



Member Profile

Scott Staudacher

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Hickory golf for Scott Staudacher began with a James Spence putting cleek found in a pile of hickories that a friend had requested be photographed and sold on eBay.

“As all such stories seem to go,” he says, “one club led to another and I soon had a complete set to play, and willing friends in the Grand Rapids, Mich. area all too eager for fresh hickory rookies to join them on regular hickory outings – and to sell clubs to as well.”

That was about six years ago. Now an avid hickory player, collector, and SoHG member, Scott can be found playing on the Michigan Hickory Tour as much as time permits.

Born in Bay City, Mich. and a member of the football team and golf team during high school years, Scott moved to the west side of the state (Rockford, north of Grand Rapids) in 1985 to enhance his career in the automobile business. He’s been sales manager at a local Chevy dealership for the past 21 years. For a time, Scott also raced 10-speed bikes and still follows such events as the Tour de France. He and Julie, his “wonderful and supportive” wife of 23 years, have two children, Nicholas, 12, and Lydia, 11. “They are my true motivation in life and never fail to inspire and challenge me on a daily basis,” he says.

How often do you play hickories?

Every chance I get, approximately 1-2 rounds per week on average (more if time would allow).

What’s in your play set?

Play club (brassie) is a stripe-top MacGregor with a spring-face added recently by Sonny Chappie and can be hit from the tee or fairway; musselsback driving iron from Kenneth Bros.; Stewart mid iron and mashie iron; D. Anderson diamond back mashie; Stewart spade mashie; Sportsman’s Emporium mashie niblick; Stewart niblick; and a Mills RNG model putter.

Favorite club?

This to me is the beauty of hickory golf – that it takes, it appears, many years to acquire the perfect play set. I must be getting close as I am making fewer and fewer changes. I currently love every club in my bag, and little by little they’re returning the love, as I work to discover their sweet spots.

What ball do you play?

The Nike Power Soft. It’s a great two-piece, soft-feeling ball with a great amount of distance. Excellent hickory ball.

Favorite course for hickories?

I love old golf courses (pre-1930) style. Any MacKenzie course I’ve been on has been awesome and most Donald Ross courses leave me wanting to play more. My club course, Silver Lake C.C. in Rockford, Mich., is a gem of an old-style course built in 1925 that I never tire of playing with hickories.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Belvedere Hickory Open in Charlevoix, Mich. is a wonder-



Scott Staudacher prepares to launch one off the first tee at the Belvedere Hickory Open in Charlevoix, Mich.

ful event on a 1925 Willie Watson design course. The club members of Belvedere and the Charlevoix setting make this event a memorable step back in time.

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

The aspect of hickory golf I’ve come to enjoy most is the study of golf architecture and course design. And to think most of the old courses were done with horse and plow and no modern machinery. After 80-90 years, many of these courses rival the best, and survived the test of time and design.

Best thing about hickory golf?

The players and collectors! We are all so passionate about our clubs and the love of the game. Also, from my experience anyone who shows an interest in collecting or playing hickories has a vast support system willing to help with questions or equipment issues.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

We have a fantastic group of hickory golfers in Michigan who gather on a regular basis both on and off the course to play and share experiences. My feeling is that all members of the SoHG are responsible for the promotion of hickory golf through our local clubs. All we need to do is get more hickory clubs in the hands of players. I’ve yet to meet a player who is not hooked and searching out a play set after he’s hit one fine shot off the face of a hickory club.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

The Spirit of St. Andrews by Alister MacKenzie (Sleeping Bear Press, 1995). I’ve been enjoying a study of golf architecture and Alister MacKenzie stands out as my favorite designer. He’s created some fantastic golf courses. The book is a great read with great insights. It’s opened my eyes to the routing of courses and golf holes and given me a greater appreciation of both.