

GOLF

Golf association tackles problem of slow play

Under the best of circumstances, sunny skies, warm temperatures and ideal course conditions, golf is difficult to play.

Slicing, three-putting and failed bunker shots are just a few of the maladies that plague average golfers — no matter how nice the weather. In recent years, slow play at area courses has further increased frustration levels.

Eighteen holes used to take less than five hours to play. Now, it can take up to six hours to complete a round.

"One of the biggest things I see," said Whispering Willows assistant golf pro Mark Peterson, "is players just not being ready to hit the ball when it's their turn."

The problem hasn't gone unnoticed. The Golf Association of Michigan, a state-wide organization of amateur golfers whose purpose is to represent, promote and serve the best interests of

the game, is trying to tackle the problem head-on, according to Director of Communications Tonin Branch.

The association is conducting a series of "Pick up the Pace" days at courses around the state. Branch said new methods of speeding play are being introduced as well as information gathered to help find a solution.

"We're trying to find out what we need to do to help solve the problem," she said.

The first seminar was conducted in mid-May at the Majestic at Lake Walden in Livingston County. More than 300 golfers took part in the day-long event.

Three ideas emerged from the gathering.

First was "forecaddening." A ranger is placed near the fairway of a hole where balls are routinely lost to help spot tee shots.

Next was positive rangering.

Clear course markings, such as where the next hole is located, is

the main component of this idea, Branch said.

"We received the most positive response from that suggestion," she added.

"Pace-setter" tees were also tried at the Majestic. Under this arrangement, rangers would advise slower players to hit from tees 200 yards in front of a hole's forward teeing area.

"This has worked well in Texas," Branch said.

Ideally, GAM would like to see average playing time at about 4 1/2 hours on the state's 759 public courses. Branch said the association will likely make recommendations on speeding play to its members this fall, but will continue to gather data over the next few years.

Livonia's Whispering Willows may be one course willing to listen to GAM's ideas. Peterson said the municipal facility, one of three in the city, has seen a steady increase in golfers the

past few seasons.

"There has been a substantial difference the last two years," he said. "We're up five to eight percent this year."

A combination of factors have slowed play at his course, Peterson added.

Greens fees are somewhat less expensive than other courses. The cheaper rates tend to attract more beginning golfers that may not be as wise to the etiquette and pace of the game.

At St. John's Golf Club in Plymouth, slow play isn't a big problem. Having a large and capable rangering staff is key, according to Justin Lauer, director of golf.

Rangers use green, yellow and red flags, just like a stoplight, to silently inform golfers if they're keeping pace.

"It allows our rangers to manage a whole section of the course without necessarily having to talk to each group of golfers," Lauer said.

Playing time at the 18-hole course averages 4 to 4 1/2 hours.

"We pride ourselves on having a good pace at St. John's," Lauer said.

Longer time between tee offs has kept things running smoothly at the Majestic, said golf pro Ed Cashman.

Instead of eight or nine minutes, which is the norm at most courses, the Livingston County facility has 12 minutes between starts.

"It spreads the groups out a bit more," Cashman said.

Players can help maintain a steady pace, Peterson said.

"When it's your turn to play you should be ready to go," he said.

A lot of time is also wasted on putting greens. Peterson said players should skip etiquette and putt-putt until you're done unless you're in somebody's line," he added.

SOFTBALL

WESTERN LAKES ACTIVITIES ASSN.
1998 ALL-CONFERENCE SOFTBALL

ALL-WLAA FIRST TEAM

Pitchers: Gretchen Hudson, junior, Plymouth Canton; Kami Scott, junior, Walled Lake Central; Ali Ault, junior, Farmington Harrison.

Catcher: Ali Ault, junior, Farmington Harrison.

Infielders: Kelly Hale, senior, Walled Lake Central; Elizabeth Elmer, junior, Plymouth Canton; Lynn Livonius, senior, North Farmington; Dayna Aspinwall, Walled Lake Western.

Outfielders: Kelly Hart, senior, Walled Lake Central; Melissa Brown, junior, Plymouth Canton; Becky Vosler, senior, Farmington.

ALL-LEAGUE DIVISION

Pitchers: Mickey Spitz, senior, North Farmington; Melissa Mytty, junior, Farmington; Catherine Katie Devereux, senior, North Farmington.

Infielders: Bridget Quinn, sophomore, W.L. Central; Samantha Crews, sophomore, John Glenn; Katie Goren, senior, John Glenn; Malinda Higgins, senior, W.L. Central.

Outfielders: Diana Gustaf, senior, North Farmington; Kristin Brown, junior, Farmington; Katie Miller, sophomore, W.L. Central.

All-stars: Samantha McComb, freshman, North Farmington.

ALL-WESTERN DIVISION

Pitcher: Adrienne Doyle, junior, Churchill.

Catcher: Kristin Dewick, junior, Churchill.

Infielders: Billie Cavallaro, senior, W.L. Western; Jackie Ziem, senior, Franklin; Sara Freese, senior, Canton; Paula McKernan, sophomore, Churchill.

All-stars: Amanda Rice, junior, Northville; Becky Mize, junior, Canton; Katina Vitanis, freshman, Harrison; Lori Andrusak, junior, Farmington; Angie Balconi, junior, W.L. Western.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Lakes Division — John Glenn: Megan Brady, senior; Nikki Reisinger, junior; Abby Massey, freshman; Farmington: Kelly DePoter, senior; Angie Lutzman, junior; Tricia Krause, sophomore; North Farmington: Katie Frazier, senior; Courtney King, freshman; Lauren Queltette, freshman; Randi Taub, junior; Salem: Stefanie Volpe, senior; Becky Esler, senior; Kasey Prosky, senior; W.L. Central: Laura Hunter, senior; Stacy Brinkman, freshman; Theresa McDonald, junior.

Western Division — Harrison: Brittany Maser, junior; Amy Robie, senior; Lindsey Emmert, sophomore; W.L. Western: Heather Glosien, Maria D'Agostino, Jenny Kosherach; Franklin: Kelly Young, junior; Jamie Linden, sophomore; Tara Morrill, sophomore; Churchill: Jessica Schulte, senior; Sarah Stiles, senior; Canton: Erica Hanz, senior; Jenny Flaherty, junior; Carrie Kovachewich, junior; Northville: Jennifer Cerverly.

WESTERN LAKES STANDINGS

(Division records)

Lakes Division: 1. W.L. Central, 9-1; 2. North Farmington, 7-3; (tie) Farmington and Salem, 5-5; 5. (tie) Stevenson and John Glenn, 2-8.

Western Division: 1. Canton, 9-1; 2. Harrison, 7-3; 3. Churchill, 6-4; 4. W.L. Western, 6-5; Franklin, 3-7; 6. Northville, 3-9.

(overall conference records)

Lakes Division: W.L. Central, 14-2; North Farmington, 11-5; Farmington, 9-7; Salem, 8-6; Stevenson, 4-12; John Glenn, 2-14.

Western Division: Canton, 13-3; Harrison, 12-4; Churchill, 8-8; W.L. Western, 7-9; Franklin, 6-10; Northville, 2-14.

WLAA champion: Plymouth Canton. Canton defeated Walled Lake Central, 2-0.

Golf honors

from page D1

and was medalist in five dual matches this season.

"She remained determined and focused in post-season tournament play."

Mazzoni was Stevenson's MVP.

Kristen Smith, senior, Mercy: The four-year varsity letterwinner capped an outstanding career with a fourth in the Catholic League (83), sixth in the regional (81) and an 88-93 at the state meet.

Serving her second year as captain, Smith averaged 44.3 per nine and 86.1 in tournaments. She made All-Catholic League three consecutive years and is nominated for All-State.

"Kristen is a team leader who will be missed next season," Kowalski said. "She was the stabilizing force the past two years as the elder of the squad. Kristen encourages the younger players to shoot their best scores."

Angela Harbar, junior, Mercy: Her best effort came at the regional where she carded a 79 to finish third followed by a 20th place finish at the state class A meet at Forest Akers (84-88).

In the Catholic League meet at St. John's, Harbar finished seventh with a 92. Harbar edged a fourth at the Oakland County Tournament with an 87.

For the season, Harbar averaged 44.1 per nine and 87.1 in tournaments.

She has been an All-Catholic League pick three straight years and is nominated for All-State.

"Angela is just a joy to coach because she has a lot of fun on the golf course," Kowalski said. "I look forward to one more year of Angela's laughter, smiles and improving scores."

Cassie Jemison, sophomore, Farmington: She attends Harrison where she plays basketball and ran track last year. Jemison won the regional at Oak Pointe with an impressive 77. She also took fourth in the WLAA with a 93 and scored 89 in the state finals. She also took an eighth place at Oakland County.

Jemison, who averaged 44.2 per nine, was a dual-meet or tournament medalist six times this season.

"Cassie is the first Farmington girl golfer to qualify for the state finals," Farmington coach Ann Marie Sopha said. "Cassie's natural athletic ability and great work ethic has paved her way to the success she achieved in her first year of competitive golf."

"Cassie has a powerful, efficient swing and, consequently, is a long hitter. But her putting is perhaps the best part of her game."

Jennifer Borowicz
Farmington Hills MercyMara Mazzoni
Livonia StevensonKristen Smith
Farmington Hills MercyAngela Harbar
Farmington Hills MercyErin Borowicz
Farmington Hills MercyCassie Jemison
Farmington1998 ALL-OBSERVER
GIRLS GOLF TEAM

FIRST TEAM

Jennifer Borowicz, junior, Farm. Mercy
Kristen Smith, senior, Farm. Mercy
Mara Mazzoni, junior, Livonia Stevenson
Erin Borowicz, freshman, Farm. Mercy
Angela Harbar, junior, Farm. Mercy
Cassie Jemison, sophomore, Farmington

SECOND TEAM

Megan Vollick, senior, Livonia Churchill
Sarah Canlit, junior, Farm. Hills Mercy
Lauren Boscher, senior, Livonia Churchill
Curt Janis, senior, Livonia Stevenson
Laura Cunliffe, senior, Farmington

THIRD TEAM

Held Wegmuller, junior, Farm. Mercy
Tanya Foster, sophomore, Farm. Mercy
Lindsay Desnoyers, sophomore, Mercy
Gretchen Siebert, junior, Livonia Ladywood
Katie Zimmerman, junior, Liv. Ladywood

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Franklin: Amanda Szabetski, sophomore; Megan O'Connor, sophomore; Stevenson: Carl Heppner, sophomore; Jessica Makowski, sophomore; Ladywood: Decca Anderson, sophomore; Sarah Townsend, senior; Farmington: Carrie May, junior; Stephanie Unger, senior; Mercy: Corrie Greenhalgh, junior; Laura Huchesa, junior; Churchill: Ashley Johnson, sophomore; Julia McLaughlin, sophomore; Jennie Lukas, sophomore; Canton: Julie Dzusak, sophomore; Christina Slupak, freshman; Salem: Angie Jones, sophomore; Jessica Hedges, senior.

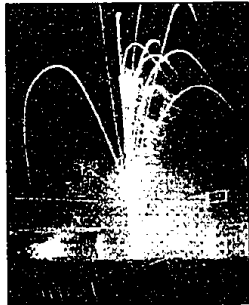


Be There!

The Observer & Eccentric wants to send you and three of your friends (or family members) to a Friday Night Fireworks Game!

1998 Friday Night
Tigers Games

June 19 vs. Kansas City Royals
June 26 vs. Cincinnati Reds
July 10 vs. Toronto Blue Jays
July 17 vs. Boston Red Sox
August 7 vs. Seattle Mariners
August 14 vs. Oakland Athletics
September 4 vs. Cleveland Indians

THE
Observer & Eccentric
NEWSPAPERS

101WRIE

50
YEARS

ENTRY FORM FOR THE JUNE 19 or JUNE 26 GAME

Must be received by June 12

Which current Tiger's pitcher went to the 1997 All Star Game?

Answer:

Name _____

Address _____

City/Zip Code _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

Mail this form to:

Tigers '98 Fireworks
C/o The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers
36251 Schoolcraft Rd.
Livonia, MI 48150

We'll pick 30 winners for each game. In all entries with the correct answer. Each winner will receive four (4) Lower, 1-week Reserved Seat passes. Passes will be mailed to each winner. Winners announced in paper Thurs., June 18.

Employees of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, the Detroit Tigers, Inc. and their families are not eligible to win.

Steps to
Greatness

Presented by the Livonia Chamber of Commerce
and the Livonia Observer

The first step in your Steps to Greatness is designed to excite,
enhance, and educate you and your staff

TOPICS

- ★ Integrity in Sales ★ How to Build Endless Referrals
- ★ How to Qualify a Prospect
- ★ Winning Without Intimidation

Featuring National

Speaker and Author

Local Speakers include:

Bob Burg
Million Dollar Round Table SpeakerRobert Shenefelt
Great White North
Distribution ServicesRich Levinson
RHL & Associates

Cost of seminar
includes Bob's
book and
12-cassette
package.
Retail Value:
\$146

"I've shared the platform with the guy. He will give you the information that will enable you to build your sales career. If you are really interested in a career in selling, listen to what Bob Burg has to say... You will be glad you did!" — Zig Ziglar

—INTERMISSION ENTERTAINMENT—
THREE MEN AND A TENOR

SPONSORED BY—

Exhibit
WorksCitizens
BankFRANKLIN COVEY
COLLEGE

HURRY! SEATING IS LIMITED!

Thursday, October 8, 1998 • Burton Manor • 7:30 - 4:30 p.m.
For Reservations, call 734-427-2122 • FAX 734-427-6055
Visit our Web Site at www.livonia.org/steps

\$149 All Chamber
Members:

\$199 Non-Members

Advance payments only.
Check Visa, MasterCard

INCLUDES BREAKFAST AND LUNCH