



Member Profile

Rob Ahlschwede

Olympia, Wash., USA

Affectionately known as “Kilty” to his golfing buddies, Rob Ahlschwede is a devoted hickory golf player and familiar figure at many major hickory events. The nickname, as you easily surmise, arose from Rob’s affinity for wearing kilts at the events.

“I grew up on a Nebraska farm where my first exposure to golf was television’s *Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf*,” he says. “I pestered my Dad until he made me a “one-piece” club from a branch of an osage orange (hedge) tree. I hit it until it broke!”

Rob graduated from the University of Nebraska and attended graduate school at the University of Washington, Seattle. After college, he taught physical education and coached in Bellevue, Wash.; Munich, Germany; and Omaha, Neb. He is now retired following 33 years in education.

“I played at golf some during school years, but did not really take up the game seriously until moving to Omaha in the late ‘70s,” he says. “Then I worked hard at the game. About 10 years ago I went totally to the “dark side” (hickories) and have not played modern clubs since.”

After retirement from education, Rob worked in the pro shop at a public course in Omaha, and restored and repaired hickories with Randy Jensen at the latter’s Classic Golf Shop in Omaha. He has hosted several Golf Collector Society events in Omaha and began the River City Hickory Classic in Omaha. He has played in hickory golf events throughout the U.S., Canada, and Scotland.

One event he is hoping to make it to is the California Hickory North-South at Pacific Grove near Carmel, Calif.

In Seattle Rob likes to sail, often racing off-shore yachts on Puget Sound and the Pacific. He and his wife of 44 years, Susan, have one daughter, Willa, who is currently in Oakland, Calif.

How often do you play hickories?

Whenever I play, I play hickory, though not as often as I would like.

What’s in your play set?

Modern play set (all originals):

Driver – Len Biles (The Homestead, Hot Springs, Va.)
Frankenstein (Spalding landing crow driver) has been retired.
Brassie – Hagen Getaway
Spoon – Bowser (anyone ever heard of him?)
Driving iron – Forgan with the flagstick
1/2 Mid iron – J. MacGregor dot face
Mashie iron – T. Stewart
Special mashie – T. Stewart
Mashie niblick – Spalding deep groove, Stanley Davies
Niblick – Forgan Peter Pan
Sand iron – H & B Par XL flanged wedge
Putter – Dunn Model wood head, center shafted mallet (stamped J.W.Watson, Monifieth or Kansas City?)

Gutty play set (all originals except the play club/driver):

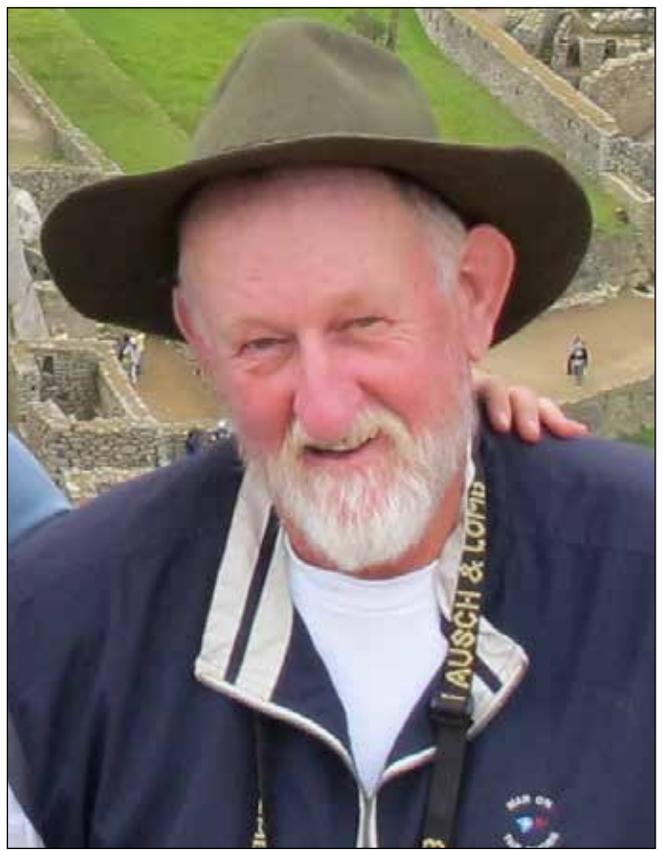
Driver – McEwan replica by Barry Kerr
Driving iron – Nichols Bros. Boston
Mashie – J.G. Longhurst, Ascot & Homburg
Lofter – J. Donald, Weston-Super-Mare
Niblick – T. Stewart
Putter – T. Stewart Accurate deep faced blade

Favorite club?

Probably my black Dunn putter.

What ball do you play?

Srixon Soft Feel, Bridgestone B330S



Rob “Kilty” Ahlschwede

Favorite course for hickories?

Oakhurst in W. Va., Gullane No. 3, and Carnoustie Championship, in that order. But then, how do you eliminate Mid Pines, Chambers Bay, or Elmwood Park in Omaha?

Favorite hickory tournaments?

National Hickory Championship, followed by the Scottish Hickory Championship and then a group of four great ones: Tad’s Southern 4-ball, C.B. Macdonald at Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Canadian Hickory at Edmonton, and the Heart of America.

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

Ben Hogan, except he would not consider himself “historic.” After Ben, the historic clubmakers of Scotland, 1890-1930.

Best thing about hickory golf?

The golf part! Actually, we hear it all the time, but the people/friends I have made through hickory are the best. I look forward to every tournament/gathering to renew friendships.

Ideas to promote SoHG, hickory golf?

To me, the most important part of the SoHG is the development of the tournament guidelines, making it easier for tournament directors to organize events. That would include course set-up, equipment guidelines, and other important aspects of running a good hickory event. Using those guidelines to run our own quality events is a great promotion and the more events we can reach out to just increases our circle of friendship!

Most recent book on golf that you read?

*“Dream Golf” by Stephen Goodwin
“The Seventh at St. Andrews” by Scott Gummer
“The Anatomy of a Golf Course” by Tom Doak*

Note: Rob currently serves on the SoHG board as the equipment chairperson.