



# Great Golf

LOCAL GOLF PROS DISCUSS  
THEIR PASSION FOR THE  
GAME AND OFFER TIPS TO  
IMPROVE YOURS

BY RACHELINA BONACCI

*Golfers – from beginner to pro – will find plenty to love at Howard County’s scenic and challenging courses. \* The Waverly Woods Golf Club is an outstanding course designed by Arthur Hills, and upscale Hobbits Glen, three-time host for the Champions Tour, has recently undergone a complete overhaul. \* Howard County also has such neighborhood golf courses as Timbers of Troy, Willow Springs and Fairway Hills. \* The lush Turf Valley offers 36 holes of championship golf and a full-service European spa for relaxing after a long day on the links. \* Those who prefer their golf on a smaller scale will appreciate the three putt-putt offerings, where they can practice indoors and out. \* We talked with local pros for advice on how to enjoy an hour, an afternoon, or an entire season on the greens.*



Turf Valley

KENNETH LOSURDO, JR.



## Kevin Smith

General Manager

### THE TIMBERS AT TROY

**Jack Nicklaus said, "A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave." When and how did you start playing golf?**

I started playing golf with friends when I was 25. I had just gotten out of the military and was looking for a hobby. A friend turned me on to golf, and I was instantly hooked. I started playing and practicing on a daily

basis and was fortunate enough to turn pro in just two years.

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about The Timbers at Troy?**

The Timbers is set up for all skill levels; we have five sets of tee markers, which ensure a fair test of golf. We are open to the public and have a full-service clubhouse with grille room, as well as both driving and practice ranges. You can also take lessons at our course to sharpen your game.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

Number 12 is by far our toughest hole. A good tee shot will carry the wetlands and travel far enough to set up an easy lay-up for your second shot over another wetland. The best approach is to an elevated green guarded by bunkers on the left.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

Golf is a game for everyone, no matter your age or skill level. It's a game that's enjoyed by kids, adults and senior citizens. It's a game that you can play with your mom, dad and even your grandparents. It's truly a game for life.

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

The Timbers "Player Club Card" is an annual player program that comes with a free round of golf at the time of purchase – along with a USGA Handicap service and discounts on greens fees and pro shop merchandise for an entire year.

6100 Marshalee Drive, Elkridge  
410-313-4653  
[www.timbersgolf.aitrk.com](http://www.timbersgolf.aitrk.com)



## Craig R. Shaffer

General Manager

### WAVERLY WOODS GOLF COURSE

**Jack Nicklaus said, "A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave."**

**When and how did you start playing golf?**

Golf is a family sport in my family. At any given time, there are three generations playing the game. What better place to see the character and personality of your grandfather than on the course? The game creates a great connection between the generations. Golf has remained a common language at the dinner table.

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about Waverly Woods?**

Waverly Woods is a championship course that golfers of all abilities can appreciate. We offer expansive areas for driving, and ways to test better players as they get closer to the hole. Skilled players will need to think their way around the course. As the greens get faster, they get tougher.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

Don't let the course par dictate how you will play the hole. Play to your strengths and you'll score better. For instance, on number 18, a long par 4 for the 2012 season, play your tee shot well left to avoid the huge fairway bunkers on the right and allow for a better angle to the green. There's nothing wrong with a pitch and putt par here; going for broke may very well result in a high number.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

We have a great championship golf course and a practice facility to match, with four instructors ready to work on anything the golfer may need. Come out and enjoy a cold drink on the patio overlooking the 9th green. It's a beautiful view, and you'll be inspired to learn more about what Waverly Woods can offer.

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

In 2012, we'll have a "fast-play thank-you." It's an incentive to play weekend morning rounds in under four hours and 20 minutes. When you do, we'll reimburse a portion of your greens fee as a thank-you.

And over the winter, our “can't miss” offer was our temperature pricing. From December 1 to February 29, golfers pay either our winter rates or the temperature at the time they tee off – whichever is lowest. It's been a hugely popular promotion.

2100 Warwick Way, Marriottsville  
410-313-9182  
www.waverlywoods.com



## Jeff Sprague

PGA Professional

### WILLOW SPRINGS GOLF COURSE

**Jack Nicklaus said, “A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave.” When and how did you start playing golf?**

I grew up in upstate New York and began playing golf when I was 12. We started playing in April if the snow had melted and if the course wasn't too wet. I learned from my dad, then attended junior clinics and took a few lessons from our club pro. In the summers, a few of us juniors would walk 18-36 holes almost every day.

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about Willow Springs?**

It's a mid-length, par 62, links-style course that is friendly for recreational players while challenging for more experienced golfers. We have a lighted driving range, with multiple target greens, that's long enough to hit any club in your bag.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

Our first hole is a dog-leg right par four about 400 yards long from



COURTESY OF WAVERLY WOODS

Waverly Woods

the back tee. Right off the bat your tee shot has to avoid a large pond guarding the entire right side of the hole. Even after a good tee shot you can't relax – since the second shot has to cross a creek to an elevated green behind two large sand bunkers. Once you hit the green, putting is straightforward – but you have to get there first.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

Golf has been called the game for a lifetime. It's a game for all ages, with as much or as little challenge as you desire. You return to the game over and over – because of that one great shot, or to redeem yourself from that one awful shot.

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

We have an ongoing special where juniors pay half price when accompanied by a playing adult. The senior rates begin at age 50 and are available seven days a week. And for those who enjoy practicing, a Range

Card lets you pre-pay for ten baskets of balls and receive three baskets free.

12980 Livestock Road, Sykesville  
410-489-7700  
www.willowspringsgolfcourse.com



## Nick Spinnato

PGA Director of Golf

### TURF VALLEY

**Jack Nicklaus said, “A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave.” When and how did you start playing golf?**

My father taught me the game – not only how to play, but to honor the game. It's a competition against the course and the elements, not as much against a fellow golfer. Integrity, courtesy, and strength are the cornerstones of the game: I learned it all from my father, who plays and serves on the board at an area club.



COURTESY OF WILLOW SPRINGS

Willow Springs

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about Turf Valley?**

Turf Valley has everything for every level of player. We have two full championship courses. One is long and wide open; the other is shorter and tighter. We also have excellent practice facilities, including a Learning Center, and a 150-yard short game.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

In my opinion, Par 4 number 4 on the Hialeah Course is our most difficult hole. It's a long uphill tee shot that flattens out to a dogleg right. A hint: minimize the big number and play it smart. Because of its length, players rarely reach the hole in two. Give yourself a chance to chip up and make 4, or at worst 5.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

Golf is a great game with something for everyone. The challenge of the game – and the satisfaction of executing a shot – bring people back. Some just enjoy the exercise, some enjoy the beauty of the course and environment, some enjoy being with their family on the course. It brings people together, or gives you the chance to walk alone.

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

Turf Valley is a private golf club, and we are offering a special on initiation fees at this time. Guests of the hotel, guests of members and golfers participating in charity tournaments are always welcome.

2700 Turf Valley Road, Ellicott City  
410-465-1500  
www.turfvalley.com

**Don Van Deusen**

Assistant General Manager

**FAIRWAY HILLS GOLF CLUB**

**Jack Nicklaus said, "A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave." When and how did you start playing golf?**

I took lessons when I was 14 years old from a social studies teacher who was a PGA Golf Professional at a New York resort during the summer. I had a group of friends that played together most of the time at Salisbury (now Eisenhower) State Park and Bethpage State Park.

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about Fairway Hills?**

Our staff offers great service to every customer whether a newcomer or regular at Fairway Hills. The driving range has good hitting mats and new clean golf balls, a sand trap and putting green. The course offers a challenge to all golfers. It's an ideal course for outings with several risk/reward holes and reachable par 5s.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

The most difficult hole on the course is number 2, "Battle Brook." The hole plays over the river three times with environmental areas at each crossing. Play the tee shot over the middle of the hill in the first fairway. Too short and you roll in the hazard. Too long and it's out of bounds. Depending upon the tee used, a player can hit anything from a 7 iron to driver. Make sure you hit the center of the second landing area with your second shot. The approach to the green is elevated. The wind will be in your face. The green is undulating, sloping from left to right, so stay below the hole.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

Fairway Hills is the home of the First Tee of Howard County. Each year we have over 700 youngsters from 5 to 17 years old participate in this junior golf program that teaches life skills and character development. We also have clinics and a summer league for juniors.

For adults we have a progression of lessons called Play Golf Columbia with three levels of instruction, from the basics to playing the course. We also have leagues: The Men's Senior 18 Hole league, Ladies 9-Hole league, and Men's and Ladies Twilight league.



# Mini Madness

*Putt-putt golf is a great way to practice – or just have fun*

## Rocky Gorge Driving Range

Golf Practice Range, Mini-Golf Course and Baseball Batting Cage.

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www.rockygorgegolf.com

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410-715-3054  
www.columbiaassociation.com

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410-579-GOLF (4653)  
www.monsterminigolf.com

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

During the summer we have a Monday-Wednesday-Friday special that includes golf, cart, hot dog and drink at reduced rates. And in the fall we have a Saturday-Sunday afternoon special.

5100 Columbia Road, Columbia  
410-730-1112  
www.fairwayhillsgolfclub.com



**Joan Lovelace**

*Head Pro and General Manager*

**HOBBITS GLEN AND FAIRWAY HILLS**

**Jack Nicklaus said, "A kid grows up a lot faster on the golf course. Golf teaches you how to behave." When and how did you start playing golf?**

Both of my parents played golf and I learned to play at the age of 12. I played once or twice a week but only with my parents because it was too intimidating to play with anyone else. There were no other girls to play with. As a freshman at Howard High School, I was recruited to play on the golf team by Coach Frank Lupe, and became the first female to play a men's varsity sport in Howard County. I played all four years as the number one or number two seed. After college, I wanted to teach golf, so began working at Hobbits. Now I'm a member of the Club Pro and Teaching Division of the LPGA and PGA. I thank my parents every

time I get an opportunity for teaching me this great game.

**What can both beginners and pros appreciate about Hobbits Glen?**

We have been voted Best Golf Club in Howard County by Columbia magazine nine years in a row, beginning in 2002. The course was built for the tour player as well as the player just beginning to love the game. Hobbits is fair to the players, with each hole clearly laid out. And our driving range, which is open to the public, is an incredible place to practice your game. With 25 hitting stations and a huge putting green, you could get lost here for hours.

**Can you offer a tip about the most difficult hole on the course?**

Number 13 is one of the toughest par 4s on the course. The tee shot is critical: too far right and you are in the hazard; too far left on the fairway, and you're blocked out by the trees. Split the fairway and you're in good shape to hit to the green. The

approach shot can be tricky. If you miss the green right, a lucky shot would be in the bunker. Everything else will hit the hill and bounce into the hazard. The green can be a challenge when there is a front pin. Players who stay below the hole find the bottom of the cup easily.

**How would you inspire non-golfers to strive to be the next Chi Chi Rodriguez or Michelle Wie?**

If you've ever considered playing in the "fundraiser scramble" with all your friends at work, then "Get Golf Ready" is for you. The program is designed to teach everything you need to know to step onto a golf course in five short lessons. It's taught by trained PGA and LPGA professionals who make sure you have fun each step of the way.

Personally, I love to teach. There is nothing better than helping a student who is struggling with an aspect of their game. Sometimes changing one small part of the swing can create better contact and a smile.

**Are there any on-going promotions and pricing that our readers should know about?**

Hobbits Glen offers specials throughout the year. If you are a member or just want to come try out the course before you join there are specials for you.

11130 Willow Bottom Drive,  
Columbia  
410-730-5980  
www.hobbitsglengolf.com



Hobbits Glen

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The Timbers at Troy