

Minocqua Country Club gets picked to host 2024 Wisconsin State Open

O'Reilly: 'It's an amazing golf course in an amazing part of the state'

By Trevor Greene
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

Minocqua Country Club (MCC) has been scheduled by the Professional Golfers Association's (PGA) Wisconsin Section to host the 104th Wisconsin State Open Championship in August of 2024. MCC board member Jeff Hoyer has been appointed as chairman of the committee overseeing the Wisconsin State Open.

The State Open is the pre-eminent PGA tournament in the state, and Hoyer said to his knowledge, the tournament hasn't been played north of Wausau in its century's long history.

He said the club was informed it was chosen to play host earlier this summer.

By hosting the State Open next year, MCC will follow SentryWorld Golf Course in

Stevens Point, which hosted both the U.S. Senior Open and the State Open this year.

Hoyer said MCC will challenge the state's top professionals with its incorporation of native grasses, rolling fairways and challenging green complexes.

In 2018, MCC hosted the Wisconsin Golf Association's most prestigious event, the State Amateur, as well as the 2020 Wisconsin State Senior Amateur.

"The interesting thing is we don't have to do anything to change the course layout," Hoyer said of MCC hosting the State Open. "The Wisconsin PGA liked the setup exactly the way it is. So we're not lengthening anything, we're not changing or adding any tee boxes or doing anything like that at all. So it's just the way the course is set up right now."

The tournament will be played from Aug. 19-21, with 18 holes being played by participants on both Monday and Tuesday, and then 36 holes on Wednesday, the final day.

The field will consist of 156

players, two of which are MCC's very own; local PGA professional David Kemnitz and 2023 club champion John Johannes.

Wisconsin-natives and former PGA Tour professionals Jerry Kelly and Steve Stricker have been dominating the PGA Tour Championships — the professional senior tour — this last year, Stricker being number one on the Charles Schwab Cup money list and Kelly being number 10 through Sept. 17. Stricker has also won three of the tour's five major championships in 2023.

Prior to making a name for themselves on golf's biggest stage, the two combined for six State Open titles from 1987 to 2000.

The two Wisconsin golf legends are honorary members of MCC, and Hoyer said invitations have been sent to both if they want to play in the State Open next year.

Mike O'Reilly, president of the Wisconsin PGA and head golf professional and director of golf operations at Blackwolf Run and Whistling Straits, said MCC was chosen by both the board of the Wisconsin PGA and its staff.

"It's an amazing golf course in an amazing part of the state," he said. "The State Open doesn't get up there to that area too often, but we wanted to take advantage of the great golf course up there."

O'Reilly said he's played MCC several times and it's "definitely a good test of golf to host our state's biggest event."

He said the greens are very receptive, but can be difficult to read, as well as the tree-lined nature of the course that will force players to keep their ball in play off the tee.

Eight qualifying tournaments for players who aren't already exempt will be held



BRETT LABORE/LAKELAND TIMES

Brian Brodell attempts a putt at the ninth hole during the Wisconsin PGA Pro-Assistant Monday, Sept. 18 at Minocqua Country Club.

across the state to determine the rest of the tournament's field. Timber Ridge Golf Club in Minocqua will be one of the qualifying sites.

"The State Open is just that, it is open to anyone," O'Reilly said. "So this is professionals and amateurs. The only difference is the amateurs have a cap on what they can earn or win based upon their amateur status. Because it's an open event and open to everyone, this is the biggest tournament that we have in the state of Wisconsin each year."

Wisconsin PGA Pro-Assistant

The Wisconsin PGA Pro-Assistant took place on Monday at Minocqua Country Club. The event offers a sneak peak to golfers at what Minocqua Country Club has to offer for next year's Wisconsin State Open.

There were two divisions that competed in the event.

The traditional division featured 56 teams. Two-player teams consisted of a head professional, director of golf or individual in general management, paired up with an eligible assistant professional from their facility.

The second division featured 10 other teams. These teams had two Wisconsin PGA professionals working for the same company or facility, regardless of their PGA classification.

Jason Rasmussen and Jake Wisniewski from Ozaukee Country Club were the traditional division winners, shooting a 65.

Joe Leonard and Shaun Finley from The Oaks Golf Course were the second division winners with a 65.

Brett LaBore of The Lakeland Times contributed to this report.

Trevor Greene may be reached via email at trevor.greene@lakelandtimes.com.



BRETT LABORE/LAKELAND TIMES

Andy Gierny hits his shot out of the bunker at the fourth hole during the Wisconsin PGA Pro-Assistant Monday, Sept. 18 at Minocqua Country Club.

Soccer

From page 25

softly, they let (McNerney) shoot from a distance. It should not have went in, but it's gonna happen. We see it on higher levels where those kind of mistakes do happen which is hopefully Talan will shake it off," coach Myshchyshyn said. "He's a good goalie, and steps up and moves on. He should have a short memory — good goalie on things like that. No wor-

ries about that at all. It just happened. You could tell, after they fell behind, they geared up, they stepped up, and they went at it."

The score was knotted up at 1-1. Out of the 80 minutes of soccer, 79:41 was played with a tied score.

"I also felt the momentum did not switch. It's 1-1, the game was tied, but the boys were still playing hard. What a fun game. The games like this, that's where you grow as players just because they were in it," coach

Myshchyshyn said. "(Washburn) was older team, typically we play as well, but this was a good playing, older (team). I want to say they have eight seniors on that field. Very happy with the boys."

Over the final 10 minutes, the Thunderbirds had the majority of possession. They used passing to their advantage, forcing the Castle Guards to stay on the defensive.

"We want to possess, we want them to chase. This

way they are getting tired rather than if they possess, we get exhausted. It was nice to see the boys settle, paid attention. These kids are very, very coachable," coach Myshchyshyn said. "The game delivered what we were expecting. At some point they stopped chasing. Maybe partially fitness, but at same time I feel like it's not only what they did, it's what the boys, Lakeland, did to put them on the back foot. (It was a) very good game."

Washburn kept the Thun-

derbirds in check, thwarting any opportunities Lakeland created offensively late in the game.

Up next, the Thunderbirds (8-1-1, 4-1) play a rare Friday night game tonight at Northland Pines High School in Eagle River. The game starts at 7 p.m. Lakeland will then travel to Ashland for a non-conference contest tomorrow at 11 a.m.

Brett LaBore may be reached at brett@lakelandtimes.com or sports@lakelandtimes.com.

Mercer volleyball sweeps Ironwood, Mich.

Brett LaBore
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

Mercer volleyball looked to stay undefeated in the month of September with a non-conference match against an old conference opponent.

The Tigers beat Ironwood, Mich. 3-0 (25-19, 25-13, 25-23) on Monday.

"I am pleased with the progress we are making. Things are starting to come together for us, and it is fun to watch," coach Robyn Schoeneman said. "Ironwood is a strong team and should be in the coming years as well. I am glad we were able to get this

match in to prepare us for competitive couple of weeks ahead."

Eiley Schoeneman and Jenny Klopatek did a little bit of everything for the Tigers. Eiley Schoeneman had 14 kills, two aces, seven digs and three assists. Klopatek totaled six kills, three aces, five

digs and 12 assists.

Rylinn Rossi had three solo blocks and two aces. Anya Brandenburg had two aces while Ava Milashus finished with 11 digs. Amber Eith picked up five digs, Ryley Saarnio two blocks and Tyla Tourtillott three digs.

"Jenny Klopatek and

Eiley Schoeneman led the way for us, along with some great play by Amber Eith, Rylinn Rossi, Ava Milashus, Ryley Saarnio, Tyla Tourtillott and Anya Brandenburg," coach Schoeneman said.

Up next, the Tigers (9-4, 3-0) return to conference play with a

road game at Butternut today at 5:45 p.m. They'll then head to Northwestern Maple tomorrow for the Zosel Invitational starting at 9 a.m.

Brett LaBore may be reached at brett@lakelandtimes.com or sports@lakelandtimes.com.