



NEWSLINKS

A publication of the Arizona Women's Golf Association | Dedicated to promoting golf for women in Arizona



Gross Winners Tui Selvaratnam and Mari Miezwa

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Help us reach more women golfers.... when you're finished reading this newsletter, pass it along to a friend.

2012 Season Opener

An outstanding start to the year!

This was a tournament of FIRSTS!

- It was the first time the Season Opener was played as a partner event
- It was the first time there was a full field of 104 with a waiting list
- It was the first time a record number of women played in an AWGA tournament for the first time.

It was a great opening to the 2012 AWGA golf season!

Tui and Mari have shared an Overall Champions title by winning the Four-Ball Championship in 2010. With the new partner format, this was a tournament meant for these two players to pair up once more. The Season Opener is one tournament Tui had not won to date so this added a new event to her list of accomplishments. "It felt good to win," she said, "but I was just excited to be playing since I haven't played since the State Team competition. It was a great start to the 2012 season." Mari agreed. "I, too, hadn't played competitive golf since last summer so it was fun to be able to get out there again."

"It's always great playing with Tui," Mari said. "When you play with someone of her caliber, you want to bring your best." Tui said she played well but gives much of the credit to Mari who "made putts from all over." Tui added, "She was really fun to watch." Mari's long putts helped but as she said, "it was definitely a team effort!"

Tui and Mari played consistently and came away with the victory. They both enjoyed the partner format noting that they are always fun but happen very seldom in true competition. Mari added, "I think it was great to change the format. It gave everyone another opportunity to play a team event."

The winners enjoyed playing golf in great weather and great company!

Season Opener Net Winners Mary Lu Esget and Joni Miller



These two women, both from Minnesota, met as Arizona winter residents in their Sun Lakes community. Joni and Mary Lu have only played together in one other AWGA tournament, the 2011 Partners Tournament. "Joni and I enjoyed it so much that we decided to play in the Season Opener," Mary Lu said. "I am partial to partner events so changing the format enticed me to play in it." Mary Lu and Joni were both surprised and excited about their Net Win title. Joni described her reaction as wonderfully surprised and shocked! Mary Lu has won Cottonwood tournaments over the years but considered this her first prestigious win!

Both ladies said they played well together. "We agreed to keep our eye on each hole and have fun," Joni said. They knew if they played their normal bogey golf, they'd be OK. And they were.

Mary Lu and Joni are both avid golfers who play several times a week. They are planning to play in more AWGA tournaments. "I love the camaraderie in partner events," Joni said. "The women in our group were friendly and fun." They complimented the course layout and condition. "We got first-class treatment at Whirlwind with great customer service," Mary Lu added. Because they had to finish their round at dusk, they had the unique pleasure of playing to the sound of coyotes howling on the last hole – creating some great memories!

Joni, Mary Lu and Joni's sister, Mary Anne Lofquist, also an AWGA member, own a business together, Fuzzy Heads, making knitted club head covers. Sometimes when you love something, it permeates your whole life. Golf has a way of doing that. Just ask Mary Lu and Joni!

Observations from First-time Season Opener Players

Janet Stanley, member of Terravita Golf Club, won 6th Flight Net with her partner, Jenice Molitor. She said they liked the Four-Ball format. She played a little over her handicap but said she had a great partner!

Linda Wenniger, Working Women's Golf Association, enjoyed her first experience in the Season Opener and especially liked the Four-Ball format and afternoon start time. A lesson learned was that she should not underestimate a short putt because it was the difference between winning and losing the 2nd Flight. Her motto is "Always play your best!"

Karen Goldberg, a member of Tatum Ranch Golf Club, was a first-time player in an AWGA tournament. According to Karen, she and her partner Kari Vanderslice, played well together as evidenced by their 7th Flight Gross win. Karen said AWGA tournament play is first-class high-quality because it makes players adhere strictly to the Rules of Golf and really play the game.





LPGA/RR Donnelley Founders Cup

By Mary Ann Souter

LPGA /RR Donnelley Founders Cup -- Marilynn Smith

On March 14-18, the LPGA Tour Event, The RR Donnelley Founders Cup was played at the Wildfire Golf Course for the second year. Marilynn Smith, one of only four living co-founders of the LPGA Tour, has been an Arizona resident for eight years and was present at the event.

Marilynn recalled the early days of the LPGA when the 13 co-founders were responsible for all aspects of the organization. "The changes over the years are tremendous," she said. "We traveled everywhere by car, wore long skirts and considered practicing on the range our fitness program."

Although she hasn't played for 11 years because of injuries, at 82 years old, Marilynn remains an ambassador for women's golf and is still passionate about the game. She works tirelessly planning for her Marilynn Smith LPGA Charity Golf Classic, which is held annually at Pebblecreek with the proceeds providing college scholarships for young women.

A tip from Marilynn to improve your game: "Harry Pressler, PGA, mentored me and one suggestion had a definite and positive impact on my game," she said. "He emphasized that the forefinger and thumb of the right hand and the toe of the club should point toward the target. Focus on that and hold your balance," she added. "When I concentrated on that tip, I played my best golf."

Marilynn Smith often attends events around our state. The LPGA/RR Donnelley Founders Cup is just one. Marilyn and founders Louise Suggs and Shirley Spork signed autographs at the 18th hole. "It's a special event," Marilynn said, "especially when the younger players thank us for establishing the LPGA." Knowing that her effort decades ago continues to help women golfers enjoy a rewarding career seemed to be a highlight of her day!



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AWGA NewsLinks is published 8 times per year and
is an official publication of the
Arizona Women's Golf Association.

141 East Palm Lane, Suite 210 Phoenix, AZ 85004-1555
602.253.5655 800.442.AWGA Fax 602.253.6210

E-mail: awga@awga.org
Web: www.awga.org

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FOUR

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LPGA Legends Tour Thoughts from Jane Blalock & Patty Sheehan

For the first time in Phoenix, the LPGA Legends Tour will play at Sun City Grandview Golf Course on April 27-29. Jane Blalock, winner of 27 LPGA tournaments, spearheaded the effort to get the Tour going in 2000. "My priority is growing the LPGA Legends Tour," she said. "People love watching the players in this event," she added. "Seeing some of the legends playing golf is both exciting and inspiring for spectators." This year Betsy King, Patty Sheehan, Rosie Jones and Pat Bradley will be in the field and more prominent names may still be signing up. Jane is quick to say that the Legends Tour is her passion. She works tirelessly for its success and is driven to make it grow. Patty Sheehan, a World Golf Hall of Fame member and winner of six major championships and 35 LPGA Tour events, shares Jane's enthusiasm. "The Legends Tour helps us keep our dreams alive and working with Walgreens to raise funds for the Phoenix Children's Hospital is very rewarding," she said. "It's a great event for everyone."

Words of wisdom from Jane: Remember that golf is a game. It's supposed to be fun. You'll never conquer it, so you might as well enjoy it. Even if you have an unwavering competitive spirit, you'll compete better if you enjoy the game more.

Swing Tips from the two Pros:

Patty Sheehan: Think extension on take away and back swing – then extension on down-swing through the ball – finish high to the sky!

Jane Blalock: I am an advocate of maintaining a very relaxed and consistent grip pressure both in the golf swing and in putting. Maintaining the same pressure throughout is imperative!

Patty and Jane invite all of our AWGA members to walk along the course with some of golf's finest women players. They'll be happy to sign autographs and chat with you!



AWGA Industry Outreach Program



One of the programs of the AWGA is our Information and Outreach program, which addresses the problems of under representation, under participation and under visibility of women in meaningful ways at all levels of the business and play of the game of golf; the need for information that voices the common interests of AWGA members to each other and to the community at large; the need for a nucleus for communication among women golfers and supporters of women's golf. This program includes four main facets, Industry Outreach, Membership Outreach, Publications, and Junior Golf Grants and Assistance. The following two articles on the USGA Regional Association Committee and The Alliance represent two of the ways that the AWGA seeks to fulfill the objectives of this program through the Industry Outreach facet.

USGA Regional Associations Committee As a licensed association of the USGA, the AWGA executive director is a member of the USGA Regional Associations Committee. This committee meets bi-annually at locations throughout the US to learn about what's new with the USGA, with golf as a national and international amateur sport, and how that impacts amateur golfers at the local level. Topics on the agenda at this year's meeting, held February 24 – 25, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, included: Golf and Tourism; USGA Handicap System changes; 2012 Rules of Golf changes; USGA Online Resources for State and Regional Associations; Updates from the senior staff of the USGA, including executive director, Mike Davis, who spoke on the USGA's Global Vision; and presentations by several state golf association executive directors, including our own Mary Pomroy, on the subject of Golf Associations Working Together.

Mary had this to say about her presentation. "I was really glad to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of Arizona as to the successes I feel that the AWGA in particular has had because of our unique structure in Arizona. There is really no such thing as a "typical state and regional golf association. I can't think of two that are exactly alike.

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While most states do have separate women's golf associations, in most cases, they focus on running the State Women's Championships, and many also do the women's Course Rating, but few are licensed to provide handicapping to their members, and therefore do not have the financial where-with-all to contribute significantly to administering and promoting the game for women in their states.

The theme for Mary's presentation was "Collaboration is Key", and in it she highlighted the many ways that the AWGA works to collaborate effectively with Allied Associations in our state. One definition of collaboration is a deep, collective, determination to reach an identical objective. The key is committing to work together, and committing to focus on the greater good of golf in our state.



Important AWGA Collaborative Efforts

AWGA & AGA - Arizona Handicap Network, Board of Director Liaison positions, Arizona Golf Hall of Fame.

AWGA & Junior Golf Association of Arizona - AWGA provides funding, volunteers, direction, and staff to assist with presenting their championships, clinics, and events.

AWGA & LPGA/PGA Professionals - AWGA Ambassador Program & AWGA Golf Performance Series, Play Golf America Days, charity pro-am fundraisers and special events, LPGA Teaching and Club Professionals Board liaison position, AWGA Challenge Series.

You can find more information on any of these collaborative efforts by contacting our office at 602-253-5655, or visiting our website at www.awga.org.





The Alliance -- YOUR Voice in the Golf Community

By Mary Ann Souter

Leaders of women’s state and regional golf associations from all over the country have been meeting together for 10 years to share information, discuss ways to better guide their associations, improve their programs and increase their membership. The meeting, traditionally held in Phoenix each March, is aptly named the WARM, but only coincidentally suggestive of the weather here in Phoenix in March. WARM stands for Women’s Association Roundtable Meeting.

Some History: In 2003, the leaders of six western state women’s golf associations gathered to conduct the first WARM. Founding members were from Arizona, Colorado, California and Nevada. Mary Pomroy, Executive Director of the AWGA, has been influential in the organization and direction of the meeting since its inception. “We united in an effort to find an outlet to exchange ideas, share successes and challenges and be part of the larger golf community,” Mary explained. This year marks WARM’s eighth meeting (the first WARM’s were conducted bi-annually) with 40 women representing 15 women’s golf associations attending. The interest is growing with more states continually attending, some annually, some bi-annually, others as they are able. In all, 24 associations have attended the WARM.

The Women’s Golf Alliance (The Alliance) : Last fall, this group of associations formed a new organization - The Alliance – a group whose tag line is “uniting women’s golf.” Their purpose is to increase the voice and visibility of women golfers and to enhance member benefits and services provided by member associations. It’s a lofty goal but one these women have already begun to realize.

The Business of The Alliance: Members of The Alliance see the WARM as invaluable to the growth of women’s golf. The three day meeting is packed full of group discussions, brainstorming sessions and evaluations of past projects. From their methods of communication with their members and member benefits to educational programs and tournament administration and sites, participants share their ideas and resourceful undertakings. Other topics include golfer development programs, long-range planning, Board configuration and responsibilities, interaction with men’s associations, junior girls golf and annual meetings. When you get a highly motivated group of women golfers in one room, the results can be amazing! Maybe the WARM acronym should denote Women Are Really Motivated!

Working with the USGA, LPGA, PGA: Each year we hear statistics from notable national golf organizations reporting that women are the fastest growing segment of the golf community. Yet, there seems to be uncertainty about how to encourage women to keep playing, play more rounds, use the services provided by professionals and become avid golfers. Continual studies addressing the preferences of women golfers have been completed with minimal results. The Alliance leadership holds that the answer lies in connecting with state women’s golf associations, which represent MOST of the country’s core and avid women golfers - in numbers, in rounds played and in their preferences. They know the habits of women golfers, have the capacity and are eager to share their knowledge with the golf community to promote women’s golf. The state women’s association is the link between industry professionals and amateur women golfers.

How will The Alliance benefit the average woman golfer? Its ambition is to get the

October

15. Kathy Barrett | Working Women GA

January

27. Sue Coak | The Gallery WGA

27. Sherry Ziegler | Los Caballeros WGA

31. Debbie Brown | Mountainbrook Ladies GC

February

1. Charlotte Kirchner | Skyline WGA

2. Charlotte Franklin | Rio Rico CC Women

6. Paddy Newton | Palo Verde CC WGA

7. Ellen Bond | Palo Verde CC WGA

7. Gail Scoggins | Sun City Festival WGA

7. Deb Vanthier | Granite Falls Ladies 18

9. Carol Schneider | Apache Wells WGA

9. Cynthia Schmidt | Country Meadows Ladies

9. Jane Wilson | SaddleBrooke

10. Sue Mitchell | Oro Valley CC WGA

10. Gay Elliot | El Conquistador CC WGA

12. Bonnie Wenzel | Robson Ranch WGA

12. Jean Molitor | Saddlebrooke WGA

13. Janet Derr | Pueblo El Mirage Women

20. Lore Schaefer | Sunbird Womens 18

21. Betty Teal | Sunbird Womens 18

21. Jeanne Lentz | El Rio Womens GC

21. Joann Brown | Sun Lakes CC WGA

23. Donna Ness | Pueblo El Mirage WGA

27. Marty Andrews | Tatum Ranch WGA

March

3. Judy Simousek | Sun City Willowcreek WGA

5. Rita Weihe | Pueblo El Mirage WGA

5. Nancy Davis | Lone Tree WGA

8. Pam Campbell | Quail Creek LGA



core and avid woman golfer's voice heard in conversations at the national level. These discussions drive programming at the national level, which trickle down to local golf businesses which learn how to accommodate women at their courses and in their shops. In time this will lead to better service and more success of golf facilities in meeting women's needs and wants in our golf experience. Our opinions matter! And the women of The Alliance are the driving force in making the changes we all hope to see – ones that will enhance a woman's experience on the course.

We Need YOU! The leaders of The Alliance have learned that involving the hundreds of thousands of women who make up the membership of state women's golf associations across our country is the way to grow women's golf. Association members are the ones who know the game and attract non-golfing friends to learn the game. We are the ones who help each other get past those first tee jitters. We are the ones who can teach each other about etiquette and pace of play, playing by the Rules, creating friendships around golf and about competitions, whether social or serious. We are the ones who can teach each other that straight is sometimes better than far, and often even more fun. We are the ones. And "we" includes "you!" Recognize your place as part of the largest community of amateur women golfers in the world. Realize that one member can make a difference. Volunteer with your local WGA and invite a friend to experience the camaraderie. Participate in local events. Support charities through fundraising tournaments. Spread the fun of golf with those just learning the game to keep them involved. If your Handicap is 27, you are an average golfer, so don't equate champions with "real" golf. **You** are a "real" golfer!

The bottom line: In Arizona alone, there are over 25,000 women on the rolls of the AWGA. Nationwide, there are well over 300,000 women who are members of state women's golf associations. If national groups and businesses want to know how to reach women golfers, they should go to the source for information and direction. The grass roots leaders of women's golf are adept at turning the wheels of progress. Together, these women know about women's golf and know how to deliver results! The present leadership is affecting the course of history of women's golf. The Alliance and the Women's Association Roundtable Meetings have started something very big!

AWGA Rep Meetings

The AWGA conducted their annual regional Rep meetings in early April. Meetings were held at; Moon Valley Country Club in Phoenix – April 4th, Arizona Golf Resort in Mesa – April 5th, and Starr Pass Golf Club – April 6th. Logan Erickson, Director of Member Programs and Services, hosted each event with the support of Kelly Hollister, Programs Coordinator and Rosie Humphries, AWGA Communications Committee Chair. The purpose of regional annual meetings is to share the most current AWGA news and golf related information with the reps in order for them to report back to their individual clubs. Alternatively, the AWGA staff absorbs constructive feedback from the Reps in its efforts for continued improvement and a more valuable membership experience. The April meetings followed a "Rep Roundup" campaign conducted by the AWGA Communications Committee Volunteers. Additionally, each rep received a current rep handbook or inserts to update an outdated copy. The objective of the campaign was to contact each Rep for the 300+ member clubs and confirm their awareness of the upcoming Rep meetings. Open discussions centered on the new GEM Program, pending changes to the State Medallion Tournament and Q&A responses from a recent rep survey.



Upcoming Tournaments

AWGA Weekend Classic

Los Caballeros Golf Club
May 19th

AWGA State Match Play Championship

The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club
June 25th-28th

AWGA Day in Hades

Quintero Country Club
July 15th

AWGA Mixed Stix

Omni Tucson National
July 28th & 29th

AWGA State Amateur Stroke Play Championship

Desert Mountain - Cochise
August 15th-17th

AWGA State Seniors Championship

Seville Golf & Country Club
September 24th-26th

AWGA Scotch Play Tournament

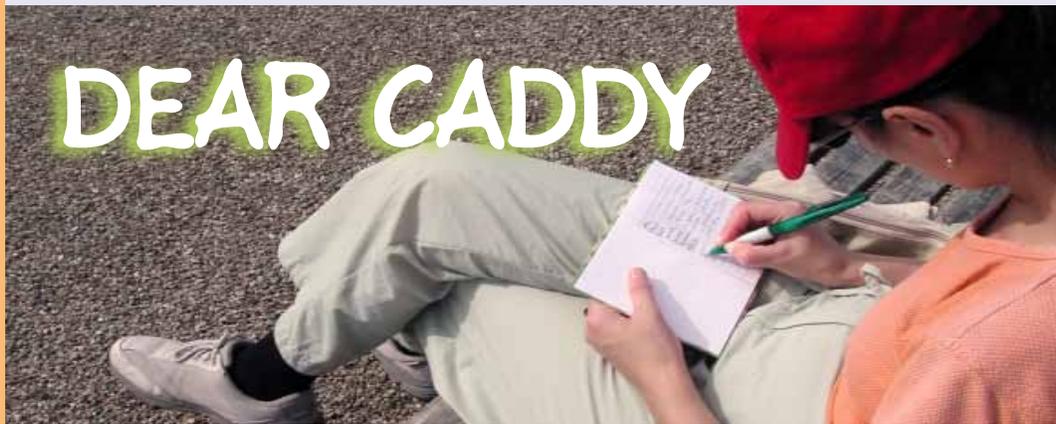
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DEAR CADDY



Q I frequently play golf with a girlfriend who insists on standing directly behind me when I'm on the teeing ground. I think she does this out of habit as she plays golf with her husband who often asks her to "watch his ball." I don't want to create bad feelings, or come across as bossy or nasty while playing, but how do I best communicate to her that I really don't want her standing behind me while I'm

A A seasoned golfer would never stand directly behind you while you were hitting your golf ball. Because you have allowed your friend to break this rule of golf etiquette for some time now, she more than likely assumes it is OK with you. A tricky little maneuver to help her break this habit is for you to stand directly behind your ball prior to your Tee shot. Take a practice swing or two to "clear your space." If your first practice swing does not move her off to the side, take another step back and appear as if you are ready to practice swing again. She will eventually realize you need your space on the tee box and find refuge off to the side! A more direct approach would be to politely ask her to stand to the side as your peripheral vision has recently become "ultra sensitive." A final thought – hope her next tournament tee gift is a "Complete Guide to Golf Etiquette" handbook!

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EIGHT

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Please send your unique golf questions or concerns to caddy@awga.org.
Your question could be selected for publication in the AWGA newsletter or on the website.