

Louisiana Golf Association seeking intern for 2008

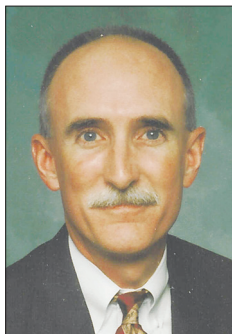
By CARR McCALLA

Each year the LGA is the recipient of a grant from the United States Golf Association (USGA) to hire a P.J. Boatwright Jr. intern. The Boatwright internship program began in 1991 in memory of long-time USGA Director of Rules and Competitions, P.J. Boatwright Jr.

The USGA funds Boatwright internships for the majority of state and regional golf associations in an effort to give interested individuals an opportunity to gain experience in amateur golf administration, while also providing the associations with much needed administrative help. The LGA has benefited from this program for over 12 years and is currently trying to identify an individual to serve in this capacity for 2008.

LGA Assistant Executive Director Kevin Jones (Oregon GA) and I (Tennessee GA) are both former Boatwright interns. Former Assistant

Executive Directors Michael Walder (Virginia State GA) and Kelly Tarala (Colorado GA) also served as Boatwright interns prior to coming to the LGA. Michael is now again serving the Virginia State GA as their Director of Handicapping, and Kelly is currently the Executive Director of the Florida Women's State GA. Many of today's golf administrators got their start through this valuable program.



McCalla

Our hope is that we can have someone on board by the middle or end of January. If you have an interest or are aware of someone who might be a good fit for this position, or would like more information regarding the

internship, please call our offices at (337) 265.3938.

2008 CLUB TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE

We have just recently forwarded entry forms for our first event of the year, the Club Team Championship, to all LGA Member Club golf professionals. The weekend of April 19-20 will find this Championship taking place at the Atchafalaya Golf Club at Idlewild in Patterson. One of our most popular championships, it will pit six-man teams from LGA Member Clubs in a Ryder-Cup type format. On Saturday, each club represented will field three 2-man four-ball teams, with the best two of the three scores counting as the team's score for the day. Sunday's play will be individual stroke play with the best four of six scores counting. With twice as many scores counting on Sunday, there's a good chance that a club will come from far back in the pack to make a run at the title. If your club is interested in fielding a team, we encourage you to send your entry form in early to ensure your club's spot in the event. Provided we have space, we will accept more than one team per club.

SANDBAGGING...OR, IN OTHER WORDS, CHEATING!

We've editorialized in this column previously about our feelings with regard to sandbagging. Perhaps we're better off describing an individual that establishes a falsely high handicap as a "cheater"...using a word with a bit heavier implications than "sand-bagger," a cutesy word that covers up the nature of the crime.

Anyone that intentionally takes steps to establish a falsely inflated handicap index is no different from the golfer that fluffs his ball in the rough, uses the "foot-wedge" from behind a tree, or always seems to have difficulty in remembering how many strokes it took to hole his ball. While it is true that there's no way to legislate morality, the USGA does give us a way to require accountability from those that we play golf with on a regular basis. If you're tired of having the same players win those periodic net events at your club or in your area, do something about it! The good news: if your club is willing to make the effort, the cheating can be addressed...and be addressed in a manner that brings added integrity to this game we love. The

biggest challenge is educating members about the responsibility of the Handicap Committee. Each club that is licensed to issue approved USGA Handicap Indexes must have a Handicap Committee. Make the Committee, and its responsibilities, visible and publish what the USGA requires of all members that receive a handicap index, i.e. 1) that the player will try to make the best score at every hole in every round, and 2) that the player will post every acceptable round for peer review. Think about it: If everyone would take those two premises to heart, sandbagging/cheating would be a thing of the past. Unfortunately, some people need a little encouragement to post those "good" scores. That's where the Handicap Committee comes in. When the Committee learns that someone is abusing the system to post only high scores (or in the case of the so-called "vanity" handicap, only low scores), it has a responsibility to investigate the circumstances, and reduce that individual's handicap index if appropriate. The Handicap Committee cannot do this alone. It must have the cooperation and commitment of the club's membership to report abuses. That's where "peer review" comes in. If you played with, or are aware of, someone who tends to not post his/her better scores, you have a responsibility to make the committee aware so that they can address the issue. If you're aware of abuse and do nothing to address it, you have no right to complain. If you'd like more information about how best to effect change with respect to abuses of the USGA Handicap System, please call our offices at (337) 265-3938.

Please note that the USGA, facilitated by the LGA, will be conducting a Handicap Seminar at Oakbourne Country Club in Lafayette on Tues., Feb. 26. Many of the issues that we discussed in the preceding paragraph will be addressed at this seminar. Any Handicap Chairman can satisfy their Club's requirement of attending a USGA sanctioned handicap seminar during the 2008-2011 term by coming to this seminar and successfully completing the quiz that will be given at the conclusion of the seminar. For more information call our offices or visit the handicapping page of the USGA's website at www.USGA.org.

ON-LINE REGISTRATION TO START FEB. 1 FOR 2008 LGA CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

Beginning Feb. 1 you'll be able to register on-line for the 2008 LGA Net Amateur and Amateur Championships. Registration for the 2008 Junior Am, Four-Ball, and Mid-Am Championships will be available April 1, with 2008 Senior Am and Senior Four-Ball registration beginning June 1. Please visit our website at www.LGAgolf.org to find out more about our championship dates and venues.

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

Carr McCalla is the Executive Director of the LGA.

He can be reached by e-mail (cmccalla@lgagolf.org) or by phone (337-265-3938).

