



Play Golf America

Play Golf America Programs Continue Growth in 2010

Play Golf America has firmly established itself as a highly respected initiative for impacting the growth and business of the game. PGA Professionals, golf facilities and most importantly, consumers, participated in Play Golf America programs at record levels during 2010, with nearly 7,000 facilities hosting at least one Play Golf America program, and a record 7,338 PGA Professionals qualifying for The PGA's President's Council on Growing the Game for their player development efforts.

Play Golf America, an innovative growth-of-the-game initiative was launched in 2004 as an industry-wide comprehensive marketing campaign designed to increase participation among new and existing golfers, and attract former golfers back to the game. Equipped with the PlayGolfAmerica.com Web site as its foundation, Play Golf America promoted the simple message for Americans to "Get out and play golf. Play more golf. And play better golf."

Throughout 2010, Play Golf America focused on building upon successful programs. Get Golf Ready was once again the leading initiative, with other traditional programs including PGA Free Fitting & Trade Up Month, PGA Free Lesson Month, American Express Women's Golf Month and Family Golf Month. Collectively, these promotions made a \$30 million impact on the industry and saw nearly 300,000 participants.

The focus of Play Golf America was expanded in 2010 to build out The PGA's energized commitment to a youth development strategy and the redesign of the PGA's Junior Medalist and PGA First Swing programs. A product of this was the development of the PGA Sports Academy.

The PGA of America developed Play Golf America with the support of Allied Associations including: the LPGA, National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA), PGA Tour, USGA and others GOLF 20/20 Conference participants. The program utilizes PlayGolfAmerica.com to serve as a link for consumers to access fun, affordable and informative programs in their area.



PGA Professional Tray Shehee, representing the Colorado PGA Section, instructs a participant at the Community Relations Youth Golf Clinic, held during the 71st Senior PGA Championship at the Common Ground Golf Course in Aurora, Colo.

■ GET GOLF READY

As the featured program for Play Golf America, Get Golf Ready is an industry-wide, nationally branded program designed to bring new golfers into the game in a fast, fun and affordable way and to bring former golfers back to the sport.

Get Golf Ready was created to expand golf's participant base by providing education and instruction at golf facilities throughout the country. Participating facilities administered Get Golf Ready by providing personnel and resources to promote and staff the program, ensure compliance with guidelines and provide periodic reports regarding the status and success of the program.

The objective is to deliver a consistent Get Golf Ready experience at an affordable price for adult consumers from coast-to-coast, where students learn the game through a series of group lessons and transition to on-going playing opportunities. By participating in this experience, students are well on their way to becoming bona fide golfers.

During the first two years, more than 1,450 facilities are certified to host Get Golf Ready and have introduced

golf to more than 34,000 students. Host facilities averaged 31 participants who spent an average of \$900 on golf, generating an additional \$19.9 million in revenue during the past two years. In 2010, 84 percent of the students continued to play and practice in their first year after completing the program and 75 percent continued to play and practice in their second year following the program.

■ JUNIOR GOLF

The PGA of America's ongoing mission to support golf's next generation was enhanced by launching the PGA Sports Academy, a fun, systematic approach to growing junior participation with PGA Professionals at the forefront of the experience. Building off the pre-existing PGA First Swing and PGA Medalist programs, the newly-branded curriculum made its debut at the 58th PGA Merchandise Show, with its focus on developing core golfers who will have a path to continue to play golf socially or competitively based upon each individual's desires.

The PGA Sports Academy's curriculum blends five core elements in offering a phased approach to overall mental and physical youth development. The elements can be integrated into existing junior programs - or be fully adopted as a turn-key solution by facilities that are seeking a fresh approach to junior programming.

The five core elements of the PGA Sports Academy are:

- Golf Skills
- Physical Skills, Fitness and Nutrition
- Assessments
- Sportsmanship, Rules and Etiquette
- Play Activities and On-Course Experiences

The physical skills, fitness and nutrition elements were a key addition to the curriculum. As part of the 2010 PGA Player Development Host Facility Survey, it was revealed that only 22 percent of PGA Professionals responding indicated that they offered fitness elements as part of their youth programming. However, 70 percent indicated that they would like to adopt those components in their programs.

The PGA Sports Academy was piloted by 50 PGA Professionals this summer. The feedback they provided was analyzed and will be used in updating the curriculum and overall direction. The next version of the PGA Sports Academy is targeted to be updated by March. This program is designed to remain an ongoing work in progress, thus updated versions will continue to be developed.

Results from Host Facility Player Development Survey showed that PGA Professional involvement with junior golf remained steady in 2010:

- 7,536 PGA Professionals offered an average of six junior camps with 72 juniors, projecting to more than 545,000 juniors receiving instruction
- 1,852 PGA Professionals offered junior leagues with an average of 56 participants

■ PGA FREE FITTING & TRADE-UP MONTH (APRIL)

In the fifth year for PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month, 3,002 PGA and LPGA Professionals across the country provided free 15-minute expert equipment fitting sessions, as they assisted 33,075 consumers in finding the appropriate equipment to help them improve their games. The PGA of America teamed with Golf Digest, the PGA Trade-In Network and the PGA.com Value Guide to sponsor this equipment-themed consumer promotion at golf facilities around the country during April 2010. Based on reports from PGA Professionals, PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month generated a combined median spend of \$3,700 per facility.

■ PGA FREE LESSON MONTH (MAY)

Celebrating its 13th Anniversary, PGA Free Lesson Month continued to be the mainstay in helping grow the game since the program was introduced in 1998. Throughout the month of May, 4,754 PGA and LPGA Professionals nationwide reached new golfers and help existing golfers improve their games with free, 10-minute golf lessons. In 2010, PGA and LPGA Professionals gave more than 73,750 free lessons and reported generating a

combined median spend of \$1,460 from consumers.

From the beginning, Golf Digest has been an active partner with PGA Free Lesson Month, by promoting the program on several May issue covers. Over the years, Golf World and Golf Channel have also been involved.

■ WOMEN'S GOLF MONTH (JUNE)

Women's Golf Month is aimed at increasing the participation of women in golf while making learning and playing golf fun in a women-friendly environment. Host facilities offer complimentary golf instruction, playing opportunities and other activities to promote golf as a year-round sport and recreation for women.

In 2010, 1,435 participating facilities welcomed 61,225 participants. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$6,110 per facility.

Women's Golf Month is an industry collaboration and is co-managed by the EWGA (Executive Women's Golf Association), Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and The PGA of America. Other leading organizations in golf, including the PGA TOUR, Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) and the United States Golf Association (USGA), provide ongoing support as well.

■ FAMILY GOLF MONTH (JULY)

While Play Golf America was originally slated for adult player development, a cultural shift that placed a high demand on family time created the necessity to expand the Play Golf America target audience to families. Throughout July, participating facilities offer family golf clinics and family golf play days for a nominal fee. Popular programs designed to motivate families to play golf have included: Kids Play Free, Family Play Days, family tees, plus other cross promotions. These programs provide a structured, yet casual opportunity for families to learn and play the game of golf together and promote golf as a regular family recreation activity for all participants. In 2010, there were 98,100 consumers participating in Family Golf Month at 1,250 facilities nationwide. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$4,210 per facility.

■ TAKE YOUR DAUGHTER TO THE COURSE WEEK (JULY)

The National Golf Course Owners Association teamed with The PGA of America to promote "Take Your Daughter to the Course Week." Last year marked the program's 10th year and the fourth year that it was promoted under the Play Golf America marketing umbrella. Take Your Daughter to the Course Week was designed to introduce young girls to the game and encourage family interaction on the course. The 2011 Take Your Daughter to the Course Week is scheduled for July 4-10.

■ AMERICAN EXPRESS / PGA FRIEND OF A CARDMEMBER

As an affordable approach to PGA Professional instruction, American Express® Cardmembers were invited to take a lesson from one of 2,200 participating PGA Professionals, pay with an American Express Card and bring a friend at no additional cost. In 2010, participating PGA Professionals averaged 16 lessons and reported generating a combined median spend of \$1,454 per facility.

■ PGA FAMILY COURSE PROGRAM

The PGA of America teamed with U.S. Kids Golf to launch the PGA Family Course Program in 2007. This nationwide initiative provides PGA Professionals a means to make golf more enjoyable for all members of a family, regardless of age and ability. U.S. Kids Golf produces PGA Family Tee Markers, which will enable any golf course to make the transition into a beginner-friendly “short course.” Participating facilities are recognized and promoted as “PGA Family Courses” including a complete list on PlayGolfAmerica.com.

It is reported that more than 850 facilities offer the PGA Family Course or similar programs. In 2010, they averaged 587 rounds on these tees at the affordable mean rate of \$14, resulting in a \$8,220 impact to the facility.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA DAYS

The PGA of America expanded its free-to-consumer Play Golf America Days in 2010 with 56 events scheduled nationwide. More than 16,540 consumers attended the 2010 events, taking advantage of free 10-minute lessons from PGA Professionals and had an opportunity to demo the latest golf equipment from participating equipment sponsors. More than 679 PGA Professionals—an average of 12 per event—provided instruction.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA SPECIAL EVENTS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PGA Professionals were the driving force behind several successful Play Golf America special events held in conjunction with The PGA of America’s high-profile events and other industry programs. In 2010, 67 Play Golf America special events were conducted in conjunction with the Senior PGA Championship, the PGA Championship, spring training and major league baseball games, an NHL hockey game, collegiate football and baseball games, NASCAR and several PGA TOUR and LPGA Tour Events. A special Play Golf America event was held on Wall Street in conjunction with the 2010 Ryder Cup captain’s pick press conference. These events connected with more than 57,000 golf enthusiasts.

The highlight was providing free Play Golf America activities on-site of golf’s major championships. Promoted as “PGA Learning Centers presented by American Express,” PGA Professionals provided a variety of free 10-minute lessons and golf instruction to spectators attending the Senior PGA Championship at Colorado Golf Club and the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits, where more than 50,700 fans were treated to these experiences.

■ EXECUTIVE WOMEN’S GOLF ASSOCIATION (EWGA)

Since its inception in 1991, more than 100,000 women have benefited from membership in the EWGA (Executive Women’s Golf Association). The EWGA is a tax-exempt organization that provides women the opportunity to learn, play and enjoy golf for business and for fun. In 1991, the EWGA had 1,500 members. Today, the EWGA has grown into a community of nearly 16,000 members in 125 local chapters across the United States and in Canada. The PGA of America has been a proud supporter of the EWGA over the years. In 2001, The PGA expanded its relationship and has since provided more than \$500,000 in grants to help support the growth of EWGA chapters and membership nationwide.

■ DIVERSITY

An important strategic direction for Play Golf America is promoting the Game to everyone across the country, utilizing proactive initiatives to foster diversification. In 2010, minorities accounted for a significant portion of participation in various programs, including Get Golf Ready (25 percent), Consumer Events (32 percent) and PlayGolfAmerica.com on-line registrations (26 percent). These rates are much higher than the data provided by the National Golf Foundation, which reports that minorities represent just over 14 percent of the overall golf population.

A variety of special events and Play Golf America Days were targeted to attract diverse audiences. In 2010 there were 16 events targeting women with 3,600 people attending, with nine additional events targeting minority communities with 1,850 people attending.

Students participating in Play Golf America University continue to come from a diverse population. Of the 2,500 students taking the College Get Golf Ready / Learn to Play Classes in 2009-2010, women accounted for 27 percent with 30 percent minority. Under a suggestion from The PGA, Corey Pavin selected two historically black colleges to receive support from the 2010 Ryder Cup Outreach Program - Grambling State University and Spelman College.

■ GOLF FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Promoting golf to individuals with disabilities continues to be a focus for Play Golf America. PlayGolfAmerica.com hosts a searchable listing of more than 1,000 PGA Professionals experienced in instructing individuals with disabilities. As part of PGA Free Lesson Month, these professionals were cross promoted and reported giving nearly 800 ten-minute lessons to individuals with disabilities. The PGA also expanded its relationship with Dennis Walters to bring his inspirational show to 10 special events where special interest groups were attending.

■ PATRIOT GOLF DAY

Patriot Golf Day began in 2007, inspired by Major Dan Rooney, a PGA Professional and USGA member from Broken Arrow, Okla and founder of the Folds of Honor Foundation.

The nationwide campaign, held during the entire Labor Day Weekend, asks golfers at public facilities to donate a minimum of one dollar in addition to their greens fee, while golfers at private facilities asked to make contributions to benefit the Folds of Honor Foundation, to provide post secondary educational scholarships for children and spouses of military service men and women killed or disabled while serving our Great Nation..

The fourth annual campaign resulted in donations of more than \$2.8 million from 4,000 facilities. Thanks to PGA Professionals, the Folds of Honor Foundation has been able to award more than 1,600 scholarships to date. Patriot Golf Day is jointly supported by The PGA of America and the United States Golf Association. The 2011 Patriot Golf Day will take place during the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2-5, 2011.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA AWARDS

Once again, The PGA of America paid tribute to those PGA Professionals and PGA Sections that demonstrated extraordinary efforts in conducting and/or supporting Play Golf America initiatives to grow participation in the game, by presenting both the President's Plaque and the Herb Graffis Award at the Section and National levels.

The 2010 President's Plaque was awarded to PGA Professional Andy Barbin, PGA general manager at Chesapeake Bay Golf Club in North East, Maryland for his dedication to growing the game for nearly two decades.

The Metropolitan PGA Section was selected as the recipient of the 2010 Herb Graffis Award, presented annually to a PGA Section for extraordinary or exemplary contributions in player development. The award is named for the late honorary PGA member and renowned golf journalist who was one of The PGA of America's most noted contributors.

New for 2010, The PGA named their Top 100 Play Golf America Performers for 2010 for their player development efforts. These Professionals have established themselves as proven leaders in growing the game and generating more business.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA RESOURCE CENTER

To support golf professionals with the development, promotion and management of Play Golf America programs, The PGA of America maintains the Play Golf America Resource Center, an online administrative resources area that is accessible to the program's host sites through PlayGolfAmerica.com. The Play Golf America Resource Center features a number of marketing tools and templates that participating facilities can download on a regular basis. To increase the utilization of these resources, The PGA of America created a new Custom Event Registration Tool that provides a streamlined process for facilities to schedule events associated with Play Golf America national promotions and post them on the website.

■ PLAYGOLFAMERICA.com

The PlayGolfAmerica.com website has served as the primary resource since 2004 to link consumers with fun, affordable golf programs. The site also combines a variety of dynamic content promoting various programs, along with a wealth of golf information with the intent for PlayGolfAmerica.com to be the central resource for golfers of all abilities. In 2010, nearly 4,952 facilities actively used PlayGolfAmerica.com to promote over 14,700 player development programs.

In addition, consumer traffic to PlayGolfAmerica.com resulted in 1.79 million page views, the second best year in the history of the site.