



Member Profile

Richard Schmidt

Southern Pines, N.C., USA

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Pa., Richard Schmidt was a multiple sport athlete and played baseball, football, hockey, soccer, and “just about anything else that would get me out of the house and keep my mother sane,” he says.

“I found golf at about age 12 after finding some of my grandfather’s old clubs and knocking them around his large back yard,” Schmidt says. “I never played competitively as I didn’t really have access to a country club, and I was too busy playing all of the other sports.”

Schmidt says he will be forever indebted to the gentleman who taught him the manners and etiquette of the game.

“I’m not sure I consciously knew what a gift I was being given, and how much that gift would impact my life over the years,” he says. “Golf has taken me places and introduced me to people that a poor kid from “PA” couldn’t even dream about at age 12.

“It is truly a gift and game for a lifetime and I’m grateful for all of the experiences that I’ve had in golf.”

He says he first got the bug when, at age 16, he scored his first and only, so far, ace.

“I was playing alone, and was waived up by a foursome on a quite long and uphill par 3,” he says. “They started jumping around like crazy people. I never did see it go in, and they never made me buy drinks – fortunately. I was so excited, I made a smooth 10 on the next hole, but I floated home that day, and have been addicted ever since.”

Schmidt has a bachelor of arts degree in economics from Gettysburg College and has been in pharmaceutical and medical device sales his entire professional career. He lived in Houston, Texas, for close to 30 years and moved to the Southern Pines/Pinehurst area in 2006 where he has a home on No. 10 at Mid Pines, and is a frequent attendee at the Mid Pines Hickory Open.

“I built my dream home on my favorite golf course,” he says. “How can it get any better than that? I live in the home of American golf, arguably one of the best places to live and play in the U.S. I am truly blessed!”

Schmidt also has a real affinity for Scotland and links golf, having visited Scotland at least eight times in the past 10 years.

“I love the people, the golf, the food, the whisky, the weather – something about it just speaks to me,” he says. “I will continue to go back most years, as long as I can.”

How often do you play hickories?

I’m about 60/40 modern to hickory. I still like to post a number with my modern clubs. I find that playing hickory actually helps my modern game as it slows me down and allows me to focus on tempo.

What’s in your play set?

I’m a George Nicoll guy – I just love the dot faces. I also have a few gaps filled in by my MacGregor Duralites. I recently acquired a Tad Moore driver, and also have a Mike Just cleek that I love. I find that the wooden clubs are the most difficult to find and fall in love with. I’ve bought countless drivers that are original, but can’t seem to find a driver that behaves consistently. (All for sale!) I think more than any other club, the driver’s swingweight and shaft flex really need to fit the player’s body and swing speed.

Tad Moore – driver

Mike Just – cleek

No-name, smooth face bulldog from Ken Holtz

MacGregor – Duralite driving iron

Geo Nicoll – Zenith 4 iron (engraved “Wm Jefferson”)

Geo Nicoll – Zenith mashie (engraved “Wm Jefferson”)

Geo Nicoll – Zenith spade mashie (engraved “Wm Jefferson”)

Geo Nicoll – Rustless mashie niblick (engraved “Macdonald Smith”)

Geo Nicoll – Zenith niblick (engraved “Wm Jefferson”)

MacGregor – Duralite pitcher

MacGregor – Duralite strong jigger

F.A. Gusho – P-81 weak jigger (stamped “Approved by Pro Golfers Assn of America”)

MacGregor OA – flanged niblick – no this is not for sale! (Thank you Jay Harris!)

Mike Just – Willie Dunn putter – looking for an original!



Richard Schmidt, one of the SoHG’s newest board members, is a keen fan of Scotland.

Favorite club?

The one that I hit my last pure shot with. They all show up from time to time. If I had to pick one, though, it would be my George Nicoll mashie niblick, stamped Macdonald Smith – I think this club may be valuable. I need to research that.

What ball do you play?

I’m a bit opposed to being dictated to what ball we should play as a Society. I think it is an individual preference thing. I totally support tournaments that mandate a reproduction ball, and I love playing in those. Brian Schuman’s new ball is good. I like the McIntyre mesh ball, as long as course conditions are firm and not wet. I do think we should outlaw balls that aren’t white!

Favorite course for hickories?

Mid Pines, of course! Any of the old Scottish courses; Panmure was fabulous. Royal Dornoch is a treat with any clubs. The Old Course with hickories is magic! Brora – watch out for those electric fences and the livestock.

Favorite hickory tournament?

Until I recently attended Belvedere, I would have said the Mid Pines Hickory Open. For those having never attended Belvedere, I recommend it highly. I’ll be going back.

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

Scotland. It is the home of golf. The history, the cool old clubhouses – both known and unknown, the courses, the air, the whisky. I simply can’t get or see enough of Scotland. I never want to come home, and am thinking about a more extended stay in future years. I’m also a Donald Ross guy through and through. He would be in my dream foursome.

Best thing about hickory golf?

Everyone says the people, but it is the people. I would have never met these wonderful gentlemen and their spouses if it weren’t for hickories. Sure we all enjoy playing well, but it truly is the conversations before, during, and after each round and the memories of same that keep me involved. Also, having access to the places we get to play. As the Society has grown and become more widely known, we are being invited to some of the great old (and private) clubs where access is limited. Folks are now coming to us, which is really fabulous.

Most recent book on golf that you read?

A fellow hickory golfer, friend, and frequent contributor to the Wee Nip, Tim Alpaugh has written a lovely wee book called “Claret Dreams.” It’s a wonderful story about a hickory golfer who qualifies for the Open Championship. Can’t be more than 100 pages, but a great read and lovely story.