



Member Profile

Barbara Kopec

Orlando, Fla.

Barb Kopec is originally from Newton Falls, N.Y., in the heart of the Adirondack mountains. "Summer is beautiful, all three weeks of it," she says.

Athletic by nature, Barb played high school soccer, basketball, track and field, but no golf. The local course had only nine holes and the high school team, boys only, was lucky if it had five players. "The only time I was ever on the course was in the winter when my dad took us sledding," she says.

Barb and her husband, Ted, married in 1983. He was on active Air Force duty for 18 of those years, so the couple has called lived in Colorado, Delaware, South Carolina, Texas and now Orlando, Fla..

Barb has worked for the Department of Defense for 25 years. After his retirement, Ted joined her, both now working for the U.S. Navy's contracting office in Orlando.

They began playing golf in the early-1980's at Lowry AFB in Denver. Barb says she began to golf more regularly in 1987 when the Air Force moved them to Dover, Del.

"Once the golf bug bit, Ted became an avid collector of classic clubs and of golf knowledge in general," she says. Through his research, he came to know Tad Moore and Randy Jensen. It was Jensen who inspired the hickory bug, asking Ted to fill in for a player in the Southern Four-Ball. "He lent Ted a set of clubs and said that he'd love it. I went along for support. I was more of a grip-it-and-rip-it kind of girl, and I wasn't sure hickory golf, with its wood clubs and fancy clothes, was something I'd be interested in," Barb says.

It didn't take long for hickory golf to work its magic on her. I had so much fun watching the matches, meeting the most wonderful people, sharing stories, seeing all the guys and girls dressed up in their knickers," she says. Listening to Ted talk about what it was like to hit a good shot with a hickory club closed the deal. "I told him that next year I wanted to play too. And I wanted the clubs and the clothes. I wanted to be a part of this wonderful thing."

How often do you play hickories?

Two tournaments a year, Mid-Pines and Tad's Hickory Classic. We practice with the wood clubs for a few weeks before each tournament.

What's in your play set?

A mix of old and modern hickory – Tad's irons, mid-iron, mashie, mashie niblick, niblick, Louisville Golf Driving Brassie and Baffy, a Tad Moore Bulldog, some ancient brassie that I use for driving, a putter with no identifying marks, and assorted other old irons.

Favorite club?

The unidentifiable brassie I use off the tee and out of the fairway. It's my most consistent club.

What ball do you play?

I'm not picky as long as it's a pretty soft ball.



Barb and Ted Kopec ready for a round of hickory golf.

Favorite course for hickories?

Mid-Pines for sure. But I think the course we recently joined here in Orlando, Rio Pinar CC, is going to be a great layout for the hickory game. I can't wait to get out there with the wooden clubs!

Favorite hickory tournament?

The two I play, Tad's "Woody" and Mid Pines. I may be a little biased since they're the only two I play.

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

I love the Francis Ouimet story, and I enjoy reading, watching shows, or hearing stories about any of the old hickory players and matches. I think that the hickory era was amazing, what those guys did with those clubs, you can't compare it to today's statistics, it's simply a different game. I would love to watch any one of today's professionals come out and play in our tournaments, under the conditions we do. I'm curious if they'd have as much fun as we do.

Best thing about hickory golf?

It's the people. Everyone says it, but it's really true. If I didn't love golf, I'd still want to be with these people. They are some of the most wonderful, colorful, interesting, diverse individuals I've ever had the pleasure of calling friends.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

I am not much of an idea person and I'm grateful for the SoGH and the work it does, and people who take the time to promote the world of hickory golf. But we do need to figure out how to get more women out there!

Most recent book on golf that you read?

Randy Jensen's "Playing Hickory Golf."