

ILLINOIS GOLFER

DIGITAL SPECIAL EDITION

NOVEMBER 2022



**U.S. Women's Open to Chicago Golf
Gets 2033 playing, plus 2036 Walker Cup**

The Buzz

Have a 2033 calendar handy?

Plan ahead. That's what accountants tell you about taxes and what your parents said about homework, which was almost as bad as taxes, depending on the subject.

In recent years, the United States Golf Association and PGA of America have done their homework and planned ahead – way ahead.

The Nov. 1 announcement of a pair of USGA Championships coming to Chicago Golf Club is only the latest example. The year 2033, when Chicago Golf will host the 88th U.S. Women's Open, is 11 years distant. And 2036, when the venerable Wheaton club will welcome the Walker Cup for a third time, is 14 years out.

The 2051 U.S. Open is set for Oakland Hills near Detroit, where it will also be played in 2034, with a handful of other USGA extravaganzas slated for the big club as well.

And Bandon Dunes, conjured up by Chicago's own **Mike Keiser**, will have hosted 10 USGA amateur championships from this year's Junior Amateur to the 2045 Junior and Girls Junior.

Meanwhile, the 2033 Ryder Cup will be at the Olympic Club near San Francisco. Set your DVR.

Why the rush? Effectively, it's because clubs have realized hosting a big tournament – and the Western Golf Association's BMW Championship, the old Western Open, can be included in this – is great publicity,

2033

Calendar

February							March						
Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
31	1	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	27	28	1	2	3
7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	27	28	29	30	31

which can bring in new members or help retain current members. In many cases, the site fee is equally attractive.

Now, Chicago Golf Club is an outlier in both regards. The club doesn't need the money, and probably doesn't need the publicity. But what was once an extremely secluded club where approximately 150 members didn't often play has moved forward in recent years. Hosting the 2005 Walker Cup brought thousands onto the grounds to gawk at the course. The inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Open in 2018 did the same. It will be 15 years since then when the tee is planted in the ground by the first player in the 2033 Women's Open, about half a generation.

But the way the rest of the golf world works these days, Chicago Golf had to say yes early or risk getting a date even more distant. And those who are making the decisions want to be alive to see them come to fruition.

THE COVER The clubhouse of Chicago Golf Club, as seen from the course side, has hosted 12 USGA championships, and in the 2030s will host two more. / Rory Spears / Golfers On Golf

IN THIS ISSUE

CHICAGO GOLF AND THE USGA



U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN, WALKER CUP TO CHICAGO GOLF CLUB	4
CHAMPIONSHIPS AT CHICAGO GOLF CLUB	6
CHICAGO GOLF CLUB MAP	7
THE IG INTERVIEW: HERB GETZ	8

OPINION

GRILL ROOM: BACK TO A MAGIC PLACE	3
-----------------------------------	---

DEPARTMENTS

OUR REGULAR DEPARTMENTS RETURN IN THE NEXT ISSUE

ILLINOIS GOLFER

NOVEMBER 2022 · DIGITAL EDITION
VOL. 8, NO. 3 · ISSUE 56+

PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN SEASON,
WITH OCCASIONAL SPECIAL ISSUES

PUBLISHER & EDITOR **TIM CRONIN**
TRAVEL EXPERT **LEN ZIEHM**

JOIN US ONLINE AT WWW.ILLINOISGOLFER.NET
E-MAIL US AT ILLINOISGOLFER@EARTHLINK.NET
CALL US AT (708) 638-1164
FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: @ILLINOISGOLFER

DISPLAY / CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING:
CALL (708) 638-1164 FOR PARTICULARS.

ILLINOIS GOLFER ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNSOLICITED MATERIALS OR CLAIMS OF ADVERTISERS. CAVEAT EMPTOR.

© 2022 ILLINOIS GOLFER LLC, A UNIT OF CRONIN MULTIMEDIA

The Grill Room by Tim Cronin

Back to a magic place

It was what the Scots would call a soft day. There was a light wind, the sky was speckled with friendly clouds, and the setting was sublime.

Chicago Golf Club, to be specific.

Invited to give the course a try by a member friend, accompanied by two other worthies from the area golf scene, we did so. Chicago Golf won, but the experience is what counted that day, not what on the scorecard.

This is brought up not to brag about teeing it up on one of golf's hallowed grounds, but to note that virtually everyone who does so has the same feeling. There are thousands of golf courses, easy and hard, manicured and not, stuffy and laid back, and then there is Chicago Golf.

There's a different feeling there. It can be as hard as you make it. It is in perfect condition, but beware the bunkers and the fescue. It is hardly stuffy – smiles abound – but please take your hat off in the clubhouse. Call it courtly, a lost art in many parts of society.

Golf has been played there since 1895, but the course is up to date in a back-to-the-future sense. Tom Doak has been the consulting architect for a couple of decades, and has added a tee here and there. The big recent project to recapture the precise look of the layout when Seth Raynor remodeled Charles Blair Macdonald's original in 1923 has been a great success. Old bunkers long buried have been unearthed, fairways put in their original place.



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

THE FOUNDER Charles Blair Macdonald still looks over Chicago Golf Club.

We have every reason to suspect the feeling will be the same in 2033, when the participants in the U.S. Women's Open make their way to Wheaton to test themselves on the same course, aside from a tweak or two, that the 1928 Walker Cup was played on. In front of the same clubhouse. Over the same hills. Across the same greens. Maybe with a few ghosts watching. At least, that statue of Macdonald, exaggerated

takeaway and all, will be keeping watch between the clubhouse and the golf shop.

What will golf look like in 2033?

Specifically, what will women's golf look like?

Well, Nelly Korda will turn 35 that summer. Lydia Ko will be 36 and probably just have changed coaches again. And Minjee Lee, this year's U.S. Women's Open winner, will turn 37 in late May.

We mention birthdays in 2033 because that trio, and a host of players as young as they are today, will likely be players to watch in when the 88th U.S. Women's Open is played.

How old will you be in 2033? Or have you burned your calendar?

The calendar doesn't really matter at Chicago Golf. Time seems to stop there.

Only in the last year or so has air-conditioning been installed in the entire clubhouse. The realization took hold that the artifacts in the building needed preservation, if not the people who frequent it.

Charlie would approve. We think.

If you're wondering where regular issues of ILLINOIS GOLFER have gone, the explanation is simple. We've been working on a number of special projects for others and time has been hard to come by. There will be a wrapup edition for 2022 and we hope to get back to a more regular schedule in 2023.

ILLINOIS GOLFER COVER STORY

Chicago Golf opens its doors

Will host 2033 U.S. Women's Open, 2036 Walker Cup

BY TIM CRONIN

One of Mike Whan's first moves upon assuming the CEO post at the United States Golf Association last year was to visit each of the five founding clubs, asking them if they would consider hosting a U.S. Open.

The Country Club, Boston's Brahmin bastion, was already on the card for this year, so that was a courtesy visit to see how things were progressing. But Whan's visit to Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton, a few miles from where Whan grew up in Naperville, was different.

The U.S. Open on a unique footprint would be a stretch, and perhaps more difficult to accomplish than the feat of Merion Golf Club hosting the 2013 U.S. Open. Merion, for one thing, had additional holes on which to station the many attendant facilities that come with hosting America's national championship, including the TV compound, which means rows of semi-trailer mobile units and office trailers. Plus, since then, the U.S. Open has only gotten bigger.

Chicago Golf could never host a U.S. Open for that reason, and the length of the course – 6,950 yards – would be another strike against it, unless the USGA would settle for scoring compa-



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

STANDING TALL The Chicago Golf Club flag flutters afront the clubhouse in Wheaton.

rable to the Bob Hope Desert Classic.

But a U.S. Women's Open? That was a possibility. Room for a less-complicated TV setup could be found. There would also be just enough room for the corporate tents dotting the golf landscape everywhere this side of Augusta National (where cabins are hidden here and there from the 10th fairway and beyond). Additionally, the contribution from ProMedica, the presenting sponsor, would help make up any financial loss.

A U.S. Women's Open would also be doable from the standpoint of the course. There would be more than enough yardage for the ladies, and if someone fired a low score, more power to them.

So it will be. The USGA and Chicago Golf announced Nov. 1 that the 2033 U.S. Women's Open, the 88th in the series, will be played on the course redesigned by Seth Raynor in 1923, and which still incorporates several of club founder (and effectively USGA founder) Charles Blair Macdonald's original holes from 1895. Guided by consulting architect Tom Doak, Chicago Golf has recently returned to Raynor's fairway lines and restored 13 bunkers that had been filled in over the years.

Additionally, Chicago Golf will host the Walker Cup, the amateur team competition between the United States and Great Britain and



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

MAJESTIC SETTING Chicago Golf Club, as seen during the 2018 U.S. Senior Women's Open, sits on a gently rolling plain. It won't look much different in 2033.

Ireland, in 2036. It'll be the third Walker Cup at Chicago Golf, following editions won by the American squad in 1928 and 2005.

Most recently, Chicago Golf hosted the inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Open in 2018, which was won by Laura Davies and was so well-attended the USGA had to print more tickets. The attraction, as was the case in the 2005 Walker Cup, wasn't the competition as much as it was the storied course.

"Hosting the best players in the world – men, women, amateur and professional – for USGA events is a point of pride for our club and a significant part of our long history," said Chicago Golf president Herb Getz. "We very much look forward to building upon that history and continuing our valued partnership with the USGA on an even larger stage well into the future."

Chicago Golf is ranked 13th in the current *Golf Digest* U.S. Top 100, and eighth on *Golfweek's* U.S. Top 100 Classic (pre-1960) list. With fairway carpets flanked by a thin high fescue waving in the wind, it is a course demanding

proper placement of the tee shot, and then a quality approach shot to greens, often squarish and always vexing, that have barely been changed since Raynor designed them a century ago.

"Chicago Golf Club is a great test of golf within a supportive golf community," Davies said. "It should make for a fantastic U.S. Women's Open venue and will certainly crown a worthy champion."

"Winning a USGA championship is always special, but winning one at Chicago Golf Club, one of the finest golf courses in the world, makes it even more so, and hoisting a trophy there in 2018 was a highlight of my career."

For the USGA, it's a return not only to the Chicago area – the aforementioned U.S. Senior Women's Open was the last time the USGA flag flew in Illinois – but to Chicago Golf Club for the 13th time.

"The history of the USGA and American golf can't be told without Chicago Golf Club, and just over 125 years after hosting its first USGA championship, we're thrilled to announce our re-

turn for two additional significant events," John Bodenhamer, USGA chief championships officer, said in a release. "With the tremendous support of its members and a world-class venue, we're confident that Chicago Golf Club will deliver memorable moments and an opportunity for golf fans around the world to see one of the country's finest golf venues."

Chicago Golf hosted the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Open in 1897, two years after the club moved from its original location in Belmont – today, the public Downers Grove Golf Club is on that site – to Wheaton. Three more U.S. Amateurs and a pair of U.S. Opens, including the 1900 edition won by Harry Vardon, followed. It also hosted the 1992 Western Junior, where Tiger Woods was knocked out in the quarterfinals, and the first Chicago Open, conducted by the CDGA, in 1914, won by amateur Robert Gardner. This summer, the Illinois PGA held a stroke-play tournament on a Monday and pros came out of the hills to play it.

In 2033, people will come out of the hills to watch. Again.

Championships at Chicago Golf Club



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

BIG LAURA BELTS IT Laura Davies tees off in the first round of the inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Open at Chicago Golf Club in 2018. She won the title by 10 strokes over Juli Inkster.

1897 U.S. Open

Joe Lloyd hit the first great shot in U.S. Open history, a 3-wood out of the rough to set up a 3 on the home hole to beat future four-time winner **Willie Anderson** by a stroke.

1897 U.S. Amateur

Henry James Whigham, son-in-law of club founder **Charles Blair Macdonald**, won his second straight U.S. Amateur, beating **W. Rossiter Betts** 8 and 6 in the 36-hole final.

1900 U.S. Open

Harry Vardon beat fellow English pro **J.H. Taylor** by two strokes, and would have broken 80 in all four rounds but for whiffing on a short putt on the 72nd hole.

1902 Western Amateur

H. Chandler Egan needed 37 holes to subdue his cousin **Walter Egan** in the championship match. H. Chandler Egan was also the medalist.

1903 U.S. Women's Amateur

Bessie Anthony of Glen View Club scored a 7 and 6 victory over **Johnnie Anna Carpenter** of Westward Ho! in an all-Chicago final that sent the Eastern contingent home chagrined.

1905 U.S. Amateur

Another all-Chicago final saw **H. Chandler Egan** of Exmoor Country Club defend his 1904 title, scoring a 6 and 5 victory over Wheaton's D.E. "**Ned**" Sawyer.

1907 Western Amateur

H. Chandler Egan scored a third victory at Chicago Golf, beating **Herbert Jones** of Wheaton GC 5 and 4.

1909 U.S. Amateur

Robert Gardner of Hinsdale Golf Club, a 19-year-old, beat **H. Chandler Egan** in the championship match, 4 and 3, while **Chick Evans** was medalist. Gardner was the youngest U.S. Amateur champion until **Tiger Woods** won at 18 in 1994.

1911 U.S. Open

John McDermott, 19, became the first American-born U.S. Open champion by tying **Mike Brady** and **George Simpson** at 307, then beating them in an 18-hole playoff.

1912 U.S. Amateur

Jerome Travers knocked off hometown favorite **Chick Evans** 7 and 6 in the title match for the third of his four U.S. Amateur crowns. Chick was medalist.

1914 Western Junior

Charles Grimes, a University of Chicago student playing out of Calumet Country Club, beat **Lawson Watts** of St. Louis' Triple A club 6 and 5 in the final of the first Western Junior.

1914 Chicago Open

Amateur **Robert Gardner** of Hinsdale Golf Club won his second title at Chicago Golf, besting a small field of pros and amateurs in the CDGA's first open championship.

1928 Walker Cup

Led by playing captain **Bobby Jones**, the United States skunked Great Britain 11-1. Only **Chick Evans** falling in his singles match prevented a sweep.

1979 U.S. Senior Amateur

Future USGA president **Bill Campbell** of West Virginia scored a 2 and 1 victory over **Lewis Oehmig** for the first of his two straight Senior Am titles.

1992 Western Junior

John Curley scored a 4 and 2 victory over **John Bernatovicz** in the match-play final. **Tiger Woods**, at 16 already the one to beat, made it to the quarterfinals before **Ted Purdy** knocked him off.

2005 Walker Cup

The United States team, captained by **Bob Lewis**, eked out a 12.5-11.5 victory over Great Britain and Ireland in a thriller, recapturing the Walker Cup after three successive losses.

2018 U.S. Senior Women's Open

England's **Laura Davies** romped to a 10-stroke victory over **Juli Inkster** in the inaugural championship for the distaff 50-plus set.



PATH TO GLORY A 2018 map of Chicago Golf Club, with north on top.

THE IG INTERVIEW: HERB GETZ

Chicago Golf Club president Herb Getz, a member since 1997, spoke Tuesday afternoon about the club's decision to take on hosting the 2033 U.S. Women's Open and 2036 Walker Cup, plus recent course changes designed to return it as closely as possible to Seth Raynor's original 1923 redesign. Here's a lightly edited transcript of the interview:

IG: *The years 2033 and 2036 are pretty far away. Are you worried about being on hand?*

Getz: It doesn't worry me much (laughing). Maybe some of the younger guys should worry about it!

I've heard John Bodenhamer (USGA's chief championships officer) explain a half-dozen times why they're doing what they're doing. Oakland Hills has 2051 (U.S. Open)! We decided if we were going to continue our tradition of hosting periodic and important USGA events, we'd better get in line, because they're all going to be gone.

We'd been in conversation with them a while, but once Mike Whan came on (as the USGA CEO), the strategic partnership concept they've got and work and awarding these took on a new level of intensity, and it was time to get in line. That's what we did.

IG: *What do you expect it will be like 11 and 14 years from now? Will the audience be the same as at the Walker Cup and U.S. Senior Women's Open?*

Getz: I think in 10 years the U.S. Women's Open is going to be like the U.S. Open was 10 years ago. The trajectory of women's sports in

general is on the upswing. They are looking toward a much larger crowd than is traditional. As purses go up, television interest is going to go up. We're prepared for a pretty substantial crowd. Chicago's a great golf market, and some would say we don't get our fair share of the big events. This is going to be a big event, the Women's Open.

I'm hoping the Walker Cup is always the same event as it's ever been, with a few thousand people walking along with the best amateur players from Great Britain, Ireland and the U.S., and we all can get to know these kids a little better. But the Women's Open is going to be a major event in the history of Chicago Golf and the Chicago market.

IG: *Have you considered how many people you can fit on the grounds?*

Getz: The USGA has spent enough time on our course and grounds to think through all those issues. If you can do (a U.S. Open at) Merion on 116 acres, on our 200 acres, they'll figure out a way to do that. We've got 100 acres of native rough, not all of which is in play, and most of it which is not in play for these folks. It gets mowed down every fall.

IG: *Has the outlook of the membership changed since you became a member. I remember the Western Junior there in 1992, and thought, "This might be the biggest thing we'll ever see here."*

Getz: I think the 2005 Walker Cup was such



Getz

a well-received event by our members, and then the Women's Senior Open – I think there were some less-than-enthusiastic feeling among some members, but by the time the event was over, the members that were out there, even the skeptics, had to say they were very excited just to see the reactions of these players coming on to our course and competing there. It was very well received.

If there every was a view that we shouldn't share our course with the public, I think that's waning. We're happy to participate with the USGA, and that's part of our history and our tradition. Now we're going to do it in a much bigger way with a Women's Open.

IG: *Was this an immediate decision when the USGA offered the U.S. Women's Open?*

Getz: Well, like everything at almost any private club, it takes some discussion with the USGA. The things that matter most to our members is, what's going to happen to our course, how much access will we have to the course. With the Women's Open, the USGA, Bodenhamer, Mark Hill, Reg Jones, the whole team has spent enough time on our golf course the last couple of years to know what's there, what can be done.

Every discussion we've ever had with what can we or would we do to the golf course to accommodate any of that always worked around, 'Look, we want to play the Raynor course. We don't want to play some other course.' You can move tees here and there, but at the end of the day, what good would it do to fiddle with a golf course that is as close to what it was when Raynor laid it down in '23 as any Raynor course in

America. That's the course they want to play.

Once that issue is off the table for our members, that's the biggest concert. Everybody understands our relationship with the USGA. It goes back to the very founding of our club, the very founding the USGA. It's part of our tradition, part of our club's personality. It had been a while (before 2018) since we had (something). Everybody wanted to see a Walker Cup come back. The USGA was interested in having us take on an even higher profile event, and those discussions came together, and we had unanimous support from our members. There were no opposing votes, I'm happy to say.

IG: *You've just rebuilt bunkers and re-aligned fairways to come as close as possible to the 1923 vision of Raynor, right?*

Getz: Right. Thanks to the continuous work that John Moran does in documenting our history, he has acquired over the last couple of years some drawings of our course. We don't have any, or we didn't have any, original Raynor drawings done at the time. We had a couple of surveys that were very close, and actually came into possession of a Raynor drawing that was done as early as '17, and it showed a number of bunkers that had been taken out of play over the years long before any of us were there.

Once we knew it was time for the irrigation system to be done, the bunkers were natural to do at the same time. Deal with all the drainage issues, because drain lines and irrigation lines have to cross, so we were armed with those old drawings. Those old bunkers back in the '20s were built with cinders used as the drainage layers for the bunkers.

Cinders and manure were the two big commodities in the bill of sale. The manure was



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

A CLASSIC HOLE The par-3 seventh, Redan, likely the best example of this Raynor favorite.

laid under the greens to inhibit drainage so you wouldn't have to water them so often. Now obviously, that has posed a huge problem over the years. But when it came time to redo the bunkers, all we did was dig down, find the cinders, and then follow the cinders. The bunkers that were taken out, we had a clue as to where they were. We put a backhoe down, there were the cinders, and just keep digging until you run out of cinders. Many of the bunkers that we've all been playing for a hundred years got a lot bigger. Pieces of them that had been taken out of play were found and put back in. We had 115 bunkers, put 13 of the Raynor bunkers back, so now we're at 128 bunkers.

The bunkers got steeper, they got bigger, and when you think about bunkers for 100 years, the faces had gotten much shallower. So we probed down, and our bunkers are all deeper, steeper and bigger. It's been a lot of fun for some and challenges for others, but pretty exciting to see this course back the way we think it was.

The other things that's changed on a number of holes that we don't have bunkers behind

is the run-off areas. The areas around the sides and backs of some of the greens were all closely mown. Say, our ninth hole. There are 15 yards that are now closely mown all around the green, so where we used to roll off and stop three feet off the putting surface, now you're 15-20 yards away and you've got to flip it back on top of the greens. It's been an interesting change for the golf course, and back to the way it was.

There is one bunker on the first hole that actually was a (Charles Blair) Macdonald bunker. It was not even on the Raynor. Our first hole is basically the way Macdonald laid it out in 1895. We put one of those back from the pre-Raynor drawings.

IG: *The gals will be in for a treat, and you'll have plenty of treats while we're waiting.*

Getz: Everybody's excited about it, and there will be a lot work to do, but it'll be one of the bigger events for Chicago. I know Medinah has the Presidents Cup coming in 2026, and after that I think we're sparse.

We're expecting a big crowd, and we should all live long enough to see both of these events.