

Christi Dickinson makes a ruling for Michelle Wie at the U.S. Women's Public Links Championship in Williamsburg, VA.



GUEST ESSAY

Women in Golf

Women . . . Golf . . . the USGA . . . the AGA . . . the AWGA . . . How does it all fit together? Very well, thank you

By Karen Moraghan

THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING about golf? Perhaps you need to think again when it comes to women and golf. Did you know that the fastest growing segment of golfers in the US is women? As a group, women golfers grew 5.6 percent last year and those 6 million women golfers constitute 22 percent of all golfers.

But that's only part of the story. On average, women golfers spend \$1,100 a

year on golf products and services. They have become a viable and marketable entity in the game. So, who ensures that the needs of women amateur golfers are addressed? Well, it's a major focus of the United States Golf Association Women's Committee!

That's right; the United States Golf Association (USGA) has a Women's Committee. The committee is made up of 19 women volunteers from across the country. Amateurism is at the heart of the

USGA, and the members of the Women's Committee serve at their own expense for "the good of the game" and to give back to a sport that they love.

The USGA Women's Committee functions in the areas of policy and administration and is of fundamental importance in maintaining the high standards of American women's golf and in interpreting USGA policies and procedures to women's golf associations, as well as overseeing the USGA

ARIZONA WOMEN AND THE USGA

Arizona golf associations have always been at the forefront of the industry and are leaders in the world of golf associations in the U.S. Arizona has led the way in providing services to its golfers, and its members are leaders in the industry.

Arizona has 15 women involved in amateur golf on a national level with the USGA. The women of Arizona are represented on all key USGA committees that focus on women's issues, ensuring that the policies and practices accurately represent the needs of the women amateur golfers in this state!

Barbara Douglas and Christi Dickinson, well-known in Arizona golf circles, currently serve on the USGA Women's Committee.

Barbara joined the Women's Committee in 1993 after serving on the Women's Amateur Public Links Committee for two years. She currently chairs the Women's Open Format Committee and was named 2nd Vice Chair of the Women's Committee during the Annual Meeting in February. At home in Arizona, Barbara is a member of the Executive Committee of The Arizona Golf Association and a member of Board of Directors of the Junior Golf Association of Arizona and the Banner Health Foundation, which conducts the LPGA Safeway Classic.

Christi joined the Women's Committee in 1997 after serving on the Women's Mid-Amateur Committee for five years. Christi currently chairs the Women's Amateur Public Links Championship. At home, Christi was the first woman to be elected as president of a state golf association and served as President of the Arizona Golf Association from years and as president of the Arizona Golf Association Foundation Board of Directors from years.

OTHER ARIZONA WOMEN SERVING USGA COMMITTEES:

Girls' Junior Committee

Jane Hawkins
Barbara Simmons

Senior Women's Committee

Barbara Burton
Jan Wobken

Regional Affairs Committee

Judi Lorenzen
Betsy Paul
Linda Thrash

Mid-Amateur Committee

Pat Trimble

Women's Amateur Public Links committee

Shelly Haywood
Ellen O'Hara

Course Rating and Handicap Committees

Lorraine Thies

Regional Associations Committee

Mary Long

The past year of 2004 was a banner year for women's golf, kicking off with the Curtis Cup, an international competition between amateur teams from the United States and Great Britain and Ireland. The U.S. fielded its youngest team ever and went across the pond to face an experienced GB & I team at Formby Golf Club in Merseyside, England. Team USA brought home the Curtis Cup, although even in celebration, many of the team members were too young to taste the victory champagne!

The Women's Amateur Public Links Championship, held at the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club in historic Williamsburg, VA, culminated in a fantastic final between Michelle Wie and Ya-Ni Tseng. Tseng won her trophy by sinking a birdie putt on the final hole!

The Women's Open broke all atten-

dance records and caught the attention of fans around the world with 16 amateurs in field at the Orchards Golf Club in South Hadley, Massachusetts. The ever-popular, veteran golfer Meg Mallon carried home the trophy for her second U.S. Women's Open crown.

The 2005 season shapes up to be as exciting as 2004 with several championships taking place within our part of the country. The Women's Open will be held at Cherry Hills Country Club in Denver, June 23-26; the Girls' Junior is being played at Banbury Golf Club, Eagle, Idaho, July 18-23; and the Women's Amateur Public Links Championship will be at Swope Memorial Golf Club in Kansas City, July 11-16.

So, now you know a little more about golf and about women in the game. As a fan, a volunteer or a participant, if you love the game of golf and want to help preserve and celebrate the traditions and history of the game, become involved. Many of your fellow Arizonans already have done so and are anxious to welcome you into the administrative side of the game.

Contact your local golf association:

Arizona Golf Association

7226 North 16th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85020
602 944-3035

Arizona Women's Golf Association

141 East Palm Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85004
602 253-5655

OR

Barbara Douglas at barbd96@aol.com
Christi Dickinson at cpdcrd@prodigy.net

Handicap and Course Rating Systems as they apply to women.

The USGA Women's Committee, in cooperation with the USGA staff, conducts five amateur championships, including the Girls' Junior, Women's Mid-Amateur, Women's Amateur Public Links, Senior Women's Amateur and Women's Amateur. In addition, it conducts the premier women's golf event in the world, the U.S. Women's Open Championship, which is open to

professionals and amateurs. Bi-annually, the Women's Committee conducts the Women's State Team Championship, the Curtis Cup and selects the team for the World Amateur Team Championship.

During the course of conducting its business, the work of the Women's Committee supports LPGA-USGA Girls Golf, women's collegiate relations, regional golf associations, handicapping, Rules of Golf, communications and course rating.

Barbara Douglas

