



Member Profile

Jim Von Lossow

Seattle, Wash., USA

Early in January 2013 hickory golf veteran Martin Pool asked his friend Jim Von Lossow if he had ever played with hickory clubs.

"I said no," Von Lossow recalls. "I never gave it much thought, plus I thought the clubs, being so old, would simply break."

Pool reassured him and took Von Lossow out for 18 holes on the local muni.

"It was a pleasant surprise, so much more fun than I had ever expected," Von Lossow says. "That was the day I got hooked on playing hickory golf. My first ever round playing hickory golf on a par 71 course – and I shot a 76!"

After his introduction to hickory, Von Lossow and Pool began a quest to enlist other golfers. They located other SoHG members as well as some Golf Collector Society members, and created the Northwest Hickory Players, of which Von Lossow is the current captain.

That first-round 76 with hickories was not a stretch, as Von Lossow has been a golf pro since age 22, working his way up at a private country club. He eventually became an assistant pro and, in 1975, a full member of the PGA of America. He has been a Life Member of the PGA for more than 35 years.

"Playing the game was what I craved and I'd spend every spare minute on the range, putting green, or course," he says. "This enabled me to become a good player and, in 1979, by finishing 13th in the PGA Q School (Pinehurst, N.C.), I became a Tour Member.

"It was a fantastic experience learning the ropes, playing great courses, the travels, the people, and the many ups and downs of tour life," Von Lossow says.

When his winnings for the year fell short of what was necessary to remain on the Tour, Von Lossow returned to his club job. "Still, those experiences on the Tour are very dear," he says.

Von Lossow and his wife, Susan, have two children, Andrew, 27, and Hannah, 25. They have lived in the same house in Seattle for the past 30 years.

"Golf has always been a big part of our lives," he says, "Both my kids play well and Susan is our cheerleader!"

For the last 25 years, Von Lossow has operated Von's Golf, a club fitting studio. He is a master club maker and club repairman of no small reputation.

"I still enjoy participating in local PGA events, but since that day two years ago hickory golf has become my favorite," he says. "Most certainly in that time I have played hickories 4-to-1 over my moderns. It is a fascinating turn of events and one I have embraced."

How often do you play hickories?

I try to play weekly, and enjoy friendly rounds as well as sanctioned events.

What's in your play set?

Driver – Bobby Jones, Spalding

Fairway Spoon – Duncan

MacGregor irons:

Popular BB Mid iron

Popular A 1 / 2 Approach iron

Popular BB Mashie

Bakspin Mashie Niblick

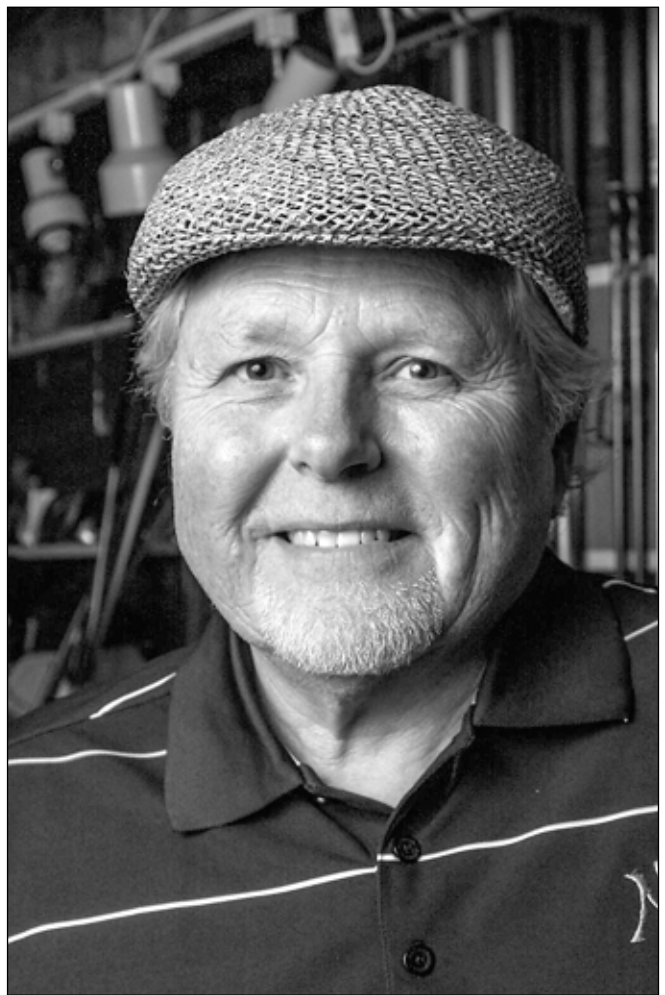
Bakspin Pitcher

OA Popular Flanged Niblick

Putter – Forgan Black Magic putter

Favorite club?

My mashie niblick – the MacGregor Flanged Niblick OA. That club is not only a fantastic sand club, it has allowed me to pitch and chip the ball better than any modern design I have found.



Seattle area PGA pro Jim Von Lossow has been a hickory proponent since trying them two years ago.

What ball do you play?

I have tried many; for the cooler months I have gone to the Wilson Duo. On hotter days, Bridgestone or Callaway. The Mesh McIntyre is also in my bag.

Favorite course for hickories?

The Links at Gearhart, in Gearhart, Ore. Not only for its location on the Pacific Ocean, but for its golf history, too.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Have not had the chance to play in many SoHG events, especially the ones in the East and Midwest. For me, out west here, it would be our annual two- to three-day gathering at the Gearhart Hickory Classic on the Oregon coast.

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

The early Scots who brought the game here to the Pacific Northwest in the 1880s and 1890s. These men laid out courses, taught the locals the game and brought a rich tradition that golfers still embrace today. Men such as Bob Johnstone, Joe Jefferson, and R.W. Ball to name just a few.

Best thing about hickory golf?

It's different for everybody, but the people for sure, echoed by many. It's just a great group from all walks of life, historians, club collectors, and sportsmen. For me, the best thing may be restoring hickory clubs for play or display.

Ideas to promote hickory golf?

Work with local courses, professionals, and groups to have an introductory nine holes of golf using hickory clubs. Easier would be to stand on a par 3 dressed appropriately and offer players a chance to swat at it with hickory. This could be during twilight golf, a men's or ladies day event or such.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

Tommy's Honor, by Kevin Cook. I loved every page.