



Member Profile

Kelly Davidson

Little Rock, Ark., USA

Kelly Davidson was born in Shreveport, La. and raised in Camden, Ark. The youngest of three boys, he was only one who adopted his father's love of golf, as early as the third grade. Much later, after walking on, red shirting and then playing golf for one year at Louisiana Tech University, Kelly transferred to Southern Arkansas University where he was selected to the "All Conference" team during his junior and senior years.

For awhile, after graduating with a marketing degree in 1993, he thought about playing professional golf. Within a four-week time period, he recalls, "I graduated from college, got married, went on a honeymoon and then left for Florida to play on the mini tours. I don't necessarily recommend that to anyone but I am very happy to say that my wife, Tracy, and I are happily married today with two beautiful girls. How she put up with me being absent the first few years of marriage, I will never know."

Eventually, he says, reality sank in and "I realized you had to make more putts than you miss in order to make a living at this game. It was time to get a real job."

Kelly works for Mountain Valley Spring Company where someone named Breck Speed felt he ought to be playing hickory golf rather than with those metal things. Breck, of course, is CEO of MVSW and chief sponsor of the SoHG.

"I will always be grateful to Breck for opening my eyes to this great new game," Kelly says. He first experienced the hickory game at the Mountain Valley Hickory Open, that year played in Fort Smith, Ark. at the Hardscrabble Country Club.

"I played with a borrowed set of clubs from Breck and shot 75-76," he says. "I finished 4th or 5th individually and was floating a foot off the ground and hooked for life."

Kelly returned early last year to the scene of that blushing debut and won his first hickory tournament with a 69-76 over two days, hanging on to win by a narrow margin over multiple MVHO champ Jeremy Moe.

"This came as a complete surprise as I don't have the time to play in order to maintain the form necessary to win," he says. "It was/is an honor to win the tournament that my company sponsors and hosts."

Fair warning to all you fellows who play in the top brackets, should you notice Kelly's name on the board, you might want to nudge your games up a notch.

How often do you play hickories?

Not that often.....6 to 8 rounds a year. I don't get to play much more than that with my modern clubs.

What's in your play set?

In a word – Tad Moore! I bought my first set of Tad Moore OA's just before the Mountain Valley Hickory Open and carry the following:

Drive
Bulldog
Mashie
Mashie Niblick
Niblick
Howitzer by Tad Moore
Putter

Favorite club?

Tad Moore OA putter.



Nearly a pro golfer, Kelly Davidson is a Breck Speed convert to the game of hickory golf.

What ball do you play?

Pro VI.

Favorite course for hickories?

Highland Park Golf Course, Birmingham, Ala. – The course is simply a hickory course.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Mountain Valley Arkansas Hickory Open, how could it be any other?!

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

Ben Hogan. An often misunderstood gentleman who willed himself to greatness.

Best thing about hickory golf?

The people, no doubt! I was raised to respect the game and taught that only "gentlemen" played the game. With hickory this is abundantly evident, but everyone is also a student of the game in every aspect.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

Short of spending a ton of money, I believe you have to rely on the grass roots effort the current membership is putting forth. Exhibitions at local clubs and courses would give people the opportunity to see how playable the clubs really are.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

I am currently reading another biography on Ben Hogan. I am ashamed to say I cannot recall the author at this time.