



March 2008

# *Golf Idaho*

A wide-angle photograph of a golf course landscape. In the foreground, a green fairway slopes down towards a large, calm pond. A yellow flag is visible on the green. The pond reflects the sky and the surrounding trees. In the background, a golf clubhouse and other buildings are visible, surrounded by trees with some autumn-colored foliage. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

## Far and Wide —and Glorious

**The hits keep coming for BanBury Golf Club**

Twenty-five years ago, Jerry Breaux drove every day from Eagle to his job in Boise. Who would have guessed then that he was passing by what would become BanBury Golf Club, the immaculate public layout he now calls home. ▶▶▶

# BANBURY GOLF CLUB

“My mind would wonder about the course when I heard of the building plans, but I never imagined that it would turn out like this,” says Breaux, who is now the Head Pro at BanBury, and who has essentially become synonymous with the course’s national reputation for its ability to stage major events, its conditioning, and its Junior Academy.

The 18-hole links-style layout looks like a longtime neighbor to its surroundings. Its use of water makes it unique, being located around the south channel of the Boise River, blending golf with a natural habitat for wildlife. The course was designed by Northwest native John Harbottle III, who has a reputation for being able to set a course into its surroundings with minimal impact.

With the number of hazards, bunkers, and moundings, the course can be intimidating for the beginner, but the mid-level to single-digit handicap player will love it.

“The course provides a good test for the serious golfer,” advises Breaux. It features a par-3 on the back nine that plays 249 yards from the back tee. The long par-3 features water all the way along the left side and sand bunkers and traps surrounding the green.

“Every championship course has one tough par-3 and par-5. That’s our difficult par-3,” chuckles Breaux of the hole that has most players reaching for a driver on the tee.

Assistant Pro Ben Bryson, who’s been at BanBury for two years, says his favorite hole is the par-5 12th. “There are so many options,” said the WSU graduate, where he played on the golf team. “Lay up in front of the creek on the tee shot? Try to cut the corner? Can I bend my second shot around the tree? A great hole.”

And a great set of finishing holes. The 16th is a 155-yard par-3 across a pond. The 17th is a 302-yard par-4 with a pond down the left side of the entire hole. And the 18th is a 478-yard par-5 with water down the left side that usually must be crossed on the approach shot. Players can go for a strong finish, if trying to make up ground on their scorecard.

One of the highlights of the upcoming 2008 season



BanBury’s long par-3 14th hole

is the 107th PGA Men’s Amateur Championship, being played for the first time in Idaho at BanBury. The event, being held July 7-12 is one of the oldest golf championships in the Northwest, and past winners include Tiger Woods as well as other current PGA Tour players (and Northwest natives) Jeff Quinney, Ben Crane, and Craig Kanada.

BanBury played host to the 2005 U.S. Girls’ Junior Amateur Championship, and also the 2007 PGA Men’s and Women’s Public Links, which was won by Boise-native Todd Points (for the men) and BanBury player Nicole Olson (for the women).

## AT A GLANCE

### BanBury Golf Club

2626 N. Marypost Place  
Eagle, Idaho 83616  
www.banburygolf.com

### Yardage/Rating/Slope

**Tartan tees**  
6,886 yards - 73.1/129

**Black tees**  
6,302 yards - 70.1/126

**White tees**  
5,729 yards - 67.3/118

### Green fees

\$39 to \$49  
“BanBury Player Pass”  
season’s pass available

## ACCOLADES

- Ranked by *Golf Digest* as the “No. 1 Course in the Treasure Valley for 2008” and a “Top Place to Play” for 2008, as well as No. 7 in Idaho for 2007 & 2008
- Recognized by *Golfweek* magazine as a “Premier Idaho Destination Resort”
- Received 4 1/2 stars from *Golf Digest* as a “Best Place to Play” in the Best Value and Best Customer Service categories

## It's a new day, and a new season



JIM DURKIN  
IGA  
Executive Director

I would like to introduce myself to the golfers of Idaho and the surrounding area. I can not express in words how excited I am to be the Executive Director of the Idaho Golf Association. In order to understand how I got to where I am now, here is a brief history of my golf odyssey. I have been in the business of golf for more than 25 years, in almost every aspect of the game. I started working at the Miles City Town & Country Club in eastern Montana at the age of 12, cleaning the glasses and stocking the pop machines, and continued to work at the club until I was out of high school.

At that point in my life there was no question as to what I would do next. I began the PGA of America's apprentice program and served at several clubs, ending up in Southern California.

My journey would shift in 1992 as I enrolled at Fullerton State, graduating with a

teaching credential, and found myself teaching Middle School in Long Beach, Calif.

Now, how does this lead me from California to Idaho? Teaching was not a good fit for me so I had to rethink my career plans. I received advice from a monk lecturing at our church. He told a story about a man seeking satisfaction and joy in life. A wise man advised him that in order to be happy he must enjoy his work. Having heard the story, I turned to my wife and told her that I enjoy working in the golf business. I turned my attention to the United States Golf Association. I became a USGA Boatwright Intern at the Public Links Golf Association in Southern California and would later be hired as the Accountant and Tournament Coordinator, and finally the Assistant Executive Director.

How I learned of the Idaho Golf Association was merely an act of curiosity. One could call it fate or destiny or whatever you want. The job came to me. I did not go to the job. I noticed the opening for an Executive Director position in Idaho in the USGA Career

Section while I was looking up a rules interpretation. I applied for the position and in a matter of weeks, I was offered the job.

I accepted the position with complete understanding of the struggles the IGA went through in 2007. However, we now face another challenge. The association must now undergo the growing pains of a rebirth and also of a retreat from the status quo.

Besides my own arrival to the association, the other major change which occurred over the winter, and which I will oversee the implementation of, is that the association will use the United States Golf Association's state of the art handicap program. The Golf Handicap and Information Network (GHIN) will provide real-time trends to the golfers and will do revisions twice a month. GHIN also provides a powerful tournament management program. The Tournament Pairing Program (TPP) will be provided free of charge through the IGA to all the clubs that utilize the GHIN service.

The Idaho Golf Association is looking forward to an exciting 2008 season. With the new handicap system and new leadership, there will be subtle but lasting changes in the management of the association which will bring an air of professionalism. We are dedicated to providing the best possible service to our members.



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# Birdie from the brink

*A comeback, and then a comeback*

BY STEVE SCOLLARD

This is a story about a friend of mine. This is a friend who is a golfing buddy, but is also much more than that. Sure, we play a lot of golf, do some camping together with our wives and some other friends. But Allan became something more to me, as he may to you, if I am able to tell this story correctly.

If you are a golfer, if you have friends, and if you have had a friend overcome tremendous odds and obstacles, you will know what I mean. If not, I hope you will be as inspired by this as much as I was living through it.

Like many of you, I play a game several times a week called "skins". We have a group of players who carry handicaps between 2 and 11. We are very competitive but not to the point of being over the top. We root for each other on the course in a genuine way and let the chips fall where they may. Oh yes, we always enjoy the 19th hole.

Allan is one of the best players of our group, and is also one of the best that I have ever had the privilege of playing alongside. He has been to the finals of the National Buick Scramble, won numerous local tournaments and always places very high in our Club Championship and our Men's Invitational. Allan currently carries a 3 handicap. We live in Twin Falls, Idaho, and it is truly beautiful and has some terrific courses. Our home course is Blue Lakes Country Club located inside the Snake River Canyon.

A little over a year ago Allan was diagnosed with prostate cancer. His Gleason Scale number was over 7. For those of you who do not know, as I did not at the time, the Gleason Scale is a measurement from 1 to 10 that tells doctors how bad the prostate cancer is for a patient. A score of 1 is very good and a score over 7 or 8 is very, very bad. A score of over 8 is a potential death sentence for a prostate cancer patient. I now know all I ever want to know about this cancer.

Naturally, upon getting this news Allan and his wife Cindy were distraught. We all were. We scrambled for information, prayed, and did everything you would expect family and friends to do for someone they hold so dear.

Allan searched relentlessly for all the treatment options. He



At the "Captain's Game" event at Blue Lakes CC are (L-R) Jason Hunzeker, Dane Meyers, Brian Avram, Dave Driscoll, Allan Howa, and Jim Retmeier.

refused the doctors who said "no chance" – and there were several. As a good golfer, he knew that getting to the hole was always a calculated decision on the proper club, wind and yardage. He was not about to give up on this. Just like when I would watch him be relentless on the course and grind over birdie putts, so he put the same pressure on himself to not give in, to not do anything else but believe he could overcome this cancer.

He finally found a doctor who said 'yes, you can beat this'. He stayed with this doctor. He went to Hawaii and discovered a full body cleanse at a place called Angel Farms. He took his family there. He stayed true to his belief that this was the proper course. He worked tirelessly through the treatments that drained his strength. Playing golf during this time was the furthest thing from his mind.

Then one day he showed up to play in our weekly game. It was great to see him but tough to watch the guy who used to routinely hit 285 to 305 yard drives only knock it 240 yards off the tee. He was weak, but he was back. Over the next few months Allan's strength came back, and he was soon pronounced cancer free.

And now for the postscript. There is a tournament every year in Twin Falls that is one of the toughest, most competitive events in the region. It is called the Latham Match Play Championships. We all play if we can, and many of us have won our flights over the years. This tournament marks the end – and the beginning – of the story for my friend Allan.

Playing against young men in many cases more than half his age, Allan entered the 2007 Latham Match Play Championship. He was the 14th seed in his flight of 16 players. The rest of us were all going camping that week (4th of July week) while he stayed behind to play in the tournament. Play started on Thursday with a single match, then Friday with another match. If you won Thursday but not Friday you were out. Allan played Thursday against a very good young player and was down 3 at the turn. He wound up winning the match 2 and 1.

By Friday we were out of cell phone range at the camp site and would not know anything else until he arrived to join us. If he showed up Friday night we would know he had lost and been

eliminated. His wife, Cindy, and I busied ourselves going to nearby towns and having a good time. Friday night passed and no Allan. He had won – again. On Saturday there were to be two matches – the first one being the semi-final, and then the Championship. I told Cindy that since Allan had not shown up Friday night he was in the semi-final. She had some doubt so I told her if he shows up this morning we will know. No Allan that morning. He must have played in and won his semi-final match.

When he did not show by mid-afternoon on Saturday I turned to Cindy and said, “He’s in the finals and he is going to win it all”. She asked how I could possibly know that. “Because some things are just right and meant to be, after what you two have been through this past year.”

Allan pulled into camp at about 9:30 that Saturday night. We had a big campfire burning and Cindy was obviously nervous. When I saw him pulling in, Cindy went directly to him, hugged him and he told her something. I got up from the fire and walked towards him. His face was unreadable. I took one look at him and said, “You did it, didn’t you?” Then he smiled and said quietly to me, “Yeah, I did, Stevie”. I hugged him.

Allan Howa had just won the first flight in the 2007 Latham Match Play Championships against other players half his age. Oh, sorry, I didn’t mention that Allan is 55 years old.



*Howa, the lost soul, usually takes his clubs with him while on vacation on a houseboat at Lake Powell.*

To have won this championship would be a huge story for any player. But for Allan it was more than a win – it was a Herculean achievement. It was affirmation that the game of golf means so much more than victory or defeat. He didn’t care that he beat much younger competitors – in fact, I can tell you he felt for them after doing so (but also reveled in the fact that he had indeed beaten them). But knowing him as I do, what he was personally amazed by, and so completely satisfied with, was the battle he had won long before the tournament ever started.

It is said that to the victor go the spoils. In this case, however, the victor neither needed nor wanted the spoils – he simply looked towards the heavens, to his wife, and to his friends and said ‘I am happy to see you guys, and I humbly find myself victorious – in a simple game of golf and, much more importantly, in the game of life.’

Allan continues to be cancer-free today, and recently, to the detriment of a lot of people’s wallets, shot a 67 at our home course. That day Allan obviously had a few birdies, and will have many more birdies to come. None of them, however, either for Allan or for all of us who care for him, will ever be as important as his birdie from the brink.

## MEET THE PRO



### DAVE CAROLLO PGA HEAD PROFESSIONAL HILLCREST CC BOISE, IDAHO

#### BACKGROUND

- PGA Head Professional, South Hills Country Club, West Covina, CA 1988-1994
- PGA General Manager, South Hills Country Club, West Covina, CA 1994-1997
- PGA Director of Golf, Glendora Country Club, Glendora, CA 1997-2004
- PGA Assistant Professional, SpurWing Country Club, Meridian, ID 2005-2008
- PGA Head Professional, Hillcrest Country Club, Boise, ID present...

#### AWARDS

- Bill Strausbaugh Award, Southern California Section PGA, 1997
- Golf Professional of the Year, Southern California Section PGA, 2002
- Assistant Professional of the Year, Rocky Mountain Section PGA, 2007

#### PGA SERVICE

- Member, Board of Directors, Southern California Section PGA, 1993-2003
- President, Southern California Section PGA, 2002-2003
- Member, Rocky Mountain Section PGA Tournament Committee, 2007

#### HOW DID YOU START IN THE GOLF INDUSTRY?

I turned professional shortly after winning the 1983 Wyoming Men’s Amateur Championship, and played professionally on a full time basis until November, 1985, when I joined the staff at South Hills Country Club.

#### DID SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR INSPIRE OR MENTOR YOU?

The golf professional that inspired me, and many others, is Tom Sargent. Tom currently serves as the PGA Head Professional at Mesa Verde CC in Costa Mesa, Calif. He is the consummate golf professional, and a role model that I am proud to know and call a friend.

#### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT YOUR CURRENT COURSE?

About a month.

#### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN IN THE GAME?

- 1) Tremendous improvements in equipment, especially in the golf balls
- 2) Golf courses that significantly exceed 7,000 yards
- 3) Player demands for premium golf course conditions at all times

#### IF YOU WERE KING OF THE GOLF WORLD FOR ONE DAY, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

I would institute programs and develop facilities to guarantee growth of the game of golf through increased numbers of golfers. This would include better access to golf for players of all socio-economic backgrounds, and would alleviate

the increasingly high cost of developing and maintaining golf courses.

#### IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING IN THE GAME OF GOLF, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

I would “roll back” the distance that golf balls travel to allow top professional and amateur golf tournaments to be played at the venerable golf courses of moderate length. It is a shame that wonderful courses like Merion are not deemed suitable for today’s major championships!

#### WHAT’S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE THAT YOU FACE AT YOUR COURSE?

My biggest challenge right now is getting to know the membership. I cannot truly provide service until I know who the members are, and what their needs are, so that is a top priority for me right now.

#### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I love my job, and I love being a PGA Golf Professional. I think the part I like the most is the diversity of the job. No two days are the same, and it always stays fresh and fun.

#### IF YOU WERE NOT A GOLF PROFESSIONAL, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

I like to believe that I would own and operate a business. The business would be in some way connected to outdoor sports and activities, and my business partner would be my wife, Paula.



# Aldridge climbing the ladder

Things seem to be on track for Tyler Aldridge. The Nampa, Idaho, native made it through three stages of last fall's PGA Tour Qualifying School, and his T-74th finish in the Final Stage earned him full status on the Nationwide Tour for 2008.

"I'm very happy that I have some place to play," Aldridge said. "Happy, but not satisfied. The goal of all the guys out here is the PGA Tour. My plan is to enter 21 or 22 tournaments, and see how things stand."

Aldridge played in the Idaho Golf Association's junior program, playing out of Caldwell's Purple Sage Golf Course "ever since I picked up a club."

Then, "it" happened – something clicked in his young swing, and he won the 2002 Rocky Mountain Section PGA's Westfield Junior Championship, and went on that summer to win the National Westfield Junior PGA Championship.

He turned pro in 2004, and bounced around a little bit. He won the 2006 Idaho Open, and his name kept popping up in other regional tournaments. Then, after tweaking his swing with Jonathan Gibbs, the Director of Instruction at Eagle's BanBury Golf Club, he made his successful run through the Q School.



## Masingill Qs it up



Over the winter, Scott Masingill spent a little time playing golf in foreign parts. But it wasn't exactly a vacation. The

Payette, Idaho native traveled to Coral, Fla., where he fired his way through four rounds of the Champions Tour Q School, tied for 7th, and earned the chance to play on the senior's circuit in 2008.

He played the tour in 2006, and had to re-qualify this year. And his work is not yet done – because the competition has become so deep, making it through the Q School now only guarantees a spot into weekly open qualifiers for the tour's events. So Masingill spent much of January in California, honing his game for the upcoming season, then traveled to Hawaii for his qualifier in the Turtle Bay event. He skipped the events

in Florida in February, and will head back to California in March to try for the tournaments there.

"It's not realistic for me to follow the tour around all season, hoping I make it into tournaments through a Monday qualifier," he said. "But it does allow for more options about where I can compete this year."

Masingill has been a trucking company executive for a couple of decades, and had a long amateur career before turning professional. He is a nine-time Idaho Amateur Champion, a five-time Idaho Match Play Champion, the 1997 PNGA Master-40 Champion, and a member of the PNGA Hall of Fame.

When in Idaho, Masingill plays out of Osprey Meadows at Tamarack Resort. He won last year's Idaho Open, and will defend the event in late July if his schedule allows.

## Getting the itch?

### GET OUT THERE!

They seem to mean what they say in their ads, and it may indeed be time to get out there, with the weather finally turning. Play Golf America will be holding its first local event of the season at Ridgecrest Golf Club in Nampa, on March 28 from 10am to 5pm. The event will feature free clinics and lessons from PGA Professionals, free tee prizes, and a Family/Kids program. You'll also be able to try out the newest equipment on the range.

Call the Rocky Mountain Section PGA office for more information, 208-939-6028.

### LPGA-USGA GIRLS GOLF

The only national initiative of its kind, the LPGA-USGA Girls Golf program specifically provides an opportunity for girls age 7-17 to learn to play the game, experience competition, and build friendships, preparing them for a lifetime of enjoyment with the game of golf.

The program is administered by LPGA and PGA professionals, Girl Scouts leaders, Executive Women's Golf Association members, and other mentors within the community.

For more information and a schedule of events, contact Laurie Draper at the Rocky Mountain Section PGA office, 208-939-6028.





The par-4 18th at the Wynn Golf Club.

## Just Wynn, baby

Driven developer saves course from destruction

Steve Wynn, the Las Vegas hotel and casino magnate, as a legitimate Renaissance Man? Believe it. He's a truly self-made billionaire who, armed with a degree in English Literature, took over his father's struggling East Coast bingo parlor and parlayed it into a hotel and casino empire that led to his eventually being voted onto *TIME Magazine's* list of "World's Most Influential People".

He is a family man who has been married to the same woman for over 40 years, has an extensive rare art collection, and has no peripheral or night vision due to a rare eye disease. He authored the Las Vegas boom of the 1990s by building the Mirage, Treasure Island, and Bellagio resorts, then selling these to fund the recently-opened \$2.7 billion Wynn Las Vegas, the only casino resort in the world with a 5-Star, 5-Diamond rating.

On April 24, 2000, the Desert Inn resort celebrated its 50th anniversary by planting a granite time capsule to be opened in 2050. Three days later, on April 27, Wynn bought the resort and had it imploded to make room for the Wynn Las Vegas.

He walked the property for over a year, taking notes before beginning construction. His one main question with the old Desert Inn property: what to do with the 137-acre Desert Inn Golf Course that sits behind the demolished buildings? What to do with this extremely pricey real estate? He certainly had the money to do pretty much whatever he wanted with it.

But it was a beautiful piece of land. And the aesthetic and artistic nature of this supremely capitalistic man took over. And the Wynn Golf Club was born. He completely plowed under the old course and brought in Tom Fazio to work with him in designing this 7,000-yard par-70 championship layout.

## 2008 Idaho Championship Courses



**PNGA MEN'S  
AMATEUR  
JULY 7-12  
BanBury GC  
Eagle, Idaho**

**IGA MEN'S &  
WOMEN'S SENIOR  
AMATEUR**

**SEPTEMBER 9-11  
Jug Mountain Ranch  
McCall, Idaho**



**IGA MEN'S  
AMATEUR II  
AUGUST 16-17  
Shadow Valley GC  
Boise, Idaho**

## Idaho Golf Show

With snow still being bulldozed into piles in the parking lot of the Western Idaho Fairgrounds in early February, the Idaho Golf Show attracted all comers, some defiantly wearing short-sleeve golf shirts and hats. Once inside they were able to warm up to the sale prices of the equipment booths and the newest offerings of the region's courses.



# Fear and wonder, ham and egg

*Hi-tech meets high handicappers at the PGA Show*

by Garth Rhys

The history of science and advanced technology is punctuated by 'eureka' moments, breakthroughs that advance the field of endeavor – through serendipity or mental gymnastics – by quantum leaps. The world of golf has evolved into that realm of high tech and now permanently resides there, however uncomfortably for some.

The game's great leaps forward too have been punctuated by discoveries in workshops and labs – feathery to gutta percha, hickory to steel, persimmon to metal, etc. – far more so than epiphanies dug out of the dirt.

As the courts decide just how much of the game-changing development of the Pro-V1 was pure inspiration and how much was patent infringement, the next paradigm shift has already taken place. But oddly, though there are so many truly odd aspects of the game of golf, this one was taken in lock step. It seems that the 'eureka' cry of the 2008 season occurred not in a research lab but in an echo chamber.

No sooner had the USGA and the R&A changed the rules to allow clubs to be adjusted beyond weights – remember the last great buzz over screw-in weights in driver heads -- than Callaway, TaylorMade and Nickent all arrived at the Orlando PGA Merchandise Show with driver heads designed to accommodate a variety of shafts.

Golfers have been changing shafts in their drivers for generations, but the 2008 models can be changed in a matter of minutes, seconds with practice. It is unquestionably golf's next great leap, on a scale of balata to solid core. But like most hi-tech innovations visited upon average players over the past few decades, ability to take advantage of the advancement will rest largely in the bank account.

"Our new I-MIX Technology gives

golfers the same access and ability to experiment and optimize their equipment that tour professionals have," Jeff Colton, Senior Vice President of Research and Development for Callaway Golf, explained.

"No one's swing is the same from day to day; neither are the weather or course conditions. Our I-MIX Technology gives everyone the ability to quickly and easily customize their equipment, every time they play."

Certainly the pros have that advantage, plus one more. Usually their equipment is supplied by a company like Callaway or Nickent. For the average player, the Aldila, Fujikura, and Mitsubishi Rayon shafts designed to fit the receptors in the FT5 and FTi Callaway heads can cost upwards of \$400. Nonetheless, the remarkable technology – the Callaway system uses a wrench-like device, the TaylorMade and Nickent a screw driver-like tool – gives the average player the same

advantage Tour players have long enjoyed.

That seems to be the theme of 2008.

Pros have caddies, so now there are a slew of hand-held yardage devices like SkyCaddie, ProShot, Garmin's Golflogix, SureShot and Sonocaddie, among others. These gadgets will tell players precisely how far their ball traveled before it entered the hazard. The ball they lost is now likely one perfectly fitted to their game, just like the pros. Bridgestone now offers a 'ball fitting' on a portable launch monitor. They have all the top brands on site and let players hit their favorites and then compare launch angle, spin rate, ball speed, trajectory, etc. with a Bridgestone ball.

Now that Titleist has been dinged for \$300 million and \$2 on every dozen Pro-V1s sold for infringement on Bridgestone patents (the Callaway suit should be settled soon), better players should not be surprised if the Tour B330-S Bridgestone ball is ideal for their game.



**Paula Creamer, No. 5 in the Women's World Rankings, signs a few autographs at the PGA Show in Orlando.**

On the new ball front, the Callaway TOURi (like a reverse play on iPod) could make low handicappers forget all about patents and the Pro-V1. And TopFlite's new FREAK distance ball even tells you when and why to use it: "Tee box intimidation; bombing drives past the long hitters; scrambles- every scramble needs a Freak; reaching the long par-5s in two."

In 2008, that second shot will most likely be struck with a hybrid (or, as Nick Faldo insists on referring to them, a 'rescue club').

TourEdge has a new line of truly superb clubs, Exotics – the Xtreme Spin wedges with variable (2, 4 and 6 grams) weighting inserts are outstanding – and their XCG Hybrids look as good as they feel and perform. Wilson is back with Open Champion Padraig Harrington, but their new line of FYbrid clubs, incorporating more of the fairway metal feel and look to hybrids, are good enough to get the iconic brand back in average players' bags. Jesse Ortiz has created beautiful clubs for Bobby Jones and nor surprisingly Adams has hybrids that can change anyone's game. Surprisingly, the new Adams driver and three-metal are outstanding.

And while out on the course, more and more golfers every year are aware of potential sun damage and are protecting their eyes. As a result, the golf market is flooded with sunglass lines including high-enders Oakley, PeakVision and Maui Jim. Relative newcomers Callaway and Tifosi have joined the fray, but the definite star of the Orlando Show was Sundog Eyewear. Star power, combined with a fine product at reasonable prices, matters. Sundog has exclusive lines by Mike Weir and Hunter Mahan, but when Paula Creamer arrived to sign autographs and introduce her latest Sundog Paula Creamer Collection, she stole the show.

It's all great stuff, it's all hi-tech, and none of it explains why handicaps have not gone down appreciably since the days of persimmon and balata. Maybe one day, one of the guys in the lab coat will have a 'eureka' moment on that part of the game of golf.

*Garth Rhys is our "man on the street", our "go-to-guy", at the forefront of all things golf, although nobody has ever actually seen the guy – we just get his expense reports.*