



Member Profile

Durel Billy

Puyallup, Wash., USA

Durel Billy was introduced to the world in the heart of Cajun Country, New Orleans, La. The family traveled the world following his father, an Air Force serviceman. Amsterdam, Holland, was home for while, but the family eventually landed in Washington state which Billy considers his home.

Billy excelled at football and basketball at Clover Park High School in Lakewood, Wash., but as yet had never touched a golf club.

"In 1999 I was introduced to the game by friends one Sunday at Pacific Lutheran University Golf Course in Spanaway, Wash.," he says. "I was hooked. I hit as many balls as I could, I read Harvey's (Penick) book, Hogan's books – I studied grip and swing images for hours to improve."

Billy so took to the game that he decided to work one day a week at his local golf course. "I got myself down to a 4-handicap and turned professional," he says. "During that time I taught junior and adult clinics and supervised golf events."

By 2013 Billy had made friends throughout the Puget Sound area as well as across the country. He decided to found a golf club with a schedule that would allow it to move around from course to course, thus Atlantic Pacific National Golf Club was born.

"In the fall of 2013 I wanted to create a classy fun, end-of-the-year event where everyone wore knickers and ties as I have always admired this look," he says. "So, I created the Vintage Hickory Invitational. It was a stretch for me, as I had never played hickory clubs before, nor did I own any; in fact, I had personally not even seen anyone playing hickories before that. But, to my surprise, I found clubs and our members were all in. So, on that fateful day Oct. 13, 2013, at my very first hickory event, I was hooked and have been ever since."

Billy and his wife, Christina, live in Puyallup. They have three children: son Jordan, a soccer standout and now a Nintendo programmer; daughter Jazmin a sophomore in college on a basketball scholarship; and daughter Hannah, a senior in high school who is, Billy hopes, heading to college as a walk-on on the golf team.

How often do you play hickories?

I play with them 100 percent of the time now, and practice with them 90 percent of the time.

What's in your play set?

I've resisted using replicas because half the fun of the hickory clubs is the search for what works for you. So, the following are all originals:

Putter – Glasgow Golf Co.
Niblick – T. Stewart 0-90
Niblick – T. Stewart 90-110
Lofter – T. Stewart 120-140
Mashie – T. Stewart 145-160
Mashie – T. Stewart 165-180
Driving Iron – T. Stewart 185-210
Brassie No markings – 210-230

Favorite club?

I would have to say my T. Stewart lofter it allows me to have so many options on the course.

What ball do you play?

I play the McIntyre mesh Ouimet.

Favorite course for hickories?

Chambers Bay – home of the 2015 United States Open and The Open Before The Open Hickory Championship.



Durel Billy, founder of the AP National Golf club, is also the organizer of National Hickory Golf Day.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Ken Holtz's Arizona Desert Hickory.

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

I enjoy the personal stories, and stories of the great matches. I am inspired by the Greatest Game Ever Played about the U.S. Open in 1913 when Francis Ouimet shocked the world. His opponents, Harry Vardon and Ted Ray, traveled to Washington state and played an exhibition match against Robert Johnstone of the historic Seattle Golf & Country Club; and with Jim Barnes at the historic Tacoma Golf & Country Club, right in my back yard. I now have had the enjoyment of walking where hickory giants once walked and played. Pretty cool.

Best thing about hickory golf?

Falling in love with the game again, in a way only a hickory player would understand. The feeling. Collecting clubs with cleek marks from local Washington state golf clubs and then hitting them at that course is truly special.

Ideas to promote hickory golf?

National Hickory Golf Day! Demos, clinics and most importantly tournaments. Don't be afraid to host events, follow your instincts.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

Picture Analysis of Golf Strokes – A Complete Book of Instruction, by Jim Barnes. He was ahead of his time.

Note: Durel Billy was the organizer for the recent National Hickory Golf Day promotion. Several clubs and playing groups around the country followed his lead and held events on May 1. There is every reason to believe the event will grow and that National Hickory Golf Day will become, not just a regular spot on the yearly calendar, but a successful method of promoting the sport in large way.