

Inside the ropes: Louisiana Golf Association, Audubon Golf Trail announce partnership

BY CARR MCCALLA

The Louisiana Golf Association, in conjunction with the Audubon Golf Trail, will initiate a LGA/AGT discount card beginning in early 2006 that will create a significant value-added benefit to LGA membership. If you're a member of a LGA Member Club in 2006, you'll be able to receive one free cart fee at all 11 AGT courses. For your \$9 a year LGA individual membership dues (\$13 if your club is a LGA Handicap Network participant Club) you'll be able to take advantage of this benefit. Play an Audubon Golf Trail facility once and you make your \$9 back. Play them all and your \$9 investment will grow into a savings of approximately \$165. A pretty good deal in and of itself, not to mention your club enjoying all the benefits of LGA membership, such as: 1) free course and slope ratings (a \$2,500 value), 2) eligibility for your members to participate in LGA Championship events, 3) discounts for your club staff and individual members to LGA seminars on handicapping, rules, etiquette, etc. And if your club also participates in the LGA Handicap Network, you'll get a Dell CPU, touch-screen monitor, label printer, and report printer, along with state-of-the-art handicapping computation and tournament management software. Audubon Golf Trail facilities include: Calvert Crossing in Monroe, Olde Oaks in Shreveport, Cypress Bend in Toledo Bend, OakWing in Alexandria, Tamahka Trails in Marksville, Gray Plantation in Lake Charles, Atchafalaya at Idlewild in Patterson, The Island in Plaquemine, Carter Plantation in Springfield, Audubon in New Orleans and TPC of Louisiana in Avondale.

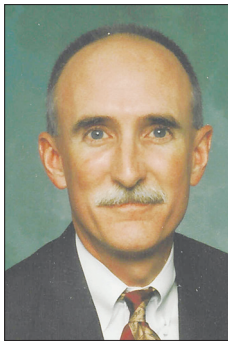
Discount cards will be sent to LGA Member Clubs for distribution just as soon as 2006 club and individual membership dues are paid (those invoices will be distributed in early March). Cards will be valid from April 1, 2006, through March 31, 2007.

CLUB TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE

The LGA has just recently sent entry forms to the 2006 LGA Club Team Championship, our first event of the year, to all LGA Member Club Golf Professionals. This year's event will again be held at Copper Mill Golf Club in Zachary, just north of Baton Rouge. As you may know, Copper Mill was honored as the No. 1 new affordable daily-fee course in the nation in 2005 by Golf Digest.

The Club Team Championship is a Ryder-Cup type format that has proven to be extremely popular in past years. Each team consists of one of the club's professionals and five club members (Clubs may elect to participate with six club members). Saturday's play (April 22) will consist of four-ball stroke play with the best two of three scores counting as the team's score for the day. On Sunday (April 23), it will be individual play with the best four of six scores counting. Under this format, a team can come from far

back on the final day as four scores will count on Sunday as compared to two scores on Saturday. As mentioned, this format has proven to create an exciting and fun event. Copper Mill, a course that features six par 5s, six par 4s, and six par 3s, also provides a real risk/reward venue for this championship. The University Club of Baton Rouge, our 2005 Club Team Champion, will no doubt return to defend the crown they won at Copper Mill last year. There are only 32 team spots available and entries will be accepted on a first come-first served basis, so we encourage you to put your teams together soon and get your entry submitted in order to guarantee your club a spot in the 2006 event.



Carr McCalla

LASER RANGEFINDER UPDATE

As we discussed in last month's Inside the Ropes, the USGA and R&A have sanctioned the use of electronic distance-measuring devices in 2006, provided the committee in charge of the competition has instituted a local rule to that effect. As you might imagine, there's a lot of confusion about just exactly what this means for you. The USGA has allowed the use of these electronic devices for the last number of years for everyday (non-competitive) play, in effect sanctioning their use relative to posting a score for handicapping purposes. That will not change. In competitive events, i.e., your Club Championship, your Member-Guest, the LGA Amateur Championship, etc., the Committee in charge of the competition must institute the Local Rule allowing their use in order for the devices to be legal in that particular event. The LGA's Board of Directors will meet in mid-February at our spring meeting and decide whether or not the LGA will sanction (by instituting the local rule) the use of electronic distance measuring devices in our 2006 Championships. If your local professional stocks laser rangefinders we encourage you to support him/her and look to them first if you would like to purchase one of these devices.

THANKS TO THE USGA!

We have just recently been the beneficiary of a grant from the USGA to help us in supporting our Member Clubs through the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. As you may know, we were forced to cancel our 2005 4-Ball Championship as a result of the storms, and the storms had many other indirect implications for our revenue stream and ability to provide much needed services to our Member Clubs. As you might imagine, wind damage to many southeastern and southwestern Louisiana clubs means many of those clubs will require re-rating during 2006. One of the benefits of LGA membership is the provision of course rating services for our Member Clubs at no charge. With no revenue stream for that service the USGA grant will help allow us to provide these services and not impact our bottom line to the degree that it would without their support. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the USGA on behalf of all of our Member Clubs and individual members. They are a real friend of the LGA and we truly value our relationship with them. We trust the Holiday Season was an enjoyable one for you and your family and that 2006 is off to a great start!

See you next month.....Inside the Ropes!

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