



Member Profile
Ben Hollerbach
 Atlanta, Ga., USA

Ben Hollerbach is originally from Nashville, Tenn. His family moved around a little, and Ben graduated from Jenks High School in Jenks, Okla.

“I started playing at age 5,” he says. “My father grew up playing golf and raised his boys (brother, Joe) the same way. I began playing tournaments around age 7 or 8. I played on three state championship-winning high school golf teams. My mother, too, began playing golf while I was in high school.”

He studied industrial design at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Ga. While there, Ben focused on his books and did not play collegiate golf.

“I began playing with hickories in the fall of 2009 and played my first hickory tournament at Tad Moore’s Southern 4-ball in 2011,” he says.

Now living in Atlanta, Ga., Ben, who is not married, works for the Institute for Electronics and Nanotechnology at Georgia Tech.

How often do you play hickories?

At this point, nearly 60 percent of my rounds are played with hickory. Predominantly this is preparation for an upcoming tournament, but I’ve become more inclined to play them on a random Saturday than my modern clubs.

What’s in your play set?

It’s always in flux. Here’s what’s current:

- Tad Moore Tom Morris Model Driver
- Tad Moore Tom Morris Model Spoon
- Tad Moore Tom Morris Model Cleek
- MacGregor Popular Driving Iron
- MacGregor Popular Mid-Iron
- MacGregor Popular Mashie Iron
- MacGregor Popular Approach Cleek
- MacGregor Popular Mashie
- MacGregor Popular Mashie
- MacGregor Popular Mashie Niblick
- MacGregor Airway Pitcher
- E. Just Bros. Niblick
- Tad Moore Chicopee Putter

Favorite club?

The lighter of the two mashies that I carry. It was one of the first hickory clubs I ever purchased and became the backbone of my set.

What ball do you play?

I prefer the 2011 Bridgestone B-330 RXS. As this ball is just two years old and hard to find, I’ve been recently playing with the Wilson Staff Duo.

Favorite course for hickories?

Lookout Mountain Golf Club near Chattanooga, Tenn.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Mid Pines, a fantastic golf course for hickories and the tournament comes at the perfect time for a late fall getaway.

Any particular player or aspect of golf history you especially enjoy?

As much as we want to believe that the game of golf is drasti-



Ben Hollerbach at the 2011 U.S. Hickory Open.

cally different than it was 100 years ago, it really isn’t. The same things that are debated today – the length of the golf courses, distance the ball carries, pace of play, equipment regulations, etc. – were hot button topics back then. The game has always been about navigating your ball down a long field of holes in the fewest strokes possible, nothing more.

Best thing about hickory golf?

Hickory golf is a game of simplicity and patience. For me, enjoyment doesn’t come so much from the score on the card, rather, the challenge each shot presents.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

Francis Ouimet’s win at the 1913 U.S. Open began the Golden Era of golf. Now 100 years later, hickory golf is primed for another golden age. As country clubs across the country begin to honor milestones within their past, hickory golf has the potential to provide a living account of history through our championships. Imagine honoring Walter Hagen’s first U.S. Open by playing the 2014 US Hickory Open at Midlothian Country Club outside of Chicago, or Robert Gardner’s win at the 1915 U.S. Amateur by playing at the Country Club of Detroit. Much like the National Hickory Open’s play at the Philadelphia Cricket Club earlier this year, our tournaments should partner with clubs of historic merit to better expand the quality and reach of play.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

It was either “American Triumvirate” by James Dodson or “The Golf Courses of the British Isles” by Bernard Darwin.

Note: Ben is one of the country’s top hickory golfers and is usually found near the top of the leaderboard. In the 2012 U.S. Hickory Open, he finished second to Tony Smarrelli of Pinehurst, N.C. in a dramatic one-hole playoff. Paired with Pat Boyd, Ben won the title in his first hickory event, the 2011 Southern 4-Ball.