



Member Profile Greg Smith De Forest, Wisc.

High school was an important time for Greg Smith. Outside of algebra, history and English, he met the love of his life, Ann, and was introduced to golf. Ann would later nurture her husband's love of the game with his first set of clubs – Wilson Gene Sarazen autograph model. “This means I’ve been playing golf – on and off – for better than 46 years,” he says.

Greg and Ann graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire and make their home in De Forest, Wisc. He is a member of the Cherokee Country Club in Madison, which, he says, is “well suited for hickory play.”

The couple have two sons. One, Ben, is in the entertainment lighting business in Vancouver, BC, where he designed and operated the special effects for the 2010 Winter Olympics. His brother, Jake, is a senior design engineer for Spectrum Brands in Madison and is a hickory golfer who has joined his dad at several events.

Greg currently works for Madison Gas and Electric Co. Prior to that, he owned a small construction company that specialized in remodeling vintage homes. “Maybe my fascination with older homes sparked my interest in the Victorian period of history and hickory golf,” he says.

“After reading an article about a group of knicker-clad hickory golfers, I grabbed a few wooden clubs that I had on display at home – a mashie, a niblick, a brassy and a putter – and went to the golf course,” Greg says. “The first few holes I could barely get the ball airborne. A few rounds later, I was hooked! The next thing I knew I was playing in the National Hickory Championship where Ann, in her award winning outfits, has been my gallery for the last four years. 2011 will make my fifth year and I hope to play in this event until I can’t swing a club anymore.”

How often do you play hickories?

I play several times per week weather permitting – tough to play all year in Wisconsin. When I am not playing, I am practicing. I rarely play with modern clubs.

What’s in your play set?

Driver	Macgregor	10 degrees	45 inches
Spoon	Jack White	18 degrees	43 inches
Bulldog	Gordon Smith Special	20 degrees	41 inches
Mid Iron	Macgregor	20 degree	40 inches
Mid Mashie	Kroydon	25 degrees	39 inches
Jigger	Jack Jolly	30 degrees	38½ inches
Mashie	Piccadilly	40 degrees	37 inches
Mashie Niblick	Anderson Anstruther	45 degrees	37 ½ inches
Niblick	Macgregor Poplar	47 degrees	37 inches
Niblick	Laurie Auchterlonie	51 degrees	36 inches
Niblick	PGA (sand iron)	56 degrees	34 inches
Putter	Macgregor	05 degrees	32½ inches

Favorite club?

Jack Jolly Jigger; very versatile club; works well from fairway, rough and around the green. The history around this club is very interesting. The Jack Jolly Sporting Goods Company still exists in New York State.

What ball do you play?

The Wilson 50/50 is what I currently use. But I have used the ProVI and various replicas as well.



Gentleman golfer and his lovely bride. Greg and Ann Smith are shown on the Oakhurst Links ninth green during the 2009 tournament.

Favorite course for hickories?

Oakhurst for the NHC and Cherokee because I can play there every day.

Favorite hickory tournament?

The National Hickory Championship. Hopefully in 2011 I will play the U.S. Hickory Open, the All American Open and the C.B. Macdonald tournaments.

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

Bobby Jones. I admire his skills and instruction. And Gene Sarazen because my first set of clubs had his autograph. I also enjoy the philosophy of golf course construction and design of Alister MacKenzie.

Best thing about hickory golf?

If and when you hit a good shot you know it was you and not technology.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

I have put together a few sets to leave at the golf course for other members to try out. I hope to have 12 sets available to get others involved. I have recently sent clubs to new players in Upper Michigan to get them started.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

“The Spirit of St. Andrews” by Alister MacKenzie. I have started to collect books on the history of golf, golf lessons and club repair.