership for the remainder of the 2020-21 PGA TOUR Season. Zalatoris is now eligible for unlimited sponsor exemptions for the remainder of the season as he attempts to earn his PGA TOUR card for the 2021-22 season.

Zalatoris secured Special Temporary Membership after five PGA TOUR starts this season, collecting top-10s at the U.S. Open (T6), Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship (T8) and Shriners Hospitals for Children Open (T5). He entered last week’s Bermuda Championship three points shy of the threshold for Special Temporary Membership and officially qualified following his T16 in Bermuda.

To earn full status on the PGA TOUR for the 2021-22 season, Zalatoris must earn as many or more points through the non-member FedExCup points list as No. 125 in the 2020-21 FedExCup standings. Zalatoris currently has 334 points, and for reference, that would fall between Nos. 15 and 16 in the current FedExCup standings. It took 376 points to finish in the top 125 in the 2018-19 season, the last TOUR season unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic. **GP**



## CARLOS ORTIZ SINKS A 22-FOOT BIRDIE TO WIN VIVINT HOUSTON OPEN

**C**arlos Ortiz held off Dustin Johnson and Hideki Matsuyama by closing with a 5-under 65 to win the Vivint Houston Open on Sunday, becoming the first player from Mexico to win on the PGA TOUR in 42 years.

He earned every bit of it, caught in a tight battle on the back nine with the defending FedExCup winner and Japan's biggest star. Ortiz delivered the winner with a 6-iron to 8 feet on the par-5 16th. He had to settle for a two-putt birdie, and it held up when Johnson and Matsuyama narrowly missed birdie chances coming in.

Ortiz finished in style. Needing two putts to

win, the 29-year-old holed a 20-foot birdie putt for a two-shot victory.

Ortiz held back tears as he waited for his playing partners to putt. The victory sends him to the Masters Tournament next April. He was there a year ago to watch his brother, Alvaro, who qualified by winning the Latin American Amateur.

"It feels awesome," said Ortiz, who grew up in Guadalajara and played at North Texas with Sebastian Munoz of Colombia, the most recent Latin American winner on TOUR.

"This is like my second home. There was a bunch of people cheering for me, Latinos and Texans. I'm thankful for all of them." **GP**



## ASIAN WRAP AT THE MASTERS

**K**orea's Im enjoys slice of Masters history with runner-up finish

Korea's Sungjae Im produced Asia's best finish at the Masters Tournament with an impressive joint runner-up outing in his debut appearance at fabled Augusta National.

The 22-year-old Im eclipsed countryman K.J. Choi's third

place performance in 2004 with some glorious golf, closing with a final round of 4-under 68 for a 15-under 273 total. He finished five strokes behind winner Dustin Johnson, who earned his maiden Masters victory and 24th PGA TOUR title with a tournament record of 20-under 268.

Straight-shooting Im, who won The Honda Classic for his first PGA TOUR victory in March, started the day four back of Johnson and got to within one stroke of the lead with birdies on Hole Nos. 2 and 3 as Johnson bogeyed Hole Nos. 4 and 5. However, Johnson, the reigning FedExCup champion and world No. 1, simply shifted into a different gear down the stretch to cruise home to an emotional win ahead of Im and Australia's Cameron Smith.

"Finishing tied for second is unbelievable, and I'm proud of my game. This is definitely going to be a memorable Masters for me, not only because this is my first appearance, but my initial goal at the start of the week was just to make a cut and get into the weekend," said a delighted Im.

The talented Korean, who was the 2019 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year, made errors after getting to within one shot of Johnson through five holes where he dropped bogeys on Hole Nos. 6 and 7. Imbirdied the eighth, 13th and 15th holes through some gutsy play to ensure his high finish and a footnote in Masters folklore.

"My iron accuracy definitely wasn't up to par as I did play the first two rounds, but I was able to put it in places where I was able to have a good angle of getting close to the hole, so my scrambling was pretty good." **GP**



## STREB WINS THE RSM CLASSIC AFTER TWO-HOLE PLAYOFF



**R**obert Streb made an 8-foot par putt to stay alive in a playoff and ended it on the second extra hole Sunday with a pitching wedge that came an inch from going in, giving him a victory over Kevin Kisner in The RSM Classic.

Streb won for the second time on the PGA TOUR, his other title also coming in a playoff at Sea Island six years ago.

He rallied from a five-shot deficit in 2014. This time, he lost a three-shot lead until a 6-iron to 12 feet on the par-3 17th hole for a birdie that allowed him to close with a 2-under 68 and force extra holes.

Kisner, whose first of three PGA TOUR titles came at Sea Island in 2015, closed with a 63.

They finished at 19-under 263, one shot ahead of Cameron Tringale (62).

Kisner had the advantage on the 18th hole on the Seaside course for the first playoff hole. His approach caught a good bounce and left him a 15-foot birdie putt, while Streb drove into the bunker, couldn't reach the green and his pitch from about 30 yards away still came up some 8 feet short. **GP**

## PROM MEESAWAT

## BATTLING BACK FROM APPENDIX SCARE



Thailand's Prom Meesawat, a two-time winner on the Asian Tour, says he is "happy to be alive" after having to endure a nightmare few weeks last month suffering from a ruptured appendix.

A video of him on social media a few days ago walking tentatively and gingerly in a swimming pool tells part of the story, fortunately the tail end of it.

On October 15, he had a surgery to fix the problem, but it was by no means routine.

"I was playing golf with all the boys last month. And in the afternoon I was going to the gym but my stomach started feeling uncomfortable," says Prom – whose famous father Suthep was the first Thai to win the Thailand Open in 1991.

"And then I went to the hospital in the evening on Sunday, just to see the doctor and he gave me some medicine to try and help the pain. The next day I am still going to play golf but I could only play six holes because it was so painful and I lost my energy.

"I almost could not drive back. So I rested in the locker room. Then I drove to Synphaet Hospital in Bangkok. The same doctor gave me ultrasound and gave me a thorough check up. I was admitted for two days but they could not see anything unusual from the ultrasound result."

He stayed for another two nights, went home for two days but it was still painful, so he went back to the hospital again on Thursday. The doctor suggested a CT scan which revealed a rupture appendix.

"It all happened very quickly. We weren't prepared for that. My wife took very good care of me despite having to take care of two kids. It is good that the hospital was close to my house – only five mins away. That was perfect," Prom added. **GP**

**"I was playing golf with all the boys last month. And in the afternoon I was going to the gym but my stomach started feeling uncomfortable."**

## JAZZ JANEWATTANANOND

## HAILS A DECADE OF REMARKABLE GROWTH



Jazz Janewattananond joins an exclusive club of golfers today when he tees-off in The Masters for the first time but when he first turned professional, a decade ago, thoughts of competing in a Major championship were very far from his mind.

In the latest My Time video in partnership with ROLEX, he reveals just how daunting it was at the start of his career and how he did not know what to expect.

"I turned professional the day before I turned 15. I remember it quite clearly," says Jazz, now aged 24.

"We just decided to go for it. To try and improve myself. I was so young and I was really naïve."

He made the cut that week he turned professional at the King's Cup in 2010 and finished in a tie for 44th – to earn a first pay cheque for US\$1,590.

"I was just star struck, like a deer in the head lights. I didn't know what to do but I was there to take it all in and the rest is history," added the Thai.

Jazz played in a handful of Asian Tour events prior to joining the play for pay ranks and played all four rounds in the Asian Tour International in 2010 making him the youngest player to make the cut on Tour at the age of 14 years and 71 days.

He goes on to explain how difficult the road to the top has been despite his immense talent and gift for the game.

In 2016, he tried his hand on the Web.com Tour (now the Korn Ferry Tour) but when he returned he had lost his playing rights on the Asian Tour. **GP**

**"We just decided to go for it. To try and improve myself. I was so young and I was really naïve."**

## 2022 SENIOR OPEN SET FOR GLENEAGLES

▶ Gleneagles will host The Senior Open Presented by Rolex for the first time when the iconic Scottish venue welcomes Europe's only Senior Major Championship in 2022.

The King's Course on the 850-acre Perthshire estate will host the 35th edition of the tournament from July 21–24, 2022, a year after Sunningdale Golf Club welcomes the Championship's return after its cancellation in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Senior Open Presented by Rolex will celebrate its 35th anniversary when the action tees off in July 2022. **GP**

**“This is another great ‘first’ in the history of The Senior Open and we could not be more thrilled to be staging the championship on The King’s Course at Gleneagles. With such a strong pedigree in hosting championships, The King’s is a fine test of golf and we know the players will relish the opportunity to play there.”**

**Johnnie Cole-Hamilton**  
Executive Director -  
Championships  
The R&A

## WHS COMES INTO EFFECT IN GB&I

▶ The World Handicap System (WHS) comes into effect for golfers in Great Britain and Ireland.

Developed by The R&A and USGA, in close collaboration with existing handicapping authorities, the WHS provides all golfers with a consistent measure of playing ability, with handicaps calculated in the same way wherever they are in the world.

Launched in January 2020 and now live in more than 65 countries, the WHS provides golfers with a unified and more inclusive handicapping system for the first time.

The WHS is implemented and administered at the local level by national and regional golf associations around the world with England Golf, Scottish Golf, Wales Golf and Golf Ireland taking on this significant responsibility within GB&I.

The introduction of the WHS marks a considerable change for golfers in GB&I and will replace the previous Unified Handicapping System developed over many decades by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU). While it may take golfers some time to get used to the new system, and for transition handicaps to settle down, the feedback received from elsewhere in the world strongly suggests that the WHS will help them to enjoy their golf all the more. For the first time, it will provide them with a Handicap Index which is a more responsive measure of their ability, and a Course Handicap which reflects the difficulty of the golf course being played.

### THE KEY FEATURES OF THE SYSTEM INCLUDE:

- A Course Rating System which sets out a consistent method of evaluating the difficulty of a golf course from each set of tees, with a player's Handicap Index being adjusted to take account of the difficulty of the course being played
- Flexibility in formats of play, allowing both competitive and recreational rounds to count for handicap purposes and ensuring that a Handicap Index reflects demonstrated ability
- A minimal number of scores needed to obtain a new handicap; with the number of scores needed to obtain a new handicap being 54 holes from any combination of 18-hole and 9-hole rounds (with some discretion available for national or regional associations)
- An average-based calculation of a Handicap Index, taken from the best eight out of the last 20 scores and factoring in memory of demonstrated ability for better responsiveness/control
- A calculation that considers the impact that abnormal course and weather conditions might have on golfers' performance each day
- Timely handicap revisions
- A limit of Net Double Bogey on the maximum hole score (for handicapping purposes only)
- A maximum handicap limit of 54.0, regardless of gender, to encourage more golfers to measure and track their performance, and so increase their enjoyment of the game. **GP**

## WOMEN'S AMATEUR ASIA-PACIFIC RESCHEDULED

▶ The Women's Amateur Asia-Pacific (WAAP) championship has been rescheduled to 30 September – 3 October 2021 due to the continuing uncertainty created by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The WAAP will be hosted at the Siam Country Club's Waterside Course in the championship's first visit to Thailand.

The WAAP, developed by The R&A

and the Asia-Pacific Golf Confederation (APGC) to unearth developing talent and provide a pathway for Asia's elite women amateurs to emerge on the international stage, will be supported by the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Sports Authority of Thailand plus a number of partners including Rolex, Samsung, Hana Financial Group, Kabaya Holdings and Trust Golf. **GP**



# A LOVE AFFAIR WITH GOLF

Very few golfers can boast of their association with golf with a degree of passion as done by Gangesh Khaitan. ■

**P**laying golf for over 57 years, a Limca Book of record came at a befitting time as he celebrates 50 years of representing India. GolfPlus Monthly celebrates the Golden Jubilee of Gangesh Khaitan in Golf.

**GP:** Tell us about your first brush with the game and the early years.

**GK:** I was just 10 years old when my aunt forced me to go and play golf with her son in 1963. I went to the golf course with my cousin Deepak Khaitan and the moment I entered the golf club, I fell in love with the game and thus started my affair with golf.

**GP:** You journey completing 50 years playing golf.

**GK:** The game has changed a lot in the last 6 decades of my playing. In the early years the only golf equipment that was available in India was golf tees with everything else having to be imported. Situation was so difficult to acquire anything with golf that I remember we used to order even the gloves through some of our family members or friends who used to go abroad. And when

The main reason for having played the game for so many years is **personal interest in the game**. I still get charmed and excited in playing and coming to the course.

the gloves used to come, the size or the color were a big problem. I got disheartened at a certain stage and gave up wearing gloves. Even till date I play without gloves. For golf balls, we used to get 1 golf balls a month on quota basis from Indian Golf Union. We also used to collect as many balls as possible when the professionals used to come to India for the Indian Open. That time had its own charm and romance. Today everything is available to the juniors, making the game far more accessible to them as a result they are making waves in the junior championships in the world. In our time we did not have good professionals but now we have no dearth of good professionals in India.

**GP: With a LIMCA record holder now for 50 years of representing India, what advice you would like to give to the upcoming golfers?**

GK: Advice to any golfer who is interested in the game is to fall in love with the game and to enjoy the game. Yes, targets and dreams are important, you cannot achieve anything unless you have a love affair for the game. Just being on a golf course should give you a high. The main reason for having played the game for so many years is personal interest in the game. I still get charmed and excited in playing and coming to the course.

**GP: Extent of impact of Covid'19 on Golf?**

GK: Covid has impacted every single human being affecting them mentally and financially. Definitely Covid has taken a toll on golf too. The professionals and amateurs both have had so much time available that they are spending extra time on the golf course as compared to what they were doing earlier. That advantage cannot compensate the disadvantage of the overall life of a human being. This is only a passing phase and part of our life that we are experiencing and we should be matured enough to let this time go by. We should probably respect Covid for what it has done to us and try to make the best use of it. Till then lie low and do the best we can do and carry on with your life.



Gangesh Khaitan and caddy Sameer Haldar on the course



**GP: What will be the biggest challenge for a revival?**

GK: There is no challenge. The moment things become normal, overnight everything will change. As far as me (as an amateur), I am playing little more golf as compared to the earlier days as a result the quality of the game is still maintained. Some of the tournaments that were being organized on all India basis have not been organized this year. But at the same time a few tournaments are still being organized and played with the same fun and excitement. We, human beings are too smart and will bounce back.

**GP: How has the pandemic affected the golfing fraternity?**

GK: Golf is not the only aspect that has been affected. In my opinion, golfers have not been affected at all as compared to how it has impacted other human beings. At this moment we should only be with all those human beings who have been affected far more than the golfing fraternity.

**GP: How are you adjusting with the new normal?**

GK: No adjustment is required. All I do is keep a check on my work but the responsibility is reduced. I am having a great time. Covid has only affected me mentally where I have a feeling that there are too many restrictions where my life is concerned and breaking them is a problem for me. From golfing and work point of view things are very good. Covid has taken a toll on my business, but I am not worried about it. I am just waiting for better times to come.

**GP: Your secret behind perfect golf?**

GK: There is no secret. Life is an open book. The moment you are in love with a sport, devoting time does not require effort. In the last so many years, I have strived to improve my game as a result I have managed to maintain the standard of my game for a long time. My dream was to play golf for India once. If I have been able to



Gangesh Khaitan with Coach Monish Bindra

## ACHIEVEMENTS OVER 50 YEARS

- **1970, 1972**  
National Junior Champion
- **2014, 2017, 2019**  
National Senior Champion
- **1970 to 1977, 1989**  
Represented India in the Indian National Team
- **2004, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019**  
Represented India in the Indian National Senior Team
- **2020**  
Inducted in the Limca Book Record as the only Indian who has played a sport for India for 50 years

play for the country for 50 years, the credit would go to the Indian Golf Union who has done good for the game of golf from such a long time. The other reason I have played golf for so many years has been the kind of friends I have played with. In order to compete with them, I have had to maintain a certain standard of the game and all these efforts is the reason of the quality of golf I play.

### GP: What is important in order to achieve Excellency in sports?

GK: We have been hearing things like child prodigy, talented golfer. In order to play any sport, there are 3 important things: hard

work, very hard work and really hard work. All these terms of child prodigy and talent is all about hard work. There is no other way or substitute to be successful in any sport.

In order to shine like the sun you have to burn like the sun.

We have a golfer Vijay Kumar Bhadana, he started playing golf at the age of 42. Put in a lot of hard work and played of scratch handicap. He was National Senior Champion twice and in individual capacity he finished Second at the Asian Pacific Golf Championship 2010. Another example is Mr. Kapil Dev, captain of our cricket team. He started playing golf after retiring from cricket, probably at the age of 39 and has played to a scratch handicap, and has been close to winning a number of championships including finishing runner-up at the Senior Golf Championship of India. Ajay Jadeja, also played cricket for the country he went to extent of playing golf as a professional in PGTI. Where was their talent. If it wasn't hard work, then, what was it?

### GP: Advice for parents?

GK: Parents and coaches complement each other but their roles are diverse. The way I see it, the entire training part should be left only to the coach. The parents should be there only to encourage the child to play and enjoy golf. They should not be involved at all as far as teaching is concerned. The parent should try to concentrate more on teaching the child love, values, and traditions of our Indian family, humanity and care. Let them enjoy the game rather than trying to pressurize them in playing

good and showing results in the game.

### GP: The importance of mental strength as far as golf is concerned?

GK: Mental strength comes into play when you have gone through the process of lots of practice and very hard work. Mental training is like appearing for a PhD certificate, which can be achieved after going through school and college. Hard work and practicing are like school and colleges. Mental training comes into play at a stage when you start playing national and international tournaments. It's very unfortunate but I have seen a lot of parents and golfers talk about lack of mental strength without putting in any hardwork. Parents and the students, must realize not to mention the word mental strength till they have completed the stage of hardwork and practice.

### GP: Which has been your most important victory?

GK: My most important victory was the game that I lost to Mr. Vikramjeet Singh in 1970 at the All-India Golf Championship in 1970. I was 16 years and he was the National Champion. I lost the game to him on the 18th hole. That loss gave me the confidence of picking up the game far more seriously. The level of confidence and commitment after that loss had such an impact that I won the Junior Golf Championship at the same course by 29 shots with in a month. It was because of the loss that I was selected by the IGU to go and play in Sri Lanka as part of the Indian National Team. **GP**



HERE  
TO HELP  
YOU SAVE  
SHOTS

# PLAY BETTER

MORE TIPS! ▶ MORE TEACHERS! ▶ MORE USEFUL!



## QUICK FIX

### TAKE A BIG STRIDE TO MORE POWER

⤵ Often, when we go searching for power, we make a loose and overlong backswing that stops us coiling properly and compromises the structure of the swing. Here is a simple drill to remind yourself how to coordinate an effective backswing rotation. Form an extra-wide stance, feet twice as wide as normal. This stance helps create resistance through your hips and lower body. Keep the ball position under your lead shoulder. From here, try to turn your lead shoulder under your chin. With hip rotation moderated, you can re-learn the feeling of coiling your upper body against the hips' resistance – a powerful position that creates torque and promotes the correct, lower body-led downswing sequence. **GP**

#### YOUR COACH



**ADRIAN FRYER**  
solidgolf.co.uk  
Fellow of the PGA based at  
Liverpool Golf Centre,  
liverpoolgolfcentre.co.uk

**Caddie On Your Shoulder** p28 **Fault Fixer** p30 **My Best Advice** p31 **Card Wrecker** p32  
**TG Challenge** p34



## CADDIE ON YOUR SHOULDER

# FOUR PLAYS ON LONG, WET PAR 3s



Long par 3s are becoming increasingly common, so it's likely you'll face at least one each time you play. They are made especially difficult when there's water in play to complicate your tee shot.

But with or without water, it is all too easy to let a short hole become a card wrecker if you don't plan your strategy as you would on longer holes. Here's the best way to tackle and tame these tough par 3s...

### 1 Can you guarantee distance?

Think about your percentage miss in terms of length here, rather than left to right. There's plenty of room to miss left and particularly right on this hole... but short is dead. If you're a confident player who can virtually guarantee your strike and carry distance consistently, then it's worth going at the pin. But if there's a chance you'll strike it poorly and come up short, it's sensible to play the safer shot to the right. Don't try and be a hero, either – take enough club to make the carry (even one extra in case you push it a bit).

## YOUR COACH



### ANDY GORDON

Score Improvement  
Coach and Head Golf  
Professional at  
Lumine Golf Club, Spain



## 2 The aggressive approach

This requires you to carry the ball in excess of 190 yards, so it's a hybrid or fairway wood for most players. This approach gives you the best chance of making a birdie, but it also increases the risk of finding the water or leaving a difficult sand save if you short-side yourself in the bunker. Only strong players should take this on. Many par 3s are not shot holes (check the card), but most handicap players would be happy to walk of this green with a four; your main priority off this tee is to keep it dry!

## 3 The percentage play

Most golfers will of course want to hit the green on a picturesque par 3 like this, but reduce the risk. In this instance, you should aim about 30 feet right of the pin. This means you won't be playing over the bunker and have a little more leeway if you don't strike it sweetly. If your distance control is good you can still leave yourself a look at a birdie putt if you hit it pin high and 30 feet right. Even if you aim for the right edge of the green, you can still get up and down for par; there's no trouble between you and the flag here, and plenty of fringe to putt it.

## 4 The safest option

Hitting the ball short and right of the green requires a shorter carry and has greater margin for error — just avoid going too far into those trees. It's only about 150 to get the ball here, and it takes the water out of play. You'll need a chip and putt to save par, but you virtually guarantee at worst a four if you stay dry; then it's just a chip and a two-putt. Use this tactic if you have a shot as you can make your net par and if you don't necessarily have the ability to take on the tricky pin. **GP**

## FAULT FIXER

# LET THE WORMS REST EASIER!

To deal with worm-worrying thin iron shots, we need to focus on the club's angle of attack. Here's how...



## Rise... and fall

The common reason for thin iron shots is the clubhead rising — moving from low-to-high — through impact. This can be the result of a poor concept — trying to help the ball up instead of trusting the clubface's loft to do so. But it can also come from failing to punch your weight forward through the shot. Pulling the club down aggressively from the top with the hands, arms and shoulders can see weight stall on the trail foot; weight that drifts forward on the backswing often falls backwards on the way down, in the infamous reverse pivot. Either way, the upper body tends to fall back behind the ball, taking the low point of the swing arc with it. That causes a rising clubhead to hit the middle of the ball.



## Follow the shaft down

1. Find one of your longer irons — a 4 or 5 is ideal. Place it on the ground, its face to the sky, where your trail foot needs to go.
2. Take your stance. As you push down with your trail foot, the grip end will rise. The created shaft angle becomes a great guide for your attack angle; you will also naturally want to get forward to avoid the club hitting the shaft.
3. Hit some short irons — no longer than a 7-iron. Focus on getting your attack angle to match the angle of the shaft. This will help you squeeze down slightly on to the back of the ball, a descending blow that helps you work the sweetspot into the ball.
4. As you work on this, note how a simple intention to strike slightly downwards rather than up helps you get your weight forward through the first part of the downswing. This will help you apply pressure to the ball and develop that ball-turf strike. **GP**

## YOUR COACH



### ANDY TAYLOR

Kirtlington GC, Oxford.  
Director of Coaching  
at the Andy Taylor  
Golf Academy  
[andytaylorgolf.com](http://andytaylorgolf.com)

## MY BEST ADVICE

# 'HIT THE SAME SHOT EVERY TIME'

Here's why Matt Fitzpatrick is one of the game's best iron players



### 1 Get comfortable with one shape

I've chatted a lot with Pete Cowen about how, for consistency and scoring, it's important to work with just one shot shape. That way, you know what the ball is going to do and you can take one side of the course out of play. The only time I tinker with this formula now is when I'm really on my game and have full control over my swing.

**2 Practise with your 9-iron** Basically, you want to practise with the most forgiving and easy-to-hit club that still gives you solid feedback on your ball striking. For me, that's a 9-iron. I've used this club to perform many drills over the years. I think it gives you good versatility and the way you strike it gives a good indication of how you're swinging. You can still shape a 9-iron, but at the same time it's relatively easy to hit.

### 3 Don't be too proud to use a mixed set

The stereotype is that good players use blades, but I'd have Ping G410s through the bag if it meant I hit the ball close every time. I use Ping i25s in the long irons (3, 4 & 5) and then switch to S55 blades for the 6- to 9-irons. I have a 47° Ping wedge and two Titleist wedges at 54° and 58°. The i25s are not Tour clubs exactly, but I love them. My longest is the 3-iron, though I did experiment with a G25 2-iron because I thought I'd hit the ball higher, but it didn't work that way.

### 4 Judge your strike by the flight

What makes a great iron player? I think consistency of flight. It doesn't matter if you hit it low or high, it's more whether you hit the same shot every time. What I class as a good ball-striker is when you walk past someone on the range and you hear that 'fssshht' sound as he hits it. That's what I think is a great ball-striker, that fizzing sound. Most of the guys on Tour do that.

### 5 Get your lay-ups as close as you can

I don't have a favourite lay-up distance. I just hit it as close to the green as possible. I know some pros say that they have a preferred yardage that

they like to lay up to, but not me. I try to hit it as close to the green. If I can't do that, I'm thinking anywhere from 70 to 120 – as long as it's within range of my 54° or 58° wedge. There's never a time when I think "Oh, this is awkward". I take the club back different distances, to my chest and shoulders for example, and that covers every eventuality. **GP**



## TURNAROUND PLAN

# Help! My game's in a slump and I can't get out



Every golfer experiences good and bad form along the way. But there's plenty we can do to end a slump with a little thought.

### PROBLEM ANALYSIS

A slump involves poor ball-striking, so ask yourself these questions: What is the ball doing? What is the club doing at impact to create that flight? What shot am I trying to hit? What does the club need to do at impact to create that? Most golfers don't consider these questions, but you must be able to answer them if you want to be a better ball-striker.

### BETTER PRACTICE

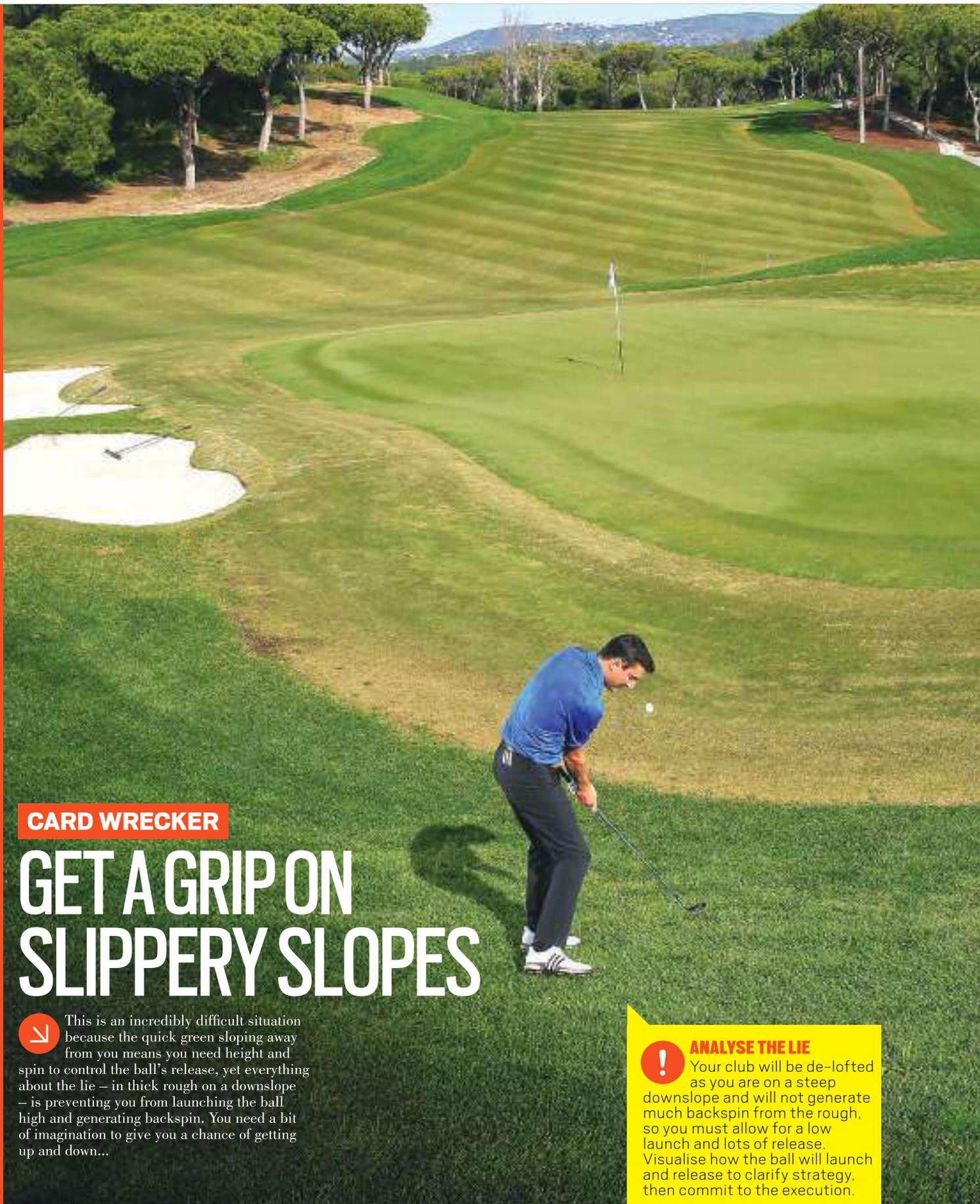
The natural reaction when we're struggling with our game is to work harder. This usually has limited success. Instead, maybe practise a little less but aim to be twice as productive when you do. Have a clear target for each shot, go through your full routine and vary clubs often to simulate on-course conditions.

### SHORT GAME FOCUS

A great antidote to poor form in the long game is a great short game. Commit to spending more of your total practice time with your wedges and putter. Getting up-and-down more often with simple short game shots is encouraging and keeps a score going even if you're not hitting the ball well.

### BE MORE POSITIVE

Commit to doing these simple things well and you can create your own positive momentum. 1. Clean your equipment and be organised. 2. Get to the course early and go through a great warm up. 3. Commit to a positive attitude after every shot. 4. Switch off and chat between shots. 5. Remind yourself that you play golf to have FUN. **GP**

**CARD WRECKER**

# GET A GRIP ON SLIPPERY SLOPES



This is an incredibly difficult situation because the quick green sloping away from you means you need height and spin to control the ball's release, yet everything about the lie – in thick rough on a downslope – is preventing you from launching the ball high and generating backspin. You need a bit of imagination to give you a chance of getting up and down...

**ANALYSE THE LIE**

Your club will be de-lofted as you are on a steep downslope and will not generate much backspin from the rough, so you must allow for a low launch and lots of release. Visualise how the ball will launch and release to clarify strategy, then commit to the execution.

## YOUR COACH



**JOSE FERREIRA**  
Head professional  
at Quinta do Lago,  
Algarve, Portugal

# HOW TO PLAY IT

1



### Shoulders aligned to slope

Match your shoulders to the slope as closely as possible while still maintaining balance. Getting them parallel to the ground makes it easier to make solid contact, which is especially important when the ground is higher behind the ball.

2



### Pick your landing spot

You must understand how the ball will react from the lie and read the terrain like a putt to find the spot to land it. Here, you must land it short and left of the target as the ball will come out hot and break right.

3



### Commit to a simple action

Play the shot like a standard chip with as much loft as you dare. A little wrist hinge will add speed and steepen your attack angle, which will add height and spin. Accelerate the clubhead through impact, low to the ground on the release. **GP**

IT WORKED FOR ME!

'In 2019 I was playing off 16.3. Today I'm off 9.2'

## TG reader **Cameron Anderson, Archerfield GC**



The starting point for getting better was being fitted for clubs through the bag. The biggest difference was with my irons. I had standard, regular-flex clubs; my fitted irons are two degrees flat and have stiff shafts. This has put a stop to the heel digging into the ground and the face twisting left and right, which has massively improved my ballstriking. I've also somehow gained 20 yards of distance. My 7-iron was around 150 yards; now it's more than 170. I also began to work technically on my swing with Archerfield coach and TG contributor Oliver Morton. Using TrackMan, he showed me that I was swinging 12 degrees in-to-out, a path that caused me shanks, blocks and pull-hooks. He asked me to work on hitting a big cut, which was a slight trick; my big cut was still very slightly in-to-out. But it did the job, and my path became much more neutral. I worked hard, hit a lot of balls, and took some playing lessons. After an initial rough spell, I started to hit gentle fades and it began to click. In the spring I shot 78 off 15 and it went from there. My advice is to first get properly fitted; equipment is vital. But also Oliver has shown me how important it is to work with a coach who you understand, and who understands you. I'm a good example of how, when you have these elements in place, you can really make progress. **GP**

The right lie angle for your set-up is critical.



## TG CHALLENGE

## A BAG OF CHIPS!

Here is a great little game you can play when you have a spare five minutes, perhaps waiting for your playing partner or even in a casual round when play snarls up. As well as being a fun challenge, it will teach you clubface control at slower speeds. Ultimately, it will help you execute delicate pitch shots to tight pins or on to firm, fast downhill surfaces. Here's how it works...

**Jump the bag**

**1.** Toss down three balls in front of your bag, the first a good pace away but the next two increasingly closer. Chip each one over the bag in turn.

**2.** If you can get all three over without any problem, reset the board, each ball six inches or so closer to the bag. Try it again... and again. How close can you get to the bag, and still clear it? **GF**

**TOTAL CONTROL**

As you get closer to the bag, it becomes an obstacle for your followthrough. This stops you trying to 'flick' the ball into the air with your wrists, encourages a more measured and controlled release of the clubhead, and helps you trust the loft on the clubface to achieve the required launch.



## YOUR COACH



**ANDREW MURRAY**  
Former European Open  
Champion who specialises  
in one-on-one or group  
coaching and corporate  
golf events.  
[andrewmurraygolf.com](http://andrewmurraygolf.com)



# PAGES

FROM MY DIARY...

DECEMBER 2020

By Brandon de Souza

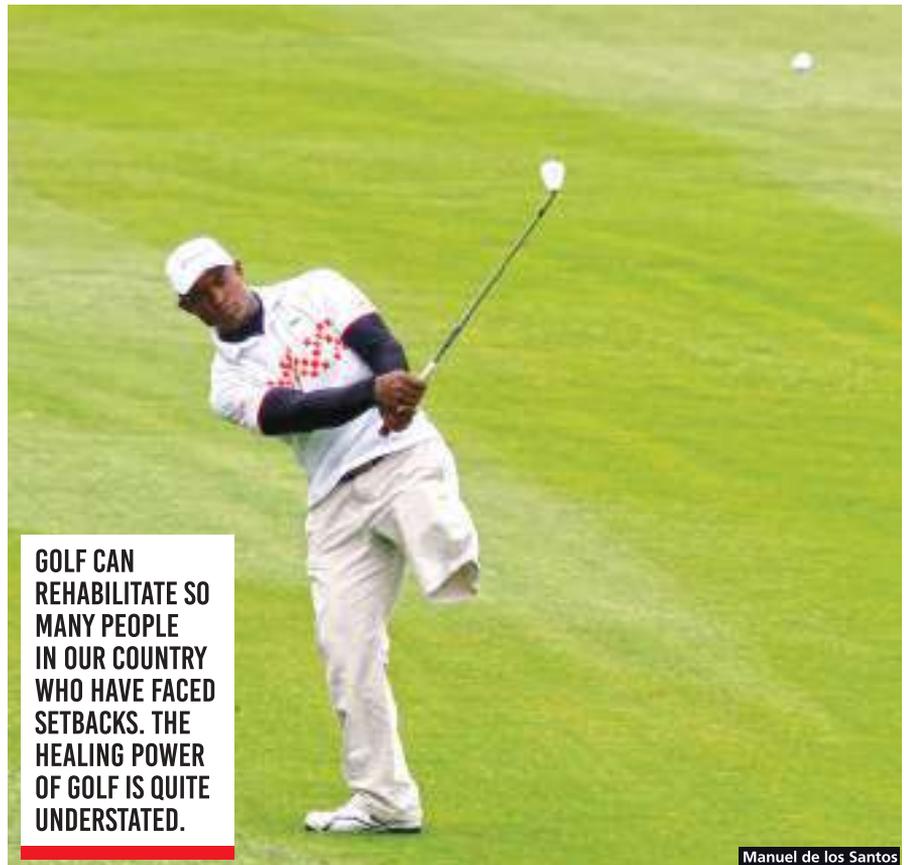
**T**he past month, while the festivities were on, I had a wonderful chance to interact with one of the most interesting golfers I've come across. Former baseball prodigy Manuel de los Santos was on the verge of becoming a Major League Baseball player. This was until he lost his leg in a motorcycle accident in 2003. His life has since been a remarkable story having chanced upon the movie, *The Legend of Bagger Vance* that changed his life and led him to picking up golf.

Golf is a game that has a universal appeal. It is one of the few sports that allow people to not only keep playing the game against all odds, but also play it well. You have a game that can give a man like Manuel another shot at competition.

There are many amputee golfers around the world and golf gives them an outlet at the very least to get on with life after horrific accidents. Some are so good they would give the privileged lot a run for their money and even beat them. So why is de los Santos different from thousands of other amputees who play golf? Unlike most, de los Santos doesn't wear a prosthetic leg, does use a golf cart. He uses his crutches, balances his weight on one leg and powers the ball over 300 yards thanks to his solid core.

He says he found his second leg on the golf course and that is spiritual for him, not just a literal expression. Young Diksha Dagar is a prime example in our country. Despite having a hearing disability, she lets her clubs do the talking rather than delve about what's not in her control anymore. Her parents also deserve kudos for identifying the game for Diksha to master.

Golf can rehabilitate so many people in our country who have faced setbacks. The healing power of golf is quite understated. The services could easily take the lead with the infrastructure they have on hand and give a sense of normalcy to our wounded brave hearts. NGOs working in this space must



**GOLF CAN REHABILITATE SO MANY PEOPLE IN OUR COUNTRY WHO HAVE FACED SETBACKS. THE HEALING POWER OF GOLF IS QUITE UNDERSTATED.**

Manuel de los Santos

also look at including golf as part of their programs.

The current mess at the Indian Golf Union restricts it from assuming a leadership role in form whatsoever. It has only increased the uncertainty for amateurs, juniors and seniors alike. The stalemate has created havoc on the entire eco system as no one, including the clubs and industry as a whole, knows who is the recognized guardian of the game.

If fresh elections are the way to go, let it happen without any further delay so things can be planned in advance a sense of direction is achieved in the promotion of the game.

What is happening at the moment is junior tours are popping up all across the country

with high entry fees ranging from INR 3500-7500 and the parents are the ones who have to bear the burden. Someone not so privileged but talented can miss out and questions arise about how real are the world rankings. Do they take into account the challenges faced by talented kids who cannot afford the costs associated with the travel, stay, food and fees? Hopefully an end to the IGU logjam can help regulate this better.

Season's Greetings to all! **GP**

*Brandon de Souza is the President of Golf Industry Association. He is the Chairman & Managing Director of Tiger Sports Marketing & Brandon de Souza Management Services. He advises brands on using golf as a platform.*



Dustin Johnson celebrates with his brother and caddie

# JOHNSON MAKES HISTORY AT AUTUMN MASTERS

The final group arrived at the 12th tee at Augusta National, lunch time for the leader at a normal Masters Tournament but crunch time in this one.

**I**t had been calm all week on the softened course, but by the time Dustin Johnson got to the famous water-fronted par 3, there was some wind, and on No. 12, where Rae's Creek drowned a few dreams in 2019, some wind is enough.

"It's all over the place," Tiger Woods said later of the fickle breeze, an accomplice in the five-time champion's shocking score of 10 on the 12th hole not too long before Johnson arrived there.

Johnson did not dawdle before hitting an 8-iron. His ball and three-stroke lead carried safely to the green, 21 feet left of the flagstick. There was a deep breath followed by a half-smile and a pivotal par, with three consecutive birdies after that, assuring this big one wasn't going to get away from Johnson as a handful of others had.

Ranked No. 1 in the world and playing in his 11th Masters, Johnson owned this unique event, which was delayed by seven months and held without patrons because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He shot a final-round 68 to accompany previous scores of 65, 70 and 65 to finish at 20-under 268, breaking the Tournament record of 270 shared by

Woods (1997) and Jordan Spieth (2015). Johnson, 36, also tied the all-time major scoring mark in relation to par held by Jason Day at (2015 PGA Championship) and Henrik Stenson (2016 The Open).

Johnson defeated Cameron Smith of Australia and Sungjae Im of South Korea by five strokes. Smith lost despite becoming the first player in Masters history to shoot four rounds in the 60s. Justin Thomas was fourth at 276, with Rory McIlroy and Dylan Frittelli tying for fifth.

"Welcome to the club," Bubba Watson, wearing his Green Jacket, told Johnson by the 18th green.

"I always dreamed of having one of those," Johnson replied.

He secured his – a 42 Long, if you were curious – having taken a four-stroke lead into the final round. Fifteen previous times at the Masters golfers led by four or more after 54 holes. Eleven times they won, but on four occasions (Ken Venturi, 1956; Ed Sneed, 1979; Greg Norman, 1996; McIlroy, 2011), the wide advantage wasn't enough.

Given that Johnson four times was leader or

co-leader going into the final round of a major and hadn't won – he captured the 2016 U.S. Open coming from behind at Oakmont – when things tightened early on Sunday, it was natural to wonder how, despite his even-keel disposition, he would respond.

"It was a battle all day, an internal battle with myself," Johnson. "I proved that I can get it done on Sunday with the lead at a major, especially in tough conditions. I felt like it was tricky out there today. There were doubts in my mind because I had been there. I'm in this position a lot. It was like, 'When am I going to have the lead and finish off a major?'"

Until making a 4 on the par-3 4th Sunday, Johnson had gone 33 holes without a bogey. And then he bogeyed the long par-4 5th after a poor drive and suddenly led Im by only one stroke.

But to a tough hole location on the par-3 6th, Johnson hit a gorgeous 8-iron to 7 feet and sank the birdie putt, then made a crafty sand save for par on No. 7 while Im was making two straight bogeys. The tall, strong 36-year-old who possesses so much athletic grace, reiterated in his



## RANKED NO. 1 IN THE WORLD AND PLAYING IN HIS 11TH MASTERS, JOHNSON OWNED THIS UNIQUE EVENT.

24th career PGA Tour victory that he has plenty of complementing grit.

Johnson, father of two young sons, Tatum and River, with fiancée Paulina Gretzky, could not control his emotions in a post-round interview, stepping away from the mic in tears. “I had a tough time there speaking with Amanda [Balionis],” Johnson said, “just because it means so much to me. It means so much to my family, Paulina, the kids. They know it’s something that I’ve always been dreaming about and it’s why I work so hard. To finally have the dream come true, I think that’s why you see all that emotion.”

Johnson’s natural talent help carried him to the tour, but in recent years he has applied himself more fully to improve and climb into the sport’s stratosphere. Instructor Butch Harmon, son of 1948 “I want to play – it keeps getting shorter – eight, nine, maybe 10 years, then hang out with my kids and Paulina,” Johnson said. “So until then, I’m going to work my butt off to be as good as I can.”

This is only the third time a family member has caddied for a Masters champion. Jack Nicklaus’s son Jack II was alongside for his father’s epic 1986 victory at age 46, and Patrick Reed’s brother-in-law, Kessler Karain, helped him to the 2018 title.

“I just love experiencing all these moments with him,” Johnson said of his younger brother, who has caddied for him since 2013. “I wouldn’t want it any other way.”

It wasn’t bad, either, to have Woods doing the Green Jacket honors. “Obviously having Tiger put it on was awesome and unbelievable,” Johnson said. “But any guy could put it on me and I’d be just fine.”

Someone figures to be in that supporting role again. “I dream of winning a lot of majors,” Johnson said. “Just hadn’t quite happened yet. Hopefully this one will help give me a little spring. It’s very nice to have a lead and then play well on Sunday and get the win. I couldn’t be more happy, and I think I look pretty good in green, too.” **GP**



## ROLEX CELEBRATES MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF PARTNERSHIP WITH AUGUSTA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB

2020 marks the 60th anniversary of Rolex Testimonee Arnold Palmer winning the second of his four Masters titles (1958, 1960, 1962, 1964), where he birdied the final two holes to win by one stroke. Palmer enjoyed unrivalled success at the Masters over a seven-year period, becoming the first four-time winner in 1964 at just 34 years old. Every year, the Masters welcomes an elite field of competitors, including today’s leading professionals, past champions and promising amateurs. The Masters Tournament, with which Rolex is an International Partner, is renowned for its celebrated history, uncompromising high standards and respect for tradition that mirror Rolex’s own perpetual commitment to excellence. For more than five decades, Rolex has been at the forefront of golf, maintaining a special connection with the sport’s majors, its greatest champions and the organizations that administer the game around the world. This enduring relationship began in 1967 when Palmer, joined by Nicklaus and Player – known together as ‘The Big Three’ – became the brand’s first golfing Testimonees, while it was in 1999 that Rolex’s relationship with the Masters was established and continues to this day.

While legends of the sport are remembered and celebrated at the Masters, Rolex and Augusta National also champion new talent, and joining DeChambeau at Augusta National is one of the sport’s most exciting young players and member of the Rolex New Guard, Matthew Wolff. This group of young, ambitious golfers are striding onto the world stage, playing with integrity, supreme skill and exacting precision, and Wolff perfectly embodies this spirit, having put on a thrilling display to finish second at his first playing of the U.S. Open this year. Now, at just 21 years of age, the American has the chance to elevate his game to the next level and claim the maiden Green Jacket of his career. **GP**

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Dustin Johnson wins the Masters Tournament by five strokes, his second major championship title and 24th win on the PGA TOUR
- Johnson moves into a tie with Gary Player for 26th on the all-time PGA TOUR wins list
- At 20-under 268, Johnson sets Masters Tournament scoring record for 72 holes
- Johnson has at least one win in each of his 14 PGA TOUR seasons, tying Tiger Woods for the third-longest streak to begin a career in TOUR history
- Johnson becomes the eighth player (ninth instance) to win the Masters after finishing runner-up the year prior
- For the first time in his major championship career, Johnson successfully converts 54-hole lead/co-lead to victory (now 1-for-5)
- Johnson, the reigning FedExCup champion, moves to No. 1 in the FedExCup standings
- Cameron Smith (67-68-69-69) becomes first player to record four scores in the 60s at the Masters

# MASTERS DISASTER

This year's Masters was a strange affair, Augusta National shorn of its traditional optimism, bright colourful flowering shrubs and its spectators – or as the like to call themselves down Magnolia Drive, 'Patrons,' an uninspiring autumnal scene, a parody of its traditional springtime splendour, perhaps reflecting the 200,000- plus funeral corteges across the country in the immediate and acrimonious aftermath of a bitterly-disputed US Presidential election.

By Michael Wilson



**A**dd in COVID-19- enforced withdrawals, an ethereal atmosphere and an understandable failure to emulate the last year's epic ending with the Tiger Woods renaissance and this was a Masters like no other. The media in general and TV in particular tried to cheer proceedings up, but somehow, Augusta National 2020 was out of sorts, arguably a reflection of the backdrop against which the 84th Masters was taking place, displaced from its April optimism, bounced into the gloom of a November like no other in the Land of the Free, perhaps taking place only because it could.

And, at the end of four drab, dismal and downcast days where the eternal enthusiasm of a southern states spring rarely shone through, golf got the cheerless champion the occasion probably demanded, Dustin Johnson, a tall, languid, characterless automaton of a man and an athlete who, were he to participate in almost any Olympic sport other than golf would not have been permitted to play.

Perhaps a scintilla of celebration is due, down to the fact the Masters got played at all, but Bunker Mentality finds the solemn ceremonial conviviality normally associated with the season-opening 'Major' difficult to buy into, but Masters 2020 was a tournament stripped to its underpants by death, destruction and political deceit and won by a charmless man with – and let's be honest – a well-chronicled history of alleged drug misuse and, if the tabloids are to be believed, the morals of an alley cat.

The saying goes that, 'Context is everything,' and if that's true, then it's hardly surprising that the 84th Masters at Augusta National turned out

to be a downcast, drab and downbeat reflection of what had been brewing in the United States of America ever since the inevitable decision was communicated, perhaps appropriately, on Friday 13th March this year, to postpone golf's springtime pièce de résistance.

25 days from the start of the 2020 Masters masterpiece came a missive from Fred Ridley, chairman of the venerable Augusta National Golf Club, a dispatch that was as inevitable – if belated – as it was cloying in a way only the until recently racist, sexist and still self-serving and sanctimonious exclusive golf club can be.

"On Wednesday, March 4, we issued a memo stating that our plans to host the Masters Tournament, the Augusta National Women's Amateur and the Drive, Chip and Putt National Finals had not changed.

"Unfortunately, the ever-increasing risks associated with the widespread Coronavirus COVID-19 have led us to a decision that undoubtedly will be disappointing to many, although I am confident is appropriate under these unique circumstances.

"As COVID-19 continues to impact the lives of people everywhere, we seek your understanding of this decision and know you share our concern given these trying times. Thank you for your faithful support."

The venerable Masters was subsequently reinstated in the 2020 / 21 PGA TOUR schedule, meaning there will be two Green Jackets awarded in the same season, if not calendar year – such are the vagaries of the scheduling, hence Dustin Johnson will – assuming he fails to hold onto his title assuming golf is back to, 'Normal,' by

April 2021 – become the shortest-serving Masters champion in history.

## POETIC JUSTICE PERHAPS?

The tournament suffered an early blow when two players, the 2017 champion Sergio Garcia and young Chileanrookie Joaquín Niemann both tested positive for COVID-19, both having to withdraw, the field reduced to 92 on the eve of the rescheduled event.

Bunker Mentality has never made any bones about DJ, no doubt a very fine – if terminally dull – golfer and, to be fair, a remarkable athlete, but with an admittedly well-disguised history of abusing recreational drugs, so much so that, had he been as proficient in almost any other sport, with three relatively recently failed drugs tests against his name, he would have been banned, therefore precluded from stepping onto the first tee at Augusta National last month, never mind winning one of the game's top four titles.

Hence, Bunker Mentality is snorting with derision, yet the game of golf and the media pack that runs in tandem with the elite end of the game barely mentioned Johnson's shady past, preferring to focus on a present tense that, at the very least, saw the Masters take place, albeit against the backdrop of a Coronavirus worldwide health emergency.

Although the PGA TOUR is coy in the extreme when it comes to such sensitive matters as failed drugs tests – it prefers to maintain an undignified silence, disproportionately respecting a player's right to anonymity, but then it is as much as trade union as it is a governing body – its rules more ambiguous and therefore much more difficult to enforce, a classic case of don't test, won't find.



Typically, was Johnson a Track & Field athlete, an Olympic swimmer or an ATP Tour tennis star, with such a record – albeit for recreational as opposed to performance-enhancing substances.

The recently-crowned Masters champion represents an interesting example, a classic case in point, where ambiguity and obfuscation – as opposed to rooting out the scourge of doping that affects professional golf more than anyone would care to admit – is the name of the game.

Dustin Hunter Johnson turned pro in 2007, a tall, awkward and some might argue, 'Naive,' 23-year-old, but, two-years-later, he failed a PGA TOUR drug test for the first time, testing positive for marijuana, a violation – all be it a relatively minor one – of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) code, before, in 2012, once again, failing a drug test, this time for cocaine, a second and more serious offence.

Two strikes - enough in some sports that take doping much more seriously than the PGA TOUR or the International Golf Federation (IGF) for a significant ban – and you're out, but publically at least, no action was taken against Johnson for his second recreational drugs violation.

Johnson appeared to have cleaned-up his act, going two years without drama, but he had another failed test – again for cocaine - in 2014; following Johnson's third failed test, he was suspended for six months by the PGA TOUR.

Shortly afterwards Johnson himself announced he would be taking a break from professional golf, citing "Personal challenges," and unspecified, "Demons," which he needed to deal with, away from the glare of golf.

Typically, was Johnson a Track & Field athlete, an Olympic swimmer or an ATP Tour tennis star, with such a record – albeit for recreational as opposed to performance-enhancing substances, which the World Anti Doping Agency(WADA) does not

differentiate between – 'Would' – Bunker Mentality says, 'Should,' – have received, under Article 10.2 of the WADA Code, Anti Doping Rules Violations, for a "First violation, Two (2) years' Ineligibility," and for a, "Second violation," receive a "Lifetime Ineligibility," in other words, banned from golf for life.

Without doubt, the bitter divisions of the US elections, still playing out in Georgia as the 2020 Masters got underway, together with the grizzly COVID-19 statistics reaching 10-million infections and 248,000 deaths by the time the Green Jacket was being tried on for size by our new champion impacted on the atmosphere under which this tepid and at times tedious Masters was played.

Similarly, the tumultuous scenes at August National on that fateful Sunday of 14th April 2019, when Tiger Woods defied logic to win his fifth Masters title and 15th 'Major' in all had also cast a shadow over its immediate successor, not so much a hard act as an impossible oneto follow. As they say in England, 'After the Lord Mayor's Show.'

And, whilst Woods himself is far from perfect, a flawed man by his own admission, he's a paragon of virtue compared to his immediate Masters successor, but then if things really do happen for a reason, then the 84th Masters – and the United States of America – got the champion they both deserved.

Hopefully, with a COVID vaccine ready to roll – ironically, a case of positive, medical drug use for the ethical purpose they are designed for

– the worst of a global pandemic that has shaken the world in general and sport in particular to its very foundations will be past and as degree of normality can follow.

And, fingers crossed, the rancorous political and social divisions brought about by the 59th US Presidential election, which have convulsed the country will have subsided by April next year and the Masters can go ahead with all its pomp and ceremony.

Meanwhile, the 84th Masters, uniquely – and uncomfortably - staged late in the calendar year between the dual distractions of a public health emergency and an acrimonious ballot for America's Commander in Chief, is, for Bunker Mentality at least, best forgotten, first for its relative irrelevance in the context in which it took place and, secondly, because, like it or not, it produced an illegitimate champion who, had golf adhered to the WADA rules, would have been ineligible to play in the first place.

2020 had already been a difficult year in very many ways, for life in general and golf in particular, ending – rather than beginning – with an out of place Masters, mixed-up as it was with external factors it could neither control or ignore perhaps reflecting the uneasy backdrop against which it took place; add in for good measure a discredited champion with multiple doping violations and who in most sports would have long since been banned for life and this was as close as it gets to a Masters Disaster. **GP**

# FABULOUS FOOTWEAR FOR ON AND OFF THE GOLF COURSE

**M**aking style statements wherever you go is always enjoyable as is receiving compliments about one's taste in shoes, but at its core what overrides everything is comfort. And unsurprisingly weight is a major concern.

However, buyer beware, it is no doubt a general assumption, but featherweight footwear is not necessarily the best thing for your feet.

"It's all about being light weight (and) I'm personally not always a fan of super light-weight shoes. Golf shoes are looking more like runners/sneakers, and the same light weight properties are expected. (However), they often compromise on stability and comfort because everything is stripped away, to decrease the weight, even the eyelets," said Ms. Alex Bartholomew, CEO of Royal Albatross,

Considering it takes the average golfer four to six hours to play 18 holes, with an average of four miles walked per course (if a player chooses to opt out of a golf cart), strongly supported shoes are imperative.

While proper fit, price, traction, breathability components, water resistance, one's specific swing mechanics and overall comfort to a player's game are key considerations, models that will provide sturdy lateral support during play are especially crucial to enjoying any round.

In any event, it must be remembered that manufacturers' quests in trying to provide players with a complete golf shoe really is an endless pursuit, a tricky one in trying to combine style, technology, performance and simply comfort.

So producers are always tinkering with new materials.

"Carbon fiber is an industrial grade material that's slowly making its way into footwear, and it's light and durable," said Bartholomew. "It has great torsion resistance too. A golf shoe with a carbon-fiber support system or shank is armored against turned ankles."

New too, on the pure aesthetic front, are the broadening of color palates being applied to men's footwear.

"It's amazing how many people want to wear lime, turquoise, even purple shoes," noted Bruce Katz, President of Samuel Hubbard Shoes, "We have shoes coming out in orange, red, teal, sky blue, expanding in the spring. I

like color. And I think consumers do too."

In the end, regardless if you choose a bright hue and tone or a basic black pair, spiked or spikeless model, light or heavier brand, it is important to be aware of the absolute imperativeness of getting a proper fit.

The potential negative physical ramifications of your golf shoe choices are abundant.

Not many people realize it until it's too late, but shoes with improper support not only affect how much your feet hurt, but they can also affect your ankles, knees, hips and lower back. Proper fit not only in length, but in terms of width as golf is a game that can be thrown off by just a couple millimeters such as an open/closed clubface. If you're feet are sliding around inside, even fractionally, you're already affecting your ball striking in a negative way. Having well-fitted shoes is a lot more important than most players think.

And don't be fooled by all the ads for sophisticated clubs, in golf, the most important investment starts at the bottom of your swing. At the end of the day, your shoes should move with you and become a part of your swing rather than hold you back.

The good news is that there's no holding back the imaginative work of footwear manufacturers who are eternally seeking that combination of shoes that makes the consumer look good and feel good on and off the course. **GP**



Handmade in Portugal with textured Italian leather and suede uppers, the new Woodley Grey from Royal Albatross offers not only versatility with one's wardrobe and social forays on and off the course, but does so with built-in comfort every step of the way.



Pretty bold by the sport's leading shoe maker to re-design one of its top sellers, but the resulting increase in stability, traction and comfort of the Pro SL Carbon from Foot Joy will help maximize the release of power in your swing.



50 years ago, the iconic Adidas Superstar silhouette showed up on the basketball court and changed the sport, ultimately crossing over to be a streetwear footwear icon worn by many throughout the world. Today, that same footwear is making its way to golf for a limited-edition release.



Offering exceptional versatility and performance on and off the course, Foot Joy's Flex Coastal uses a lightweight performance mesh that delivers all-day comfort with exceptional breathability.



The Moneymaker from Cuater features a lightweight midsole and spikeless outsole in a waterproof construction.



Ducadel Cosma's White Eldorado has all the style and sophistication you'd want from a dress shoe, and the substance of a technical golf shoe that can be worn on or off the course. The innovative Airplay XI spikeless outsole offers unrivalled grip and stability thanks to the 5mm square shaped nubs across the entire sole. With its soft, tumbled leather upper and waxed laces, you'll appear on top form however your game is going. It's fully waterproof as well as breathable.

GFore's MG4+ not only delivers comfort in a super lightweight design, there's no compromise in performance either. A triple density foam cushion footbed and molded 3D heel cup add up to great support.



These stylish Cross Mark leather sneakers from Timberland feature OrthoLite Insoles and premium leather uppers. The Aerocore Energy System provides a midsole compound that improves cushioning.



These popular rope-soled cotton canvas slip on shoes from Ralph Lauren are a breeze to wear and care for... and pack.



You'll be a Step Ahead in this very successful model from Samuel Hubbard where the leather is just as high quality on the inside as on the outside. Custom Vibram soles put a spring in your stride and provide all-day support and the quilted exterior offers a distinct look.



The Flight from Samuel Hubbard is an unobtrusive light delight. They provide enduring comfort within a featherlight construction. Available in a wide range of colors they put the sport in your sportswear.



# THE 2020 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

**W**ith the unprecedented year we've all endured, it will be soothing to hear these words- "Ho-Ho-Ho, Merry Christmas!"

When Santa comes down the chimney this year with his bag of gifts, golfers will be offered a potpourri of presents that range from perennial favorites as well as new items they'll be happy to see filling their stockings above the fireplace and gifts wrapped with care under the Christmas tree. And one of the things most everyone is looking forward to is the resumption of travel, so what is on many gift lists are all types of luggage.

Undoubtedly, however, there is a certain natural fabric that is a clear favorite to pack one's belongings into for their next journey. "The time-honored use of leather in travel bags and luggage spans generations, and goes so deep into our history with travel, that it speaks to a classic and vintage look", noted Xan Hood, founder of the Buffalo Jackson Trading Company.

Be warned however, with so many consumers shopping on the web these days, many distributors try to pawn off an inferior product. "Many folks can trick you into a really nice-looking picture online from something that if you saw in person would be seen for the cheapness it is. You get the product, only to find out it is made of thin material, and maybe even a faux or quasi-leather piece," explained Hood.

The veteran industry executive added: "I think the focus should be on a good company, that has a history in selling top grain and full grain leather items. They have a warranty, and they are willing to back-up their product with great customer service. Investing in a piece of luggage, should last for years. And you should sense the company believes in that, and which has stood the test of time."

And there a few items that all golfers can use to fill their luggage that stand the test of time and those are shirts and sweaters. One

➔ From the Roosevelt Collection of Buffalo Jackson, (<https://buffalojackson.com/products/leather-flight-bag-roosevelt-collection>)

this leather flight bag is tough, roomy and durable. Made from full grain Water Buffalo leather, it includes an interior zippered pocket, interior pockets for travel documents and exterior buckled pockets.



➔ Speed is usually associated with the clubhead swing, but Titleist (<https://www.titleist.com/golf-balls/tour-speed>) brings the notion to the ball itself. Tour Speed offers a technology-driven core design that delivers maximum speed on full swing shots by using a Fast lonomer casing layer that contributes to increased speed and low long game spin. It is enhanced by a new 346 quadrilateral dipyrmaid dimple design that provides a penetrating, consistent flight.



➔ Triple Track putters (<https://blog.odysseygolf.com/triple-track-putters/>) from Odyssey come in five different headshapes and each use Vernier Hyper Acuity, a proven scientific method analyzing how the human eye sees straight lines. So whatever your preference, get in line.



➔ The new leather zip wallet from Bellroy ([https://bellroy.com/products/zip-wallet/leather\\_rfid/black?store\\_currency=1abe985632a1392e6a94b885fe193d5943b7c213&shipping\\_to\\_country=US&gclid=CjwKCAiAnIT9BRAMeIwANaoE1fvA-fHE3bxaYQOLni48woYNUQ04b-xQoaH4yJ6F3e\\_VbYKnBUSIDxoCb5wQAvD\\_BwE#slide-0](https://bellroy.com/products/zip-wallet/leather_rfid/black?store_currency=1abe985632a1392e6a94b885fe193d5943b7c213&shipping_to_country=US&gclid=CjwKCAiAnIT9BRAMeIwANaoE1fvA-fHE3bxaYQOLni48woYNUQ04b-xQoaH4yJ6F3e_VbYKnBUSIDxoCb5wQAvD_BwE#slide-0))

adds a lot of peace of mind when rushing around in one's travels.



can't go wrong gifting their favorite golfer with those.

"Sweaters are always a great option because they are easy to dress up or dress down," said Jamie Dion, the Head of Design at Blair, "Sweaters are also a great option for when you may not know how the temperature will flux. It is much more comfortable to throw on a sweater during a flight or while playing a round of golf than it is to wear a coat the entire time!"

Dion also offers advice about what are the key components a consumer should look for in a quality garment.

"The devil is in the details! I think anyone can produce a basic polo or sweater. The key is adding that something special to make the garment feel elevated. Special features like a placket detail, button close pocket, heather or marled yarns, or even banded bottoms all add quality elements."

In terms of in-vogue colors, the veteran clothing executive notes that while one can't go wrong with Navy and Grey, 'going into the Holidays, Burgundy always starts to up trend as well.'

Happy Holidays. 



The Banded Bottom Polo from Blair (<https://www.blair.com/product/palmland-vertical-stripe-banded-bottom-polo?id=3fa20eead8044472b2dcb1fed8484bdf&category=/mens/casual-shirts/&swatchTitle=Light%20Blue>) is a popular holiday gift choice for golfers because of its multifunctionality. It is an impeccable look offered in Burgundy, Light Blue, Navy, Sage and Taupe.



The state-of-the-art Hub 6700 Turbo Portable Charger from My Charge <https://mycharge.com/collections/shop-all-portable-chargers/products/hub-turbo-6701> is 75% faster and includes built-in iPhone and USB-C charging cables as well as a built-in wall plug that functions as a wall adaptor.



This stylish cardigan by Stacy Adams offered by Blair <https://www.blair.com/product/stacy-adams-jacquard-zip-front-cardigan-sweater?id=1a480aeed9684058a7c242e791a839bb&category=/new-arrivals/mens-new-arrivals/features/ultra-soft-acrylic/viscose/polyester-knit>. It is a full-zip front with textured, contrast cable. Zip-close pockets; ribbed collar, cuffs and bottom band and available in Brown, Grey and Cream.



Mobvoi's Tic Watch GTX <https://www.mobvoi.com/us/pages/ticwatchgtx>

offers 14 different workout modes and up to 10 days of battery life while offering the ability to customize your own watch face as you want.



## PEDERSEN POWERS TO 'SAUDI SWEEP'

As the sun sets on a sensational ten days in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Denmark's Emily Kristine Pedersen completed the 'Saudi Sweep' of titles, adding to her season's trophy haul with victory in both the 'team' and 'individual' standings at the inaugural Saudi Ladies Team International.

The 24-year-old has been in red-hot form all year and having won last week in a thrilling play-off with Georgia Hall, dominated again at Royal Greens Golf & Country Club to seal a 'hat-trick' of wins and the Race to Costa del Sol crown.

Playing alongside partners Scotland's Michele Thomson, South Africa's Casandra Hall and English amateur Matt Selby, Pedersen fired a relentless bogey-free final-round 67 (-5) to win the individual title by two shots at 14-under-par

and spearhead her side to a slender one-shot win in the team event at 40-under-par.

"I can't believe what's happened this season, I was confident I could get back to where I was, but I couldn't imagine that it would be like this. It's been a strange year for all of us with COVID but while everyone's saying it is the worst year, I'm having the best year ever, so that's a little weird but I am really happy."

Protecting a two-shot lead in the individual contest heading down the risk/reward 18th hole, Pedersen laid up for the first time in seven rounds



at the par five and, despite wedging in to 10ft, set the stage for playing partner Casandra Hall to take the limelight. **GP**

## MINJEE WINS IN THE MOONLIGHT

Australia's Minjee Lee captured her first LET title at the OMEGA Dubai Moonlight Classic with a clutch birdie putt from 20ft at the first extra hole to beat France's Celine Boutier in a thrilling shoot-out under the Middle Eastern moonlight.

Following in the footsteps of previous champions including Annika Sorenstam, Lexi Thompson and Shanshan Feng, Lee came into the week as the highest ranked star and left on top of the 56-player field, collecting the €36,266 winner's prize fund and the iconic 'coffee pot inspired' trophy.

"I couldn't really see the break too well on the last hole, but I thought it would be about two cups outside the right and luckily I hit it hard enough and it dropped. It feels pretty special to be here playing at night-time and the course has



been amazing It's been a really fun week."

Tied at the top of the leaderboard in regulation at ten-under-par, just one shot ahead of overnight leader Caroline Hedwall, defending

champion NuriaLturrioz and Germany's Laura Fuenfstueck, the pair could not be separated after Minjee posted a consistent round of 69 (-3) to Boutier's 68 (-4).

"I didn't really see the scores until I had a couple of holes left and then I ended up making a bogey on the 15th so I stopped looking. Then my caddie told me what the score was on the last hole and I realised I was tied and had a chance of winning."

Boutier, who was flawless for most of the day, held the lead for most of the final round but faltered with a costly bogey on the 16th to open the door for Minjee to tie the lead with two to play with a birdie. Going right to the wire, Hedwall and Iturrioz both had putts to force their way into the playoff, but it wasn't to be, as Lee and Boutier headed for sudden death. **GP**

## LET BREAK PAR CHALLENGE POWERED BY GOLF SAUDI



The Ladies European Tour launched the LET Break Par Challenge Powered by Golf Saudi - a season-long charity competition designed to recognise outstanding player performances and showcase the exceptional LET talent in a fun and measurable format.

Eligible to any competitor to tee it up during the 2020 season, the LET Break Par Challenge rewards impressive scoring and exceptional shots with points awarded to a player who makes any score better than par, with the rankings winner awarded €5,000 to donate to their chosen charity. The more impressive the score, the more points on offer - with one point given for a birdie, five for an eagle, 10 for a hole-in-one and 25 for the ever-elusive albatross.

Backdated to include the complete 2020 season which got underway in Australia and most recently visited France, the challenge currently includes eight tournaments, with four counting events still to play.

With an action-packed November schedule on the horizon including the Omega Dubai Moonlight

Classic, The Aramco Saudi Ladies International presented by Public Investment Fund, The Saudi Ladies Team International and the season-finale, the Andalucía Costa Del Sol Open De Espana, the first-place prize is all to play for with a number of players only one extraordinary shot away from adding significantly to their tally.

Current Race to Costa del Sol leader Emily Kristine Pedersen has been in sensational form all year, collecting her first LET victory since 2015 at the Tipsort Czech Ladies Open, and is in prime position to capture another title.

The in-form Dane has recorded as many as nine eagles and 99 birdies from 28 rounds to sit atop the rankings on 144 points, achieving a remarkable five more eagles than her nearest. **GP**

## SEI YOUNG KIM WINS PELICAN WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

The 12th career LPGA Tour title for Sei Young Kim was never in doubt this afternoon as she shifted into cruise control for the final round of the Pelican Women's Championship presented by DEX Imaging and Konica Minolta and captured a three-stroke victory at 14-under par overall.

Kim becomes the first player on the LPGA Tour to win her first start after capturing her first major since Ariya Jutanugarn at the 2016 AIG Women's Open and CP Women's Open. "Win is always great, feels great," said Kim, who signed for an even-under par 70 at Pelican Golf Club. "I'm very happy to win my 12th tournament, after winning the major tournament. It means a lot to me. "My friends sprayed champagne; they put it on my

head, t-shirt and everything feel like take a shower in champagne. I'm still smell, yeah, then drink a little bit." Kim held a four-shot lead walking to the tee on the par-3 9th but when she made the turn, it was down to three after a bogey. But on No. 14, a bounce-back birdie helped her regain any confidence from the lone blemish on her final-round scorecard "Ally [McDonald] was going really good, it could be she chase me," Kim said. "When I turned after the ninth hole, I was a little bit pressure before I made the birdie. After hole 14, little more comfortable and then good feeling back. "Starting on hole nine, my feeling just wasn't good. Not perfect as much as last three days. I tried to get the good feeling back, a little bit of struggling in my



instincts. I make the birdie and everything good." GP

## PEDERSEN POWERS TO ANDALUCIA COSTA DEL SOL OPEN VICTORY

2020 will be remembered for many things but it will go down in LET history as Denmark's Emily Kristine Pedersen powered to Andalucia Costa Del Sol Open De Espana victory, closing with a bogey-free final round of 66 (-6) for a four shot win from home favourite Nuria Irujo.

A model of consistency all year, the 24-year-old has won an impressive five LET titles from 12 starts and becomes the first player since Marie-Laure de Lorenzi to win three tournaments in a row.

Walking away with the first-place winner's check of €90,000, Pedersen also collected €20,000 for winning the inaugural Race to Costa del Sol and finishes the year with a mammoth €415,000 in prize money.



Accompanied by her Father on the bag for

her sixth career win, an emotional Pedersen, said,

"It was very special with my Dad here, he got me in to golf and he has been a big support the whole way, he kept me going when I was down and it is really big for me to have him here and win this amazing trophy. I was really happy to go through something really positive and good with him because he is right beside me off the course and now, he has been there on it."

Leading by one shot heading into Sunday, Pedersen used all her front-running experience and looked in control from the start, opening with three pars before an uncharacteristic miss on the par four 4th hole.

Undeterred, the serial winner proceeded to chip in for birdie from the back of the green before steadying the ship with seven pars to extend her lead to four shots with seven holes to play, with playing partner Nuria Irujo trying to keep pace. GP

## LADIES EUROPEAN TOUR POSTPONE 2021 AUSTRALIAN SWING

The Ladies European Tour announced the upcoming 2021 Geoff King Motors Australian Ladies Classic and the Women's NSW Open will be postponed to the same weeks in 2022.

Usually set to mark the beginning of the LET season from February 18-21, tournament organisers investigated numerous contingency plans to stage the events but made the difficult decision to postpone both popular tournaments by a year due to ongoing travel restrictions into Australia.

A must-stop venue on the LET's schedule, the 2020 Geoff King Motors Australian Ladies

Classic at Bonville was the first event of the 2020 season and was captured by Australian amateur, Stephanie Kyriacou.

At only 19-years-old, the teen sensation romped to an eight-shot victory and immediately turned professional before embarking on a whirlwind first season on Tour, making the cut in her first Major Championship at the AIG Women's Open and recording three further top-five finishes in the Czech Republic, Switzerland and France. With only four events left to play, she currently sits in seventh place on the Race to Costa del Sol and only one position behind Alice Hewson, in the race for 'Rookie of the Year' spoils. GP



by Wg Cdr Arun Kumar Singh (Retd)  
President, GCS&MAI

# THE STEEL SHAFTS

## GOLF CLUBS – A STRUGGLE

**G**olf began in the Eastern Scotland few centuries ago and the game was played with primitive equipment in the earliest days. The oldest reference to the golf clubs being specially made comes from the year 1502 when King James IV of Scotland commissioned a Bow maker to make a set of clubs for him. In the early days, the set of clubs consisted of 'Longnoses' for driving, 'Grass Drivers' for fairways, 'spoons' for short range shots, 'Niblicks' for pitching and a 'Putting Cleek' for putting. Introduction of 'Featherie' golf ball standardised one aspect of the equipment and the clubs started getting standardised too.

The early standard for making golf clubs was the use of hard wood (holly, beech, pear, and apple) for the head and softer wood (Ash, Hazel) for the shaft. The Head and Shaft were connected with a splint and tightly bound with leather straps. The whole process was expensive and time consuming so the cost of these clubs could not be afforded by common people. It was

common for an odd club to break while playing a round which added to the costs and the game became elitist.

A club maker in Scotland began importing Hickory from USA for the shafts in early 19th century and the introduction of 'Guttie' ball few years later necessitated the change in the design of 'Longspoons' into 'Bulgiers' with bulbous heads similar to what we see today.

Well known Scottish Professionals like Alan Robertson, Old Tom Morris and Willie Park Sr ran a thriving industry of manufacturing clubs and balls in their Pro Shops and then exporting it to golfers all over the world. Golfers around the world associated Scotland with golf and the business was very lucrative. By 1900 'Persimmon' imported from the USA had replaced hard wood like Bleech and experimentation with Aluminium had also begun.

Advent of Drop Forging had already encouraged the use of Iron in the manufacturing of golf club heads and it was common to see hickory shaft clubs with iron heads. Creating steel shafts for golf clubs was still a difficult proposition because of the weight. Blacksmiths such as Thomas Horsburgh started experimenting with Steel shafts in the late 1890s but the adoption was very slow. Thomas Horsburgh was bullish on the prospects of steel shafts and obtained a patent in 1893. The solid steel made the shafts very heavy and the clubs did not gain any popularity which resulted in the patent being allowed to lapse by the owner.

Failure with solid steel shafts due to its weight led to experimentation with steel tubes. This again proved to be a tough proposition because techniques to manufacture steel tubes wasn't easily available in those days and the tubes were prone to extensive breakages during the manufacturing process. Meanwhile, with the advancement of steel making technologies in USA, lot of effort to find new solutions shifted there. In 1910 Arthur (Bill) F Knight, a former engineer with General Electric, was granted a patent for steel shafts. His clubs also failed to gain traction among general public mainly because both R&A and USGA refused to accord sanction on the grounds of steel shafts being 'artificial assistance'! Arthur Knight was unable to develop a marketable steel shaft and in 1920

Horton Manufacturing Company bought the patent on royalty basis as the patent still had seven more years to run.

Meanwhile, in 1915, Alan Lard of Washington was granted a patent for perforated steel shafts. Alan Lard made his shafts from solid steel having six sides and bored hundreds of small holes to reduce the weight. These shafts when swung, made a strong whistling sound and picked up the nickname of 'whistler'. The perforations on 'whistler' increased the club head speed considerably and reduced torque but the clubs failed to gain popularity.

Horton Company continued on the path of trying to manufacture a steel shaft. Apart from paying royalty to Arthur Knight, they also paid royalty to General Electric for using their processes of Brazing. They made hundreds of experiments to fold thin steel strips into tapered tubes by using hydrogen brazing, heat treatment etc. Everything from size, weight distribution an entirely new process and the first set of production shafts was ready by June 1921. They got immediate commercial success and found Crawford, McGregor and Candy Company as their first customer. Soon after, Spalding, who were experimenting with Alan Ward's perforated shafts, also became a client. Sale of steel shafts began in earnest in 1922 and Horton Company was surely on a roll or was it too soon to celebrate?!

Horton Company got a shocking setback when in 1923, USGA barred the shafts from official play on the grounds of it being a mechanical aid! The steel shaft clubs were not to be used in USGA sanctioned championships until it could be proved to be not a mechanical aid and its use will not provide any undue advantage. Fortunately for Horton Company, the provincial associations were well organised and effective bodies in USA (unlike our situation). The company got in touch with Western Golf Association who organised testing at Edgewater Golf Club in Chicago. Horton Company went on record to show their appreciation for the officials of the Association and the club for their friendliness and cooperation but were effusive in praise for their attitude to help the game.

Many golf Pros were initially opposed to the steel shafted clubs in the beginning because of their apprehension of it impacting their



King Edward VIII

club making business but soon realised that it actually helped. Horton Company, in the meantime announced that they would gift a steel shaft club to anyone registering a hole in one provided they submitted an attested score card. To their surprise, they received 700 applications and honoured their promise. The company then requested all the recipients of the steel shaft clubs to write to USGA to give an honest opinion about the clubs and more than 600 recipients obliged. USGA too was surprised with the letters and wrote to Horton Company to inquire about the kind of influence they had used!

The efforts of Horton Company and help from Western Golf Association backed by so many users seems to have worked and steel shafts in golf clubs were approved by USGA in early 1924. Herbert Lagerblade, a professional player who had been helping Horton Company with the development and promotion of 'Bristol' steel shafts, became the first player to swing a steel shaft golf club in the US National Championship in the same year at Oakland Hills Golf Club. He called his drive as 'the shot which was heard around the world' primarily because a lot of future of the shafts depended on it. Winner of the US Open that year, Cyril Walker also used steel shaft on his putter. It was not surprising that steel rapidly grew in popularity and soon overtook wood.

In 1929 True Temper developed the first seamless, step down tapered shaft which allowed them to decrease the outside diameter in a tapering fashion to fit into the head. This helped them to create different flexes to cater to individual needs. Then in 1930, Spalding unveiled their Bobby Jones signature steel shaft clubs which were painted brown to give it a hickory look. The practice was adopted by others to make the transition from hickory to steel easier. Very soon in 1931, Billy Burke



King George VI



R&amp;A Clubhouse

## Well known Scottish Professionals like Alan Robertson, Old Tom Morris and Willie Park Sr ran a thriving industry of manufacturing clubs and balls in their Pro Shops and then exporting it to golfers all over the world.

became the first to win US championship by using the entire set of steel shaft golf clubs. The transition was complete.

Even after the approval of USGA in early 1924. The challenge still loomed across the continent because the R&A refused to approve the steel shaft clubs. Steel shafts were initially banned by the R&A in 1914 on the grounds of being "not permissible departure from the traditional form and make of golf clubs". We must appreciate that Rules on Clubs did not exist before 1908 and R&A was only beginning to come to grips with them in those early years. In the beginning, ban on steel shafts seemed logical as with little technological innovations, standardisation was difficult. Horton Company (later Bristol Steel) creating a seamless shaft overcame the obstacle and USGA allowed its use in 1924 onward after it was demonstrated that it gave no unfair advantage to a player.

R&A continued with its opposition to the steel shafts in order to be "repelling novelties that seek to cross the Atlantic"! The approval was doggedly resisted despite increasing public pressure as these clubs were long lasting and provided better value for money. Fortunately, a fortuitous royal intervention took place through the Prince of Wales in 1929.

In September 1922, Prince of Wales (later to be King Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor after abdication) was invited to be the Captain of R&A. He was a keen golfer who patronised

St Andrews and liked travelling to USA often, partly because of its attractiveness as a golfing destination. The Prince acquired a set of steel shaft clubs during one his visits to USA and liked them. R&A, in the meantime, was sticking to its position of not allowing the steel shaft golf clubs in its jurisdiction.

The Prince of Wales arrived to play an event in the Old Course in 1929 and strode in with his set of steel shaft clubs acquired in the USA. He played his round, submitted his card and left. The committee at R&A was caught in a fix because as per rules the player must be penalised with 'Disqualification' for playing with a set of unauthorised equipment. It was something which would have been hugely embarrassing as the player was a former Captain of the R&A and the future monarch of the country. The committee met quickly and legalised the play by steel shaft golf clubs based on the USGA's findings!

Steel shafts were thus approved by the R&A and it was befitting that Prince Albert, the younger brother of Prince of Wales, who was Duke of York then, was invited to be the Captain of R&A in 1930. He arrived for the ceremonial tee off and became the first Captain to tee off with a set of steel shaft golf club. Prince Albert was to later succeed Edward VIII, after his abdication, as George VI the King of England. The Royal intervention had certainly helped the steel shaft golf clubs. **GP**

# SHUBHAM JAGLAN TO PLAY COLLEGE GOLF IN 2021

Shubham Jaglan, an Indian born star playing amateur golf has announced his decision to play college golf for the University of South Florida starting next year in August. Jaglan has won the Junior World Championship in 2015. He has been trying to get back to his game after the back injury in 2017.

On the occasion Jaglan added “Thankful to my whole family, the Laxman Public School, my coach Mrs. Nonita Lall Qureshi, The Delhi Golf Club, Mr. Amit Luthra and the Golf Foundation for their immense support. Wouldn’t have been possible without them. Big thanks to the boss Zahaan Qureshi for helping me throughout my recruitment process! Grateful to Coach Bradley and coach Caldwell for this opportunity. Can’t wait till August and play for USF!”

**“SHUBHAM ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO PLAY COLLEGE GOLF FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA STARTING NEXT YEAR IN AUGUST.”**



## THE ACE AUTOMN CUP 2020

The Ace Autumn Cup was held on the 8th November 2020 at the Forest Hill Golf Resort.

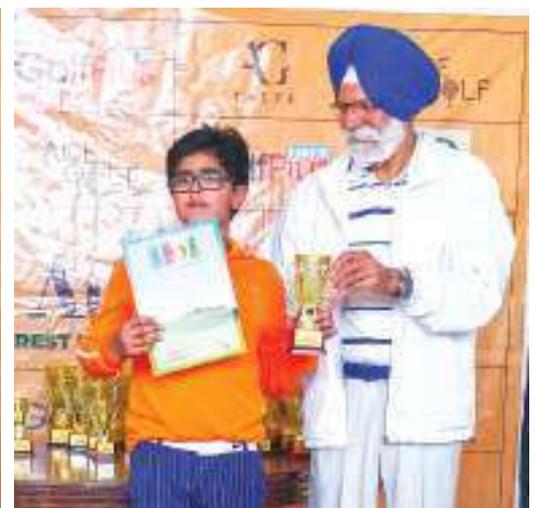
Playing in Category D Boys, Danish Verma with 8 Birdies won on the first hole playoff with Rannvijay Gill with 6 Birdies with both were tying at 4 Under.

In Category D Girls, Anahita Pusri won on the first hole playoff with Ganika Goyal.

Category A Boys saw Harteg S Grewal winning with a lone stroke over Ram Singh.

Whereas in Category E Girls Ojas Wini Saraswat with a score of 2 over and 2 birdies followed by Teesta Singh Sikarwar for the second position.

The prize distribution saw the President of the Forest Hill Golf Resort Mr. B Gill giving away the prizes to the winners and encouraged junior golfers to follow their passion in golf and enjoy the sport.



# The Black Rhino Team Trophy

**L**ittle Master Junior Golf Tour organized a 27 hole tournament at the Jaypee WishTown Par 3 course on 30th November called the Black Rhino Team Trophy.

The event saw amazing response from juniors and parents who came out in full force, seeing participation of 14 teams taking part in the age group from 10 to 17.

Few of the top juniors of the country participated, like Raghav Chugh, Jai Bahl, Sukhman Singh, Akshath Sharma, Zara Anand, Parth Raman Sood, Udai Midha, Aarav Shah, and Kanav Chauhan to name a few.

The scoring was hot like the weather and the conditions were perfect for low scoring with the greens holding like a magnet and the surface smooth like a billiard table.

The highlight of the tournament was a playoff for 2nd, 3rd & 4th positions (first time held for other than 1st position in a junior event) amongst 8 teams.

After the first playoff hole which was the 9th hole, all over water 2 teams with a score of 5



## TEAM POSITIONS

- 1 Sukhman & Vinamra -6
- 2 Zara & Sanvi -2
- 3 Armin & Sohng -2
- 4 Raghav & Jai -2
- 5 Aarav & Neil -2
- 6 Anshh & Ayan -2
- 7 Udai & Ranveer -2
- 8 Anish & Vedant -2
- 9 Akshath & Arin -2
- 10 Savdeep & Samar Veer +1
- 11 Aryaveer & Aman +2
- 12 Ivan & Vihaan +2
- 13 Shubham & Harsh +3
- 14 Parth & Kanav +4

**Best score 1st 9:** Scramble Format - Akshath & Arin (5 under)

**Best Score 2nd 9:** Alternate Shot Format - Raghav & Jai (Par)

**Best Score 3rd 9:** Best Ball Format - Aryaveer & Aman (4 under)

managed to book a place in the playoff for 2nd & 3rd place, two teams missed out, while 4 teams with a score of 6 moved to the next playoff hole to decide the 4th position.

The 2 teams for the 2nd & 3rd place playoff Zara & Sanvi, Armin & Sohng played the 9th hole and with identical scores after the hole had a 100 feet putt off, which was won by Zara & Sanvi. **GP**

## The Golf Revolution Cup

**A**ce Golf and The Golf Revolution came together to conduct the first of its kind golfing tournament and a Discover Golf event, called The Golf Revolution Cup, at Jaypee Wishtown, Noida, on 26th and 27th November 2020. This was an event where beginners got to explore golf, and gain exposure of this fascinating sport under the expert eye of seasoned golfing instructors. The Golf Revolution has been spreading

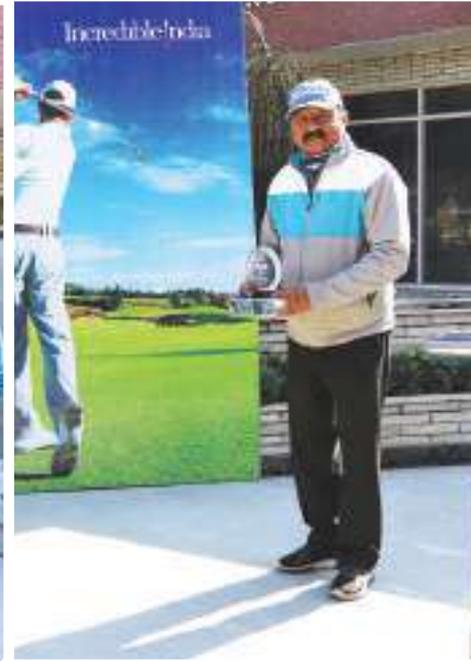
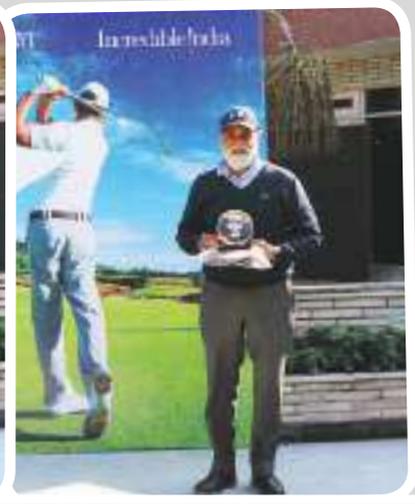


the love and awareness of the game of golf among school going students for a long time now. TGR, in fact, is a multinational which is driven by the aim of making Indian golfers stand firmly on the international pedestal of glory in the near future, while demolishing all entry barrier to the game for the school kids.

TGR Cup was conducted for the Junior and Amateur categories. The event was graced by Mr Mukesh Sharma, the Founder of Prometheus School and Mr Ganesh Sharma, the Principal of Global Indian School, as the Chief Guests. During the cup, there was great enthusiasm and excitement out in the Wishtown Golf Course, going onto show the great success the event was.

The Golf Revolution Cup is the first in a series of events planned by TGR, where, in their own unique style, the company hopes to pass on their passion for the sport to youngsters. Ace Golf is their partner on this mission of taking Golf to all corners of the country. **GP**





# NATIONAL INTERCLUB GOLF TROPHY

The National Interteam Golf Trophy 2020, presented by GolfPlus Monthly, was a major golf event held in Panchkula. The event supported by Incredible India-Ministry of Tourism saw golf enthusiasts competing for the prizes in various categories at the Panchkula Golf

Course. The event was played on 21st November strictly following all Covid protocols prescribed by the government of India and Government of Haryana. The weather was amazing for a perfect golfing day in the beautiful setting besides the Ghaggar River. The tournament was played

on a Stroke Play format over 18 holes on a gross basis. GM, Panchkula Golf Course, Col. A S Dhillon, gave away the prizes to the winners at the prize distribution ceremony which was followed by a gala lunch. [GP](#)



<b>RESULTS:</b>		
<b>1 - 9 HANDICAP</b>	Winner - K S Kang	Runner up- Rajeev Pandey
<b>10 - 18 HANDICAP</b>	Winner - Subhash Goel	Runner up- Yogender Singh
<b>19 - 24 HANDICAP</b>	Winner- Upkar Singh	Runner up - Sanjay Mahajan
<b>LADIES</b>	Winner - Sunita Singla	Runner up- Babita Mahajan
<b>JUNIOR</b>	Winner - Khushi	Runner Up - Master Jatin Pal
<b>SENIOR (65+)</b>	Winner - Vivek Kumar Srihan	Runner Up- Ashok Kumar Sharma
<b>STRAIGHTEST DRIVE</b>	Winner - Jasbir Singh	
<b>LONGEST DRIVE</b>	Winner - Subhash Goel	
<b>CLOSEST TO THE PIN</b>	Winner- Brig G J Singh	





# IN MEMORIUM

**T**he South Asian Fellowship of Golfing Rotarians (SAFGR) paid a fitting tribute to PRID Yashpal Das, a dedicated Rotarian and a front runner in SAFGR. The event was played virtually to overcome the difficulties posed by the Covid19 pandemic. PRID Yashpal Das Memorial Rotary Golf Tournament became a landmark event with 550 Golfers in four countries participated. The participants played in a golf course of their choosing. There were a large number of prizes to accommodate the large field from the Rolling Trophy for the Rotarian & Non Rotarians to City Champions selected in each from each city.

Chairman SAFGR Rtn. Parag Sheth included Polio Pulse as the Charity of the event wherein each player's contribution was matched twice by the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation to ultimately raise 3.75 Lac US\$.

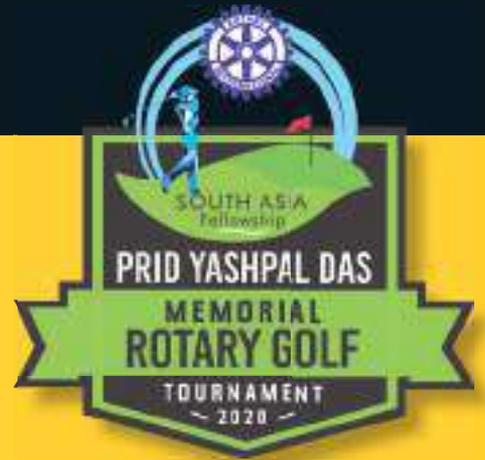
Another first was the inclusion of Non Rotarians to the event and having a separate Rolling Trophy for them.

Participants printed and displayed banners dedicated to the memory of PRID Yashpal Das at the respective course of play.

The Virtual Golf event had 43 coordinators spread over 36 cities who worked towards making the event a roaring success.

The event saw an inaugural address by the

Tournament Chairman Rtn. Navdeep Chawla on a Zoom call from the Delhi Golf Club wherein he greeted all the golfers who had logged in for the tee off ceremony. The event culminated in a virtual Prize distribution in IPL style with all the Office bearers being present and more than 250 participants attending the Prize Giving ceremony virtually. **GP**





(L-R) : Navdeep Chawla, Chair of the event, SAFGR President, Parag Sheth with wife Punam Sheth

“ The Virtual Golf event had 43 coordinators spread over 36 cities. ”



<b>Winner PRID Yashpal Das Trophy- Rotarian</b>	Sarvpreet Singh
<b>Winner PRID Yashpal Das Trophy- Non Rotarian</b>	Karan Mehto
<b>Winner Ladies</b>	Neeraja Khanna
<b>Winner Senior</b>	Kashinath Pai
<b>Winner Super Senior</b>	Kuldeep Bery
<b>Winner Max Pars</b>	Karan Mehto
<b>Winner Max Birdies</b>	Babu Sherpa



Champion of the event Rtn. Sarvpreet Singh

CITY	CITY CHAMPION	CITY	CITY CHAMPION
Ahemdabad	Shridhar Singh	Kandy, Sri Lanka	Haroon Aslam
Ambala	Ravinder Dhillon	Kathmandu, Nepal	Babu Sherpa
BaluMath	Krishna Sandarbh Pandey	Kochi	T. M. Shaji
Bengaluru	Sunil Shanmugam	Kodaikanal	Gauthma
Baroda	Shashwath Jayakumar	Kolkotta	Arya Vardhan Gupta
Bharuch	Prashantpatel	Lucknow	Yogesh Bajpayee
Bhubneshwar	Colonel S.K. Mohapatra	Nagpur	Subhash Chander
Chandigarh	Mr. M. S. Pooni	Noida	Kishore Thakur
Chennai	D Nagaraj	Panchkula	Sunil Sharma
Daltonganj	UO Himanshu Kumar Dubey	Patna	VivekkumarRana
Delhi	Hardeep Singh	Poona	Rajiv Joshi
Dhaka, Bangladesh	Abul Kalam Azad	Ranchi	Sushila Toppo
Faridabad	Raghavkalra	Roorkee	Rtn Dr Karan Singh
Hyderabad	Ramesh Surana	Shillong	Tony Curtis Lyngdoh
Jamshedpur	Vikramjit Singh Panag		

# WPGT 2020 TO RETURN IN DECEMBER

Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour 2020 - Leg 7 to return from 1st December from the Noida Golf Course.

After a long break with players eager to participate and the Women's Golf Association of India is set to welcome the players with the new regulations in place. **GP**

## LEG 7

**Date:** 1st – 4th December, 2020

**Venue:** Noida Golf Course

## LEG 8

**Date:** 9th – 11th December, 2020

**Venue:** DLF golf & Country Club

## LEG 9

**Date:** 15th - 18th December, 2020

**Venue:** Classic Golf & Country Club

**“Restart of Hero Women’s Professional Golf Tour with full International COVID protocol from 1/12/20 augurs well. Increasing numbers in women professional players reiterates a strong commitment from young golfers towards their chosen career path.”**

Champika Sayal,  
Secretary General, WGAI



## INDIAN FEMALE GOLFERS IN SAUDI

Tvesa Malik from Gurgaon carded rounds of 74-76-69 for a total score of 3-over 219 to finish Tied-39th at the US\$ 1mn Saudi Ladies International Team International on the Ladies European Tour. The event was played in both the team and individual standing at the Royal Greens Golf & Country Club in from 17-19th November 2020.

Tvesa was joined by Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar who finished tied 47th and 76th respectively.

Emily Kristine Pedersen completed the ‘Saudi Sweep’ of titles, adding to her season’s trophy haul with victory in both the ‘team’ and ‘individual’ standings at the inaugural Saudi Ladies Team International. **GP**

## IN MEMORIAL



### NGC Golf Captain Commodore V.K. Thakur

He passed away (29.11.2020) at the Base Hospital, Delhi Cantonment. **GP**

## KAPIL DEV GETS BACK AT THE COURSE

Legendary Indian Cricketer Kapil Dev earlier in shared a video of himself playing golf after undergoing angioplasty. He was admitted to the hospital in the month of October on complaining about chest pain.

In a video shared by him on social media he could be seen enjoying a round of golf with his friends and quoting “You cannot express in words what fun it is to be back on the golf course or a cricket ground. It is beautiful to be back at the golf course, having fun and playing with friends. That’s what life is all about”. **GP**



# TROON INTERNATIONAL PROPERTIES TRIUMPH IN NINETEEN WORLD GOLF AWARDS

Troon International Properties heavily featured in the 2020 World Golf Awards



**T**roon International, the leader in upscale golf course management is celebrating after sixteen of its global properties were named in the 2020 World Golf Awards. Categories included; Europe's Best Golf Course, Oceania's Best Golf Course and UAE's Best Golf Course.

The World Golf Awards celebrate world-class golf courses and golf destinations, recognising excellence within golf tourism. Voted for by professionals working within the golf travel and tourism industry as well as golf tourism consumers, these accolades further solidify Troon's place within the market and recognise a collection of the finest venues around the globe. The highlights of the awards were the recognition of the PGA National Czech Republic as Europe's Best Golf Course and Brookwater Golf & Country Club as Oceania's Best Golf Course. PGA National Czech Republic, a stunning Kyle Phillips design, opened for preview play earlier this year, ahead of an official grand opening in spring 2021. The course operated under Troon Privé, is also a trailblazer in environmental practices and sustainable golf design.

Brookwater Golf and Country Club, winner of Oceania's Best Golf Course, features an ambitious Greg Norman design weaving up and down rolling terrain, complementing the natural landscape, each hole features distinctive Australian bushland landscapes.

Also featured in the 2020 awards as Cambodia's

Best Golf Course was the "East Course" at Vattanac Golf Resort. The Sir Nick Faldo designed Championship Course in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, showcases an imposing character and striking identity, receiving high praise from golfers around the world since opening in May 2019. Saudi's Best Golf Course, Royal Greens Golf and Country Club, prepares to host the historic LET double header, Aramco Saudi Ladies International presented by PIF and the Saudi Ladies Team International, on November 12th-19th.

Mark Chapleski, President of Troon International, said: "To have sixteen Troon-managed properties, across fourteen countries, recognised in this year's World Golf Awards is an incredible achievement. It is a testament to the hard work of the Associates who deliver

**"To have sixteen Troon-managed properties, across fourteen countries, recognised in this year's World Golf Awards is an incredible achievement."**

**Mark Chapleski**  
President, Troon International

the Troon standards whether that be through agronomic practices, golf operations or service level. Through their efforts we have been able to ensure these properties are maintained to the highest standard and befitting a reputation as some of the best in the world. Many congratulations to all of our ownerships and renowned course designers whose exceptional visions created each of these award-winning courses."

All categories and award winners were: Europe's Best Golf Course & Czech Republic Best Golf Course – PGA National Czech Republic; Oceania's Best Golf Course & Australia's Best Golf Course – Brookwater Golf & Country Club; UAE's Best Golf Course & Abu Dhabi's Best Golf Course – Yas Links Abu Dhabi; Middle East's Best 9 Hole Golf Course – The Track Meydan Golf; Dubai's Best Golf Hotel – Address Montgomerie; Saudi Arabia's Best Golf Course – Royal Greens Golf & Country Club; Bahrain's Best Golf Course – Royal Golf Club; Egypt's Best Golf Course – The Allegria Golf Club; Spain's Best Golf Course; Las Colinas Golf & Country Club; Cambodia's Best Golf Course – Vattanac Golf Resort; Malaysia's Best Golf Course – Els Club Desaru Coast – Valley; Sri Lanka's Best Golf Course – Victoria Golf & Country Resort; Greece's Best Golf Course – Costa Navarino – The Dunes; India's Best Golf Course – Prestige Golfshire Club; Cyprus' Best Golf Course – Secret Valley Golf Resort; Russia's Best Golf Course – Agalarov Golf & Country Club. 

# SILVIES RANCH

## A WESTERN TREAT OF A RETREAT



Cabin Exterior and Pond



Real cowboys at work



**G**olfers looking to go off the grid in search of memorable experiences will certainly find it on this working ranch in an area referred to as Frontier Oregon. Located in the eastern part of the state a couple hours drive from either Boise (Idaho) and Bend airports, it is one of the least populated areas left in America. Social distancing is a natural way of life at Silvies and a great opportunity for urbanites to re-connect with nature while enjoying four distinct golf courses laid out among a magnificent landscape that includes high desert alpine meadows, marshlands and a national forest of ponderosa pines at nearly 5,000 feet high.

Named for a French trapper, Antonine Sylvaile,

who discovered the valley in the early 1800's, the animals outnumber the humans by a vast, vast margin. Over 4,500 cattle, 3,000 goats, 50 horses and hundreds of other wildlife species, including herds of wild elk and antelope that prance across the plains (and fairways sometimes) as if they own the place. (Silvies is owned by Scott Campbell, a retired veterinarian who turned Portland's Banfield Pet Hospital into a multinational company with over 800 clinics, many of them in PetSmart stores. Scott grew up in the area and while not a dedicated golfer, he knew the sport would help attract tourists to the area.)

What the golfer soon learns upon arrival, is that not only is the resort very Western in appearance (luxury log cabins, native American and cowboy furnishings and motifs abound) but that in between rounds, they are offered a bevy of

throwback activities that include the opportunity of participating in cattle roundups and goat herding; pistol and rifle ranges; horseshoes; fishing; horseback riding, even taking a carriage ride with Clydesdales.

In addition to mountain biking and 60 miles of hiking trails, all that activity combined with golf will be soothed by gourmet dining and a massive (17,000 square foot) state-of-the-art spa.

"Silvies is 150,000 acres or about 225 square miles. It is about the size of Chicago with 32 guest rooms," said general manager Brooks Bradbury.



Cattle herding



Clydesdales buggy ride



Deer just off the Green

The GM offered a little history about the area. “On the ranch, which dates to 1883, are the relics of a Native American population that lived here long before first white settlers, and the weathered cabins of homesteaders. Our golf courses are named after the Craddock and Hankins families, both were early homesteaders on the property. Our golf center is named after Chief Egan who was the Paiute tribe leader in this territory. “

## GOLF COURSES

### Craddock/Hankins

Designed by Dan Hixson, traversing the ridges that overlook Silvies Valley, the course direction of Craddock (like Hankins) is reversed each day to create a different layout with a variety of pin placements and tee box options, creating thousands of unique rounds. While the course is free of water hazards, there are over a hundred bunkers incorporated into the course design.

Silvies’ Director of Golf, Roger Porzak (who along with Golf Superintendent Sean Hoolehan oversee the entire operation), explains some of the reasons behind why Hankins Course and the Craddock Course at Silvies Valley Ranch have been recognized by Golf Digest as two of the top four Best New Courses of 2018 including the unique “reversible” aspects they offer.

“We are at 4,500 feet and it is pure links-style golf. There are no water holes on those two championship courses. We are one of just 2 places in the US that have reversible courses. So we have 27 greens. They share 9 greens. And they each have 9 of their own,” explained the veteran golf pro, “Sometimes it is difficult for people to wrap their head around the concept. They are two entirely different courses.”

A veteran of 40 years in golf, Porzak, who also owns a golf academy in San Diego, talks about more distinct aspects of the 18-hole championship courses.

“Undulated greens, hard and firm. And fast and a lot of creativity goes into playing these courses. I like when players come in and say, ‘wow, I had



fishing at Silvies Ranch



18th Tee Hankins Course



Golf among the Ponderosa Pines

to hit every shot in the bag around the greens.’ There’s just a lot of creativity involved. Lot of bump and runs. There are times you’re hitting that flop shot too. There are also some blind tee shots and elevated tees. Ball flies out here at 4,500 feet. The shared tee complex at No. 7 Hankins and No. 13 Craddock measures 4,887 feet above sea level, is the highest point for golf in Oregon.”

Porzak adds: “The grass is identical to St. Andrews (which is famous for its reversible holes), the fairways are fescue and greens are creeping bentgrass. We try to keep the stimp meter around 11. If you get above the pin it is like putting on concrete.”

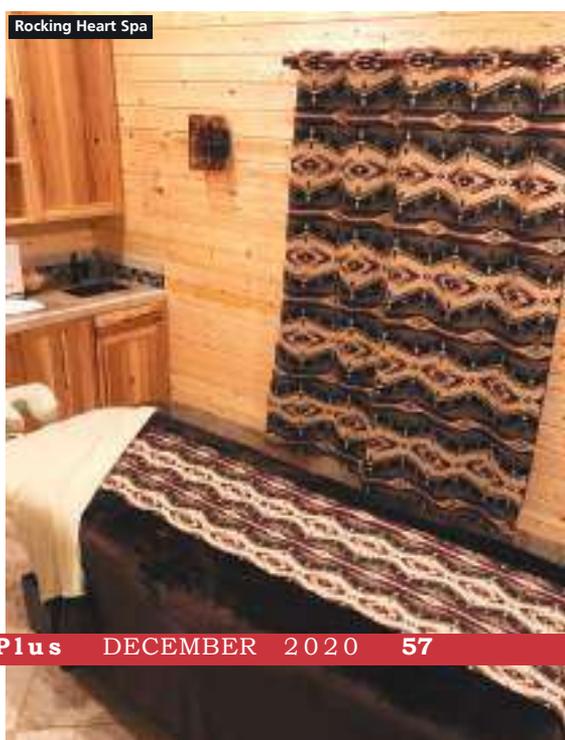
### Chief Egan

As mentioned by Mr. Bradbury, named after the leader of the local Paiute native American tribe, Chief Egan is a mountain meadow 9-hole, Par 3 course.

Goat caddies, born, raised and “educated” about



Shooting range



Rocking Heart Spa



Chevon Crosscut Leg Steak



Silvies Chicken Fried Steak



Chevon Osso Bucco Stew

golf on the ranch, are equipped to carry up to six clubs along with balls, tees and more “fun” refreshments if desired. A ranger goes along to help escort the caddies through the round.

“The goat caddies are great. They never give “baahhd” advice. They are the best employees I’ve ever had. They never talk back, never insist on what club to use and work for peanuts,” notes Porzak.

### McVeigh’s Gauntlet

“It is pure target golf. Nothing but tee boxes and greens. Holes range from 247 to 77 yards,” notes Porzak.

It was voted the Best New Golf Experience by GOLF Magazine, the 7-hole ridge course has distinctive characteristics that include a strategically-placed “beer tree” with a well-stocked cooler that can be happened upon after a

particularly steep climb.

“After the 3rd hole, you reach the Beer Hole,” points out Porzak. “It’s 50 yards, just a long green, so you have a choice of putting or try to flop it up there. It is in addition to the 7 holes, but comes after the 3rd hole.”

With all the greens being sloped, tiny, and elevated onto hill tops, the course is designed to be so difficult that it’s fun. If you miss your target even slightly, you will face a tough up and down from a potentially precarious situation, so even par 2s are not easy to come by.

Silvies is open year-round and though the golf season runs generally from mid-May through October, they just recently launched a new winter golf experience for its guests called Cool Golf where on the Chief Egan course, they enlarge the holes and you play with tennis balls.

### FOOD

Breeding prize-winning cattle and developing a meat goat – the American Range Goat, Silvies’ gourmet menu features a lot of their home-grown livestock raised from its certified-organic meadows.

“I’m proud the Campbells have given me the opportunity to prepare menus and dining experiences that showcase our organic grass finished meats, ranch-grown herbs and microgreens, and locally sourced produce in a creative and flexible way,” Mike Wilson, the Executive Chef said.

One of Wilson’s prized skills is a special way to prepare a main course using what is called Sous vide — French for “under-vacuum” — which is an innovative cooking technique in which food is vacuum sealed and slow-cooked in water at constant precise temperatures until it’s perfectly cooked.

Wilson works with Scott’s brother Jeff in taking advantage of all the natural resources found on the ranch.

“We also do a fair amount of foraging when we can, accessing a lot of natural range of mushrooms that grow on the property from late spring to early fall. We harvest at various times, elder berries, rose hips, any of those type of things can find their way to the kitchen table around here,” said Jeff Campbell. “There’s also a native trout fish that lives here. If the guest catches one we take it right to the kitchen and prepare it for them.”

Campbell, an immunologist who studied at Stanford and also conducts a popular sourdough-bread making class, oversees a massive bar that features over 220 different types of wine from across the Pacific Northwest, California, and Europe and also boasts the largest Scotch collection in the region with over 110 different varieties.

### SPA

One option of working off meals are to access the gym, an indoor rock-climbing wall and the

### Hankins Course

- Dan Hixson-designed Championship 18-hole course
- 7075 yards
- Played odd # days

### Craddock Course

- Dan Hixson-designed Championship 18-hole course
- 7035 yards
- Played even # days

### Chief Egan Course

- Par 3 golf course
- 9 holes, 875 yards
- Goat Caddies available

### McVeigh’s Gauntlet

- Challenging executive course (par 2’s 3’s and 4’s)
- 7 holes, 1177 yards
- Goat Caddies available

Olympic-quality swimming pool at the 17,000 square foot state-of-the-art Rocking Heart Spa.

Facilities there also include a sauna, whirlpool, indoor and outdoor hot tubs, manicure and pedicure and a wide range of massages, many of which are designed to look after the golfer looking for some rejuvenation between rounds.

“We spend more time getting behind those golf clubs and golf balls (personally) to better understand the biomechanics of the swing such as how the pelvic area how that affects the hamstrings, glutes, hips as well as how that corkscrew turn affects the upper body. Elbows in particular. So rather than working laterals on outside edge of the arms, we are going to be turning inward,” explained Cindy Qual, the spa director.

One thing is clear, golfers will be turning westward as word gets out about what this working ranch offers largely as a result of its remoteness.

Unless they fly in by private aircraft, golfers will spend up to 3½ hours on isolated stretches of road from commercial airports to get to the resort (and best to arrive before dark), however they will be rewarded with a unique golf experience.

There’s a reason why Golf Digest, Golf Magazine and Golfweek have all ranked Silvies regularly in their Top Ten lists.

While the air is pristine and views of The Milky Way unprecedented, add in the bonus of increased distance on your tee shot (being over 4,000 feet high), it is a landscape and ecosystem that most people simply have not experienced before.

“You create something to draw attention to what’s still very much a frontier, and golf has shown that it can be a magnet that gets people to go just about anywhere in the world,” states Bradbury. 

# SIR NICK FALDO REVEALS NEW 19TH HOLE IN VIETNAM

**Sir Nick Faldo Signature Course, Laguna Golf LãngCô, unveils new par-3 experience to enhance playability and course experience.**

**S**ir Nick Faldo has developed a very different definition of golf's '19th hole' at his Signature Design course, Laguna Golf LãngCô in Vietnam.

In conjunction with his Faldo Design team and Laguna Golf LãngCô Director of Golf, Adam Calver, Sir Nick has created a new, coastal par-3 to add an original hole at the award-winning course he designed and opened for play in 2013. Such is the beauty of the venue, the six-time major champion often refers to it as 'his version of paradise'.

The newly added feature hole was recognised as an opportunity to stage an idyllic natural links experience, with panoramic views of the course's neighbouring beach and mountain backdrop framing the extraordinary setting.

The idea was conceived by Sir Nick during his visit to the venue in 2018 for the Faldo Series Asia Grand Final. It will create even more of a memorability factor for golfers, increased flexibility to the course layout, as well as new challenges and experiences for players.

The hole plays parallel to the coastline and can stretch to 155 yards from the back tees. However, with multiple pin location options and an exposed design which invites onshore winds, the



Laguna Lang Co 19th in the distance is framed by the mountainous surroundings and neighbouring bay

hole creates a strategic three-club challenge depending on the set-up. Additionally, the framing dwarf dunes, mounds and swales provide visual deception whilst a Biarritz-style swale feature splits the green on the left side to define the front and back segments.

Should players miss the green, the surrounding close-cut Trinity grass and protruding sandy waste carry areas from the beach present multiple shot options to test players green side recovery.

Following its unveiling, **Sir Nick Faldo**, said: "Laguna Golf LãngCô is one of the very best golf experiences Asia has to offer and it's a course design of which I am particularly proud of. The 19th hole is a wonderful addition, not only because it is unique for a course to boast an additional hole, but because very few venues can provide such a beautiful setting, given its



Sir Nick Faldo first conceived the new 19th hole with the Faldo Design team in 2018

surrounding mountains, beach and bay."

"The hole has been designed in such a manner it can be played on the ground as much as in the air. It therefore invites a variety of different shots and calls for good decision making off the tee. Its sandy waste areas, which mimic pot bunkers, its close-cut surrounds, and a varied putting surface, create a real challenge. But one could play over and over and never get bored of." **GP**

## 2020 ABU DHABI AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIPS SET TO RETURN TO SAADIYAT BEACH GOLF CLUB

**Dates confirmed for the third edition of Abu Dhabi Amateur Championships**

**S**aadiyat Beach Golf Club has begun preparations to welcome some of the world's best amateur golfers, as they once again battle it out for top honours when the club hosts the 2020 Abu Dhabi Amateur Championship from 14th-16th December.

The Championship invites scratch golfers from around the world to compete for a chance to earn valuable World Amateur Golf Ranking points, as well as the Abu Dhabi Amateur Championship title – and potentially, spots in the European Tour's prestigious Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship presented by EGA for the champion and leading Emirati player.

Saadiyat Beach Golf Club, the Arabian Gulf's first beachfront course, has provided a strong test of golf for the first two editions of the Abu Dhabi Amateur Championships. The Gary Player-designed course respectfully harnesses the natural beauty of Saadiyat

Island's magnificent white sand beaches for a truly unique playing experience. Three saltwater lakes and sand dunes provide majestic on-course hazards, while more than 60 bunkers add to the difficulty of the challenging Par 72.

The 2019 edition hosted at the Gary Player designed course, was bigger and better, with over 30 nationalities from across the globe competing over 54 holes in an individual strokeplay format. Local star Josh Hill, who became the youngest ever winner of an Official World Golf Ranking event last year at the MENA Tour's Al Ain Open, capped a memorable 2019 with a thrilling one-stroke triumph over Arjun Gupta to be crowned the second winner of the Championship following Dino Capazario's triumph in 2018.

With the victory, Hill secured a spot in the European Tour's Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship presented by EGA, where he became the youngest-ever participant in the event and enjoyed a practice round with then World No.1 Brooks Koepka.

Ahead of the third Amateur Championships, **Matt Waters**, Group Director of Golf for Troon Abu



Saadiyat Beach Golf Club to Host Third Edition

**Dhabi**, commented: "At Saadiyat Beach Golf Club we pride ourselves in delivering the world renowned Troon Experience, which largely consists of maintaining exceptional playing surfaces which we believe sets the course up to be the perfect Championship venue for a World Amateur Golf Ranking Tournament. We are thoroughly looking forward to welcoming a vast array of elite amateur golfers to Abu Dhabi in December and to witness what we hope to be a thrilling tournament for all." **GP**



Akshay Sharma - Winner

# AKSHAY SHARMA

registers resounding five-shot win after coasting home with a 67, Sharma's 24-under tally equals record for lowest winning total on the PGTI.

Content Editor: Nikhil Kalaan, Media Manager, PGTI

**C**handigarh's Akshay Sharma registered a resounding five-shot victory after coasting home with a final round of five-under-67 at the TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship 2020 Presented by Panchkula Golf Club.

The 30-year-old Akshay captured his second title in style by taking his tournament tally to 24-under-264 which also equaled the record for the lowest winning total on the PGTI previously jointly held by Anirban Lahiri and Rashid Khan.

It was a wire-to-wire win for Sharma who led from the first round till the end at the Rs. 30 lakh event, the first tournament to be staged on the PGTI in eight months.

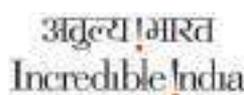
Karandeep Kochhar, also hailing from Chandigarh, put together an error-free 67 to maintain his overnight second position. His totaled 19-under-269 for the week.

Pune-based Udayan Mane shot the day's joint best round of 66 to claim tied third place at 14-under-274 along with Bengaluru's Chikkarangappa (69). Udayan thus extended his lead in the PGTI Order of Merit and moved up in the Official World Golf Ranking from 290 to 275 having collected 1.8 world ranking points.

Akshay Sharma (64-66-67-67), the overnight leader by a massive five shots, who looked extremely relaxed and confident at the start of the final round, never seemed in trouble during the round as his lead was not under threat at any stage with the rest of the field struggling to catch up.

Interestingly, Akshay dropped just two bogeys and a double-bogey during the week.

Sharma's tournament tally of 24-under-264 equaled Anirban Lahiri and Rashid Khan's previous records for the lowest winning total on the PGTI. While Lahiri had posted the score at the PGTI Players Championship in Aamby





Akshay Sharma (centre) receives the winning cheque from Mr. Uttam Singh Mundy, CEO, PGTI (left) and Col. A S Dhillon, GM, Panchkula Golf Club (right)

## KARANDEEP KOCHHAR FINISHES RUNNER-UP

Valley in 2010, Khan matched it at the City Bank American Express Chittagong Open in 2019. Udayan Mane's 26-under-262 at the TATA Steel Tour Championship in 2019 was achieved with the 'Preferred Lie' rule being in force, so it will not be counted as a record.

Akshay, who won his first professional trophy at the QA InfoTech Open in Noida in 2018, took home the winner's cheque worth Rs. 4,84,950 on Saturday and as a result climbed from 29th to fourth place in the PGTI Order of Merit.

An elated Akshay said, "I was quite relaxed from the very outset today. I knew that I just had to make regulations to stay ahead. Then the eagle on the third made things easier for me.

"Importantly, I had worked on my weakness, my temperament, during the three-month lockdown period when the courses were closed. That seems to be paying off because

today I played with a very cool mind and didn't feel much pressure. The 64 in the first round at Panchkula really set it up for me. It was a bonus since I didn't expect to go that low.

"I recently bought a new house for which I had taken a loan and there had been no earning for me for the past several months so things were getting a little tough. This win now means a lot to me because it makes it easier to repay the loan and take care of other expenses," added the chirpy Sharma, who moved into his new house about a month back.

Karandeep Kochhar (68-65-69-67), who trailed the leader by five at the start of the day, produced five birdies on the last day but was unable to catch up with the lead. Kochhar, who won on the PGTI in 2016 as a 17-year-old while still an amateur, moved up from 23rd to seventh place on the PGTI Order of Merit after his runner-up finish in Panchkula.



Karandeep Kochhar - Runner-up

The tournament had a unique format as it was played across two venues in close proximity - Panchkula Golf Club (in Haryana) and Chandigarh Golf Club - both located in the Chandigarh Tricity region.

The format for the event was as follows: One half of the field played their first round at Panchkula while the other half played their first round at Chandigarh. In round two both the halves of the field switched venues. The third and fourth rounds were played at Panchkula. **GP**



Karandeep Kochhar - Winner

# KARANDEEP KOCHHAR CLINCHES VICTORY

ON HOME TURF WITH STOIC LAST ROUND EFFORT OF 69, KOCHHAR'S LONG-AWAITED WIN HIS SECOND ON PGTI AND FIRST SINCE TURNING PROFESSIONAL

**C**handigarh's Karandeep Kochhar clinched victory on his home turf with a stoic last round effort of three-under-69 at the TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship 2020 Presented by Chandigarh Golf Club.

Twenty-one-year-old Kochhar's long-awaited win was his second on the PGTI and his first since turning professional in 2017. His first win on the PGTI came in 2016 at the age of 17 while he was still an amateur. Karandeep, the leader since round two, ended up with a tournament

total of 18-under-270 to finish two shots ahead of the rest at the Rs. 30 lakh event.

Kochhar, who took home the winning cheque worth Rs. 4,84,950, climbed from seventh to second position in the PGTI Order of Merit as a result of his win. Pune-based Udayan Mane continues to lead the merit list. Karandeep moved up 151 spots in the Official World Golf Ranking from 586 to 435 having collected 5 world ranking points.

Twenty-six-year-old Sunit Chowrasia of Kolkata, nephew of Indian golfing great SSP Chawrasia, broke the course record with a

sensational 10-under-62 to secure the runner-up spot at 16-under-272.

Karandeep Kochhar (66-68-67-69), the overnight leader by a massive four shots, kept his nerves on the final day to register his first win on the PGTI in four years after having come close to winning on several occasions including posting three runner-up finishes.

Kochhar was the outright favourite for a major part of the day having collected two birdies and a bogey till the 15th. Standing on the 16th tee Karandeep realized that Sunit Chowrasia was tied for the lead with him at 16-under. Kochhar





Karandeep Kochhar (2nd from right) receives the winning cheque from Mr. S S Sandhu, President, Chandigarh Golf Club (2nd from left), Mr. S P S Matharoo, Captain, Chandigarh Golf Club (extreme right) and Mr. U S Mundy, CEO, PGTI (extreme left)



## SUNIT CHOWRASIA BREAKS COURSE RECORD WITH A SENSATIONAL 62, SECURES RUNNER-UP FINISH

then stepped on the gas and picked up timely birdies on the 16th and 17th sinking a 20-footer from the fringe on the latter.

Kochhar said, "I've waited a long time for this win. I came close to winning several times in the past and had many top-10 and top-5 finishes over the past three years. So it's a big relief to finally cross the line and that too at my home course.

"I got the perfect start and then had a nervy phase between the ninth and the 15th. However, I kept my calm and stuck to my task. On the 16th tee I found out Sunit's score and knew had to make a birdie thereafter. I managed to do that and the 20-foot birdie conversion on the 17th was crucial as it gave me a two-shot cushion and helped me avoid the pressure on the last hole.

"I was very consistent through the week and made just two bogeys during the tournament. So it's been quite a satisfying performance," added Karandeep.

Sunit Chowrasia (69-69-72-62), who was

overnight 14th and nine off the lead, had a blazing start as he birdied the first three holes making two 15-footers and a good chip-putt. With two more birdies on the eighth and ninth, including another conversion from 15 feet, Sunit made the turn at five-under.

Chowrasia, who turned professional in 2018, had a bogey against the run of play on the 10th but came roaring back with birdies on the 11th, 13th and 14th where he sank a 15-footer, made a tough chip-putt and drained a 30-footer respectively.

The soft-spoken Sunit, who has a striking resemblance with his famous uncle SSP Chowrasia, came up with another birdie blitz on the last three holes. A couple of quality chips set up birdies for him from four feet on the 16th and 17th while he made his sixth long conversion of the day, a 15-footer, on the 18th.

Chowrasia thus shattered the previous course record of 64 jointly held by Rashid Khan, Sudhir Sharma and Abhijit Singh Chadha. It was also Sunit's best finish on the PGTI. Chowrasia's runner-up finish propelled him from 24th to eighth place in the PGTI Order of Merit.

Chowrasia said, "I didn't have very high expectations at the start of the day but the start

was terrific and the birdies just kept coming all day. I was in great rhythm throughout. My short-game was excellent and my putter was on fire.

"I wasn't putting well till last week. But this week fellow Kolkata professional Divyanshu Bajaj who was staying with me helped me a lot with my putting alignment and posture. That made a huge difference to my game.

"I also keep talking to my uncle SSP Chowrasia regularly and his sound advice is always helpful. I maintain a diary and note down all the points relating to my game. That has helped me figure out and rectify things in my game over the past few years."

Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma, the previous week's winner, took third place at 14-under-274.

The tournament had a unique format as it was played across two venues in close proximity - Chandigarh Golf Club and Panchkula Golf Club (in Haryana) - both located in the Chandigarh Tricity region.

The format for the event was as follows: One half of the field played their first round at Chandigarh while the other half played their first round at Panchkula. In round two both the halves of the field switched venues. The third and fourth rounds were played at Chandigarh.



**T**hese are some positive signs for the former Asia No. 1 who had a forgettable 2019-20 PGA Tour season where he didn't secure a single top-25 finish.

In a virtual interview conducted by the PGA Tour, Anirban spoke about his current form, spending time in India during the lockdown and playing events during the pandemic. Here we feature some extracts from that interview.

Lahiri said, "I feel I'm definitely close to playing my best golf. How close, I don't know."

The PGA Tour resumed events in June this year when the Covid-19 pandemic was wreaking havoc across the world. This led the tour to introduce a lot of new rules and protocols for the safe conduct of events. The experience of playing in such circumstances has been a new one for all pros including Anirban.

"It's obviously been a different kind of way to travel and play events. I think the Tour has done a great job of keeping us all healthy and safe ahead of everything else and still managed to conduct these events.

"Obviously once we get to the tournament, we follow all the protocols. We have to test almost twice a week every week just to make sure that everyone is healthy and safe. There's lots of measures that have been implemented within the clubhouse. We still don't have family and coaches and the support staff necessarily inside the bubble, just the caddies and the players at the moment. So all the precautions are in place and we're all getting used to it," said Lahiri, a two-time winner on the European Tour.

Speaking about his good recent form, Anirban emphasized on how spending time with his coach Vijay Divecha back in India during the lockdown helped him.

Lahiri said, "I put in a lot of work during the lockdown when I was in India, put a lot of new processes, refreshed a lot of my old practices and things that used to work for me. I've been able to implement a lot of those changes so far this season.

"Obviously spending extended time with my coach back in India made a huge difference and that's beginning to show. I trust my game a lot more, I'm hitting my irons a lot better, which has

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# ANIRBAN LAHIRI

## “I’M CLOSE TO PLAYING MY BEST GOLF”

Indian star Anirban Lahiri has made a decent start to the 2020-21 PGA Tour season having posted a tied sixth, a tied 11th and two other finishes inside the top-40 from his four starts so far.

basically always been my strength but not so much so in the last couple of years.

“I think it’s been a bit of a mixed bag in my first three events this season. I’ve obviously had one good result and a couple of average results. I think the game has been a few loose holes every event, the game has been one bad round or mediocre round every event, and there’s been a lot of good golf and a lot of birdies and a lot of other positives as well.

“For me it was just identifying where some of those mistakes are coming from and what are the areas I need to tighten up. There’s definitely been some inconsistency with my iron play. My long game and driving by and large has been good. Barring one day out of the three events that I played, my putting’s been pretty solid. More or less most departments are in good shape barring the odd inconsistency, which is exactly what I was trying to work on over the last few weeks.

“It’s a matter of getting off to a good start. That’s something that I haven’t done as consistently, so I’ll be focusing on a good start and then keep my foot on the pedal or keep that momentum and keep myself in it all four days,” added Anirban, who has recently been working hard with his short game coach Jim Sieckmann.

Lahiri, who represented India at the 2016 Rio Olympics, is currently ranked 566 in the world and thus not one of the top contenders at the moment for the two berths in the Indian Olympic team for next year. But the 33-year-old prefers to stay in the present and not think too far ahead.

“There’s a lot to play for and I’m in a position where I’m not getting into a lot of events. I’ve just played four events in the current PGA Tour season so far. So I have to make the most of my opportunities.

“Without getting too far ahead into the future for other teams or Olympics or so many things that we have to play for and so many things that we aspire to do for ourselves, for our country, I think it all starts with right now and what I need to do right now and play well in the moment,” said Anirban, who is affectionately known as Baan to all those close to him.

While he was in India, Lahiri, a two-time participant at the Presidents Cup, also cherished the time he spent with younger Indian golfers like Udayan Mane and Chikkarangappa.



Anirban said, “It was fantastic. You know, they’re family. At least that’s how I like to think about it. Chikka’s like a younger brother to me and so are a lot of other kids that I worked with that work with Vijay (Divecha) at his academy.

“So for me to be able to spend so much time at home with my friends and my family and my extended family was great. More than them picking my brains, I picked their brains. I try to learn from them. I try and pass on whatever knowledge I have or whatever experience I have and I enjoy doing it, too. I see so much talent, I see so much potential that sometimes I can’t help it, I’ll reach out to them and I’ll probably give them advice even when they don’t want it. So to that extent I feel old, I guess, like a veteran in some aspects.”

When asked what has been the silver lining for him this year despite all the constraints posed by the pandemic, Lahiri reflected on his time spent away from the game earlier this year.

“I came to India for the Indian Open and we all know what happened after that. So yeah, I think being away from the game for 70 something days, I didn’t hit a golf ball, I didn’t have my golf clubs with me. They were at the academy and that was a challenge. It’s probably the longest I’ve been away from my clubs for 20 years, maybe more.

“I think that also gives you some perspective. It builds the hunger to come back and motivates you, something that can suffer when you have an extended period of bad golf like I did, so that was the big take-away for me,” said the seven-time international winner. **GP**



## DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN INDIAN GOLF

# WITH INCEPTION OF PGTI, ASHOK KUMAR DOMINATES INAUGURAL SEASON WITH FIVE WINS

Indian professional golf witnessed the dawn of a new era with the birth of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) in September 2006. PGTI, the controlling body for professional golf in India, was formed as a 'body by the players for the players' which was to operate in the same manner as most other international professional tours.

The inaugural season in 2006-07 witnessed the staging of 10 events with the total prize money on offer being Rs.4.6 crore. The first season held between October 2006 and June 2007 featured a host of new tournaments as well as some long-standing events on the Indian domestic tour such as the TATA Open, IndianOil XtraPremium Masters and SRF All India Matchplay.

Delhi-based Ashok Kumar dominated the season with five victories, including three on the trot and emerged Order of Merit champion as he ended up with prize money earnings of Rs. 44,17,875. Ashok won the IndianOil XtraPremium Masters, Solaris Global Green Open, SRF All India Matchplay, CG Open and Color Plus Open. He claimed top-10 finishes in all his eight starts.

Jyoti Randhawa was the other shining star during the season as he posted wins in all his three appearances. In other words, Randhawa went undefeated on the PGTI in 2006-07. He won the BILT Open (the first event of the tour), AIS Golf Open and DLF Masters and clinched second place on the merit list.

SSP Chawrasia and Harmeet Kahlon also



Ashok Kumar poses with the Solaris Global Green Open trophy, it was one of the five events he won during the season



Jyoti Randhawa in action at the BILT Open, one of the three events he won during the season

### PGTI SEASON IN REVIEW 2006-07



Harmeet Kahlon poses with the Emaar-MGF PGTI Championship trophy



SSP Chawrasia seen teeing off at the TATA Open which he went on to win

tasted success during the season as the former bagged the TATA Open while the latter emerged triumphant at the Emaar-MGF PGTI Championship. Chawrasia, who had seven top-10s, secured third place on the money list while Kahlon took sixth place.

Digvijay Singh was among the most consistent performers with seven top-10s. As a result, Digvijay finished fourth on the Order of Merit. Rookie Gaganjeet Bhullar was a spot behind in fifth place in the season's rankings thanks to his three top-10s. ☐





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