



MEMBER PROFILE

Dave Ramos

Marshall, Michigan USA

Dave Ramos is one of the stalwart stars on the Michigan Hickory Tour. The Marshall, Mich., native has a sweet swing and a great game.

“Golf was an early interest, even before I got on a golf course,” he says. “When I was in sixth grade my brother bought me a used set of junior golf clubs. I’ve been an avid golfer since.”

After graduating high school, Ramos attended Montana State University for his freshman year because “I loved to fly fish and loved the mountains. In fact, I loved them so much it was tough to attend classes. So I decided to finish up at Michigan State.”

While at MSU, Ramos spent a study abroad semester with a local family in Kathmandu, Nepal, exploring the country and the culture. “It was a great experience,” he says. He graduated with a bachelors in anthropology, then treated himself to a bit more travel, spending the new millennium New Year’s Eve in Moscow, Russia, followed by a month-long journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway, finishing in Beijing.

Ramos returned to Montana, working as a wrangler and elk hunting guide. He has also been a painter, carpenter, and woodworker. He is currently employed as a supervisor by Firekeepers Casino in Battle Creek, Mich.

“I got into hickories about five years ago,” Ramos says. “It was my love of woodworking and golf history, that led me into this great sport. I had an idea to try and replicate a set of long nose clubs. Though I didn’t find much information on the construction methods of these clubs, I did discover the Society of Hickory Golfers and Ralph Livingston’s wonderful website. A few phone calls and emails later, and I hooked up with the Michigan group of hickory golfers.”

When work permits, Dave plays regularly with the Michigan guys and has occasionally brought his nephew, Garrett, with him. (Garrett, by the way, was featured, along with other young hickory stars, in the Autumn 2014 edition of the *Wee Nip*.)

How often do you play hickories?

I have been playing hickories exclusively for four years now. I’ve taken my moderns to the range a couple of times, I just can’t get used to them anymore.

What’s in your play set?

I have a set of Stewarts I like to use for casual play. For tournaments I’ve assembled a set of Kro-flites that I really like.

Tournament Set:

Driver - Wright and Ditson
Brassie - A.J. Spalding Bros.
Mid-Iron - Kroydon J-8
3-9 Irons - Spalding Kro-flite
Niblick - Kroydon P-8
Putter - MacGregor OA

Favorite club?

My Wright and Ditson driver. I just really like the feel when it is well struck. The click it makes is very satisfying.



Dave Ramos and favorite hickory partner, his nephew, Garrett.

What ball do you play?

I play the Callaway Supersoft. It’s consistent and has great feel.

Favorite course for hickories?

I enjoy playing hickories anywhere, but I my favorite course is the course I grew up on, Alwyn Downs Golf course in Marshall, Mich. The 1921 course is almost obsolete for modern players, but plays perfectly for hickories. Small push up greens make it perfect for the hickory game.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Without a doubt Mid Pines. I just think it’s a first-class tournament, played on a great course, in one of the nicest places in the U.S.

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

*I really enjoy learning about early American golf and the professionals. I think that is why I have an affinity for American-made golf equipment. It’s nice to be able to link a club with a certain professional and golf club. Course architecture and agronomy are also fascinating to me. The most recent book I’ve read is the *Bulletin of the USGA greens section*. It is a must read for anyone wanting to learn about course management in the 1920s.*

Best thing about hickory golf?

It’s the lack of expectation. It’s just fun to swing a hickory. It’s nice to hold a hickory, and great just to look at a hickory. Sometimes, the last thing you’re worried about is hitting a great shot. When you do it is just a bonus, a great experience.

Ideas to promote hickory golf?

Although I do get many questions about my hickories when I show up at the course, not many people ask to play with them. I don’t think people realize the good golf that can be played with hickories. I think more people would try them if they were made more accessible. I always let everyone who shows interest in my clubs know that I have extra sets and that they are welcome to play with me anytime. I think this grassroots approach is one of the best ways to spread knowledge of our game. Hickory events at local golf clubs also are great ways to encourage new players.