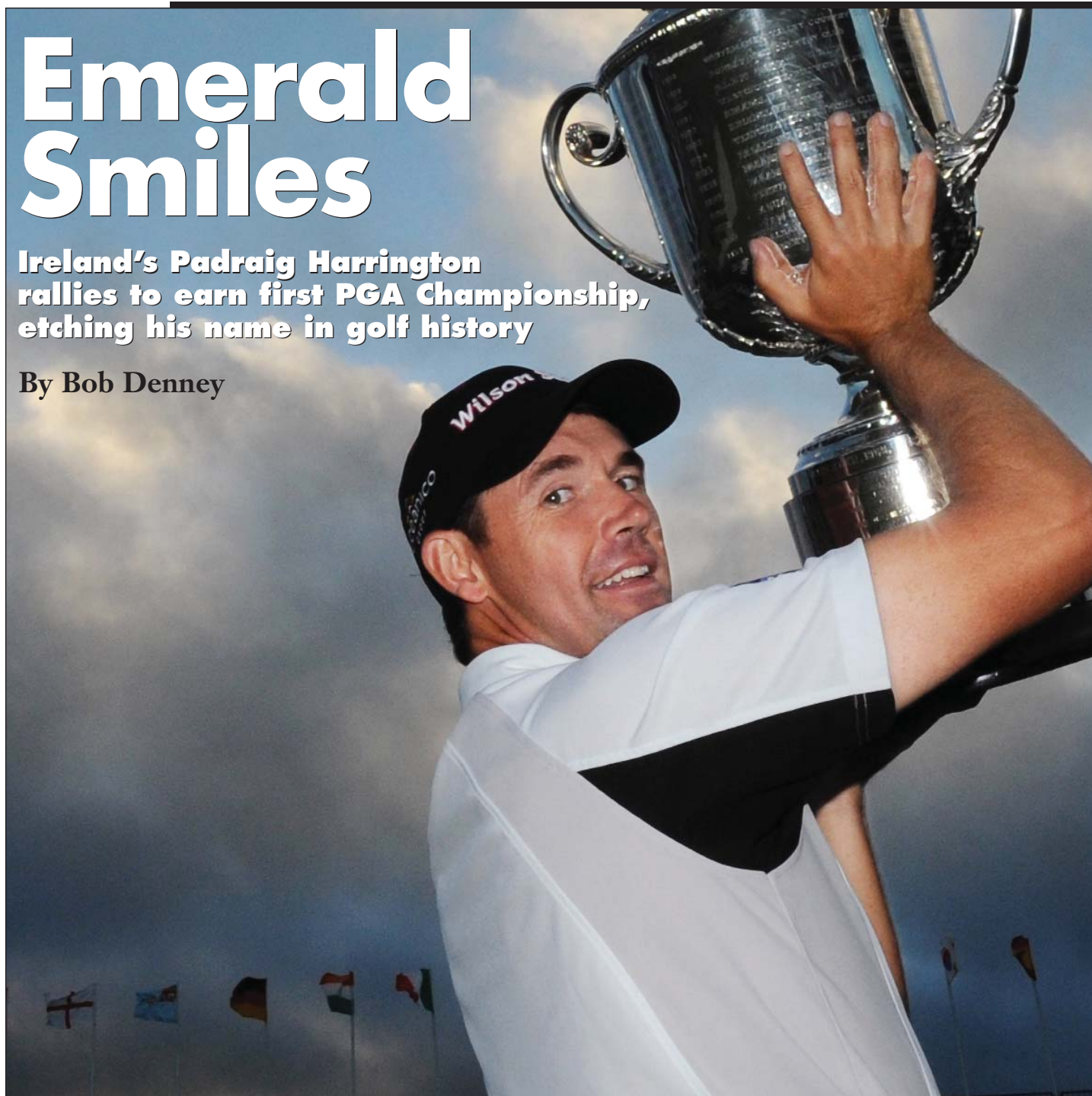


# Emerald Smiles

**Ireland's Padraig Harrington rallies to earn first PGA Championship, etching his name in golf history**

By Bob Denney



**O**n a monster of a golf course that bared a new set of teeth, Padraig Harrington flashed his own pearly whites while carving his way into history at the 90th PGA Championship.

Ireland's favorite son rallied at Oakland Hills Country Club in Bloomfield Township, Mich., with a Sunday for the ages, capturing his third major championship and second in a span of three weeks. In the process, he snatched the PGA Championship from Sergio Garcia's grasp in a tense back-nine shootout on the club's South Course.

Harrington, 36, became the first European to win the British Open and PGA Championship in succession, and the first to win the PGA Cham-

pionship since Scotland's Tommy Armour in 1930.

"I really do like the fact that no other European has won two majors consecutively," said Harrington. "Because, obviously, I hold a lot of European players who I grew up watching in high esteem. To believe that I achieved something that they hadn't is very special."

Harrington has won three of the past six major championships, prevailing at Oakland Hills with back-to-back rounds of 4-under-par 66, and completing 27 holes on the final day after Saturday's third round was suspended by rain in mid-afternoon.



Harrington's winning 72-hole total of 3-under-par 277 was good for a two-stroke margin over Spain's Garcia and America's Ben Curtis, the 2003 British Open champion – whose chances faded with bogeys on two of his final four holes.

Garcia closed with a 68 and Curtis a 71. Sweden's Henrik Stenson posted a 72 that left him and Colombia's Camilo Villegas, who had a final-round 68, sharing fourth at 281.

The PGA Championship featured the year's strongest field among golf's major championships, despite the absence of two-time defending PGA Champion Tiger Woods, who was sidelined while recovering from knee surgery. The Championship had 93 of the top 100 world-ranked players, including 68 international players representing 20 countries – the most for any U.S. major.

It was Harrington's steely demeanor and his ability to execute at the right moment that carried him to victory. His signature moments came on the final three holes where he made pressure putt after putt, including a 15-footer for par at No. 18, to go 1-under par over the monstrous final three

Left: Scotland's Tommy Armour was the last European to win the PGA Championship in 1930.

Below: Sergio Garcia's inability to make key putts down the stretch resulted in his second-place tie with Ben Curtis.



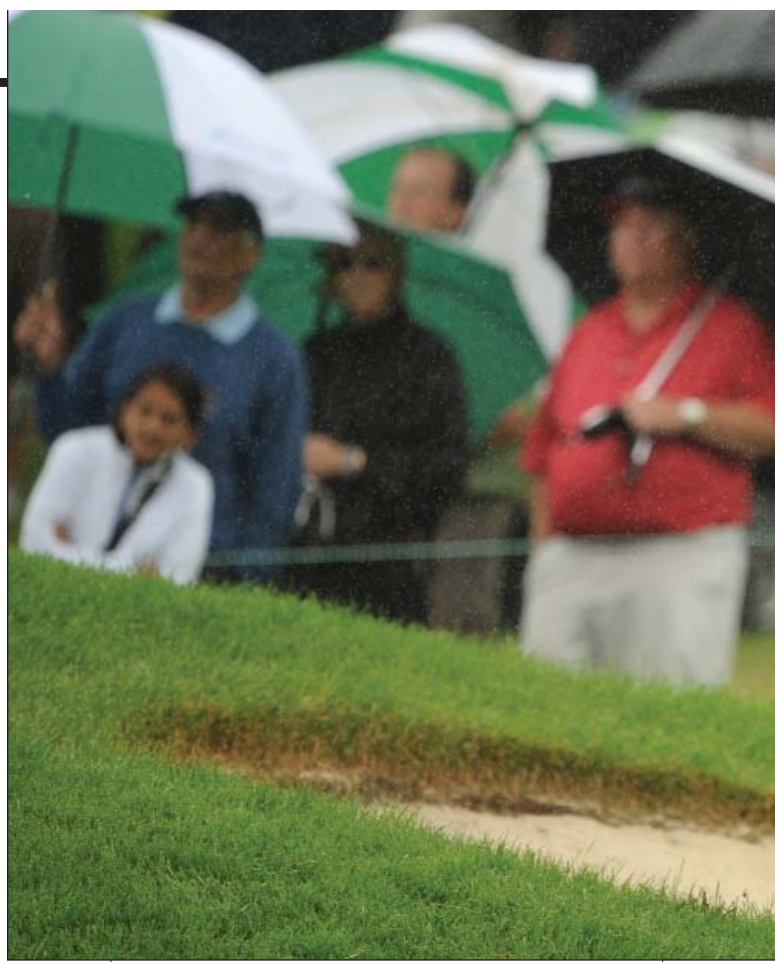
Sporting Detroit Lions attire, Ben Curtis was a fan favorite throughout the week at Oakland Hills.

holes on Oakland Hills' South Course. "It was looking like Sergio's day, and I just wanted to hang around and get some opportunities," said Harrington, who opened the final round three strokes behind Curtis and two behind Garcia and Stenson. "I knew what I had to do. I was playing catch-up and had to take on the shots on the back nine that would mean the difference between winning or losing.

"I'm a great believer in making it your own responsibility to win or lose in a major."

Beginning with the final nine holes of his rain-delayed third round – which he played in 32 strokes, 11 of them putts – Harrington recorded nine birdies. His third-round 66 pulled him into contention at 1-over-par. Harrington then rode his putter and a series of highlight reel shots to victory.

"That's the way it goes," said Garcia, who bogeyed two of the final three holes. "You know, the good thing about it is I felt good out there. I felt like I played well. I definitely feel like I played well enough to win. But unfor-



## Teacher-player Jim Estes marks PGA Championship debut with an inspiring

Jim Estes of Germantown, Md., made his debut in the 90th PGA Championship at Oakland Hills Country Club, becoming what most likely was the first contestant to give a clinic on the eve of a major championship.

The 43-year-old PGA director of instruction at Olney Golf Park in Olney, Md., Estes was the featured presenter in *Making Golf Fun for People with Physical Limitations* at the PGA Learning Center presented by American Express, positioned near the main spectator entrance at Oakland Hills.

Estes was one of several featured presenters at the PGA Learning Center, which enjoyed a banner week of traffic by attracting 18,450 spectators. More than 3,600 golfers received instruction (including lessons and clinics) from some 100 PGA Professionals.

"It was a fabulous week, a great presentation and a great setting and I couldn't believe how many PGA Professionals were there," said Estes, who gave instruction to Army veterans David Cook of Havre de Grace, Md. and Ben Dellinger of Charlotte, N.C., who had flown from Washington, D.C. to be with their coach.

Cook and Dellinger had each lost a left leg in combat, and later followed Estes for 18 holes in Thursday's opening round of the PGA Championship.

"Jim has been a great help and I'm feeling that I can really drive the ball well now," said Dellinger.

Cook, who had received his prosthesis earlier in the year, said that establishing confidence and balance in his swing were the

key tips he had received through Estes' guidance.

"I was hitting the ball long when I didn't have the prosthesis," said Cook. "But, I'm getting better adjusted now. Jim has been great to work with."

Estes was inspired in 2005 to serve America's veterans and founded the Salute Military Golf Association ([golfsalute.org](http://golfsalute.org)), a non-profit organization that equips and encourages injured veterans to use golf as a means to overcome their physical limitations.

Conducting a clinic before playing in a major, Estes said, was not a problem in his preparation.

"To be honest, I had underestimated the difficulty of Oakland Hills," said Estes, who had competed in four previous U.S. Opens. "I didn't think the fairways would be that tight, and it was almost a U.S. Open for me. I was very honored to have had Ben and David following me around for 18 holes. They were in pain walking, but that was very special to me to see that support.

"I may have a bad day on the golf course, but there are a lot of guys like Ben and David where it would be one of their greatest





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### clinic for the disabled

days to be out on the golf course.

"My goal is to keep helping these guys and the many more veterans who want to find enjoyment through golf. My wife said once to me that playing full-time on the Tour wasn't in the cards, and now you have found a new mission in life. I believe that I have been able to help carry on a greater mission."

One of 20 PGA Professionals in the 156-player field at Oakland Hills Country Club, Estes earned a PGA Championship berth in the fall of 1995, after tying for seventh in the PGA Professional National Championship. But, he chose to give Tour golf a shot the following year and won the Nike Inland Empire Open on what is now the Nationwide Tour.

Over the past two years, Estes has conducted a free golf clinic for the soldiers every Saturday morning in the spring. A section of the range at the 21-acre Olney Golf Park is cordoned off for use by the men and women who make the 30-minute trip from Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Every week, in a more formal group session, Estes



focuses on all aspects of the game of golf. He and other staff professionals also offer individual instruction for anyone who asks.

Through working with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Estes and his program were given support in acquiring golf equipment to train the veterans. During the past few years, Estes has witnessed the full spectrum of injuries to veterans, from the catastrophic to those that don't show outwardly any wounds, but carry them within – suffering from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Estes said that his father has used his medical knowledge to assist in a means of training tips for the wounded warriors.

"It is so rewarding for me to see golf play a vital role in their recovery," said Estes.

"Overall, I think that this has been the best year of my PGA life. When you can do things for other people, it comes back. We hope that what work we have been doing with the veterans will be replicated around the country. There are no limits to what golf can do when it comes to making these men and women find value in their lives."

tunately, it didn't happen. So that's pretty much all I can ask myself to do."

Curtis, playing in the group immediately behind Harrington and Garcia, was not disconsolate about his round.

"I struggled in the middle of the round," said Curtis, who qualified for the U.S. Ryder Cup Team for the first time with his performance. "Those guys were having such a good battle. Every hole it seemed like those guys were making something. It was fun to hear and a lot of fun to play out there in a championship like this.

"Coming down the last two holes, I had a chance to win the golf tournament, and that's all you can ask. You don't get these opportunities very often, and to be able to stick in there and to be able to hold my emotions under control is a good feeling."

In a chilly wind and intermittent rain, Garcia and Harrington went back and forth over the

final 18 holes as they did a year ago in the final round of the British Open at Carnoustie, where Harrington also prevailed – then in a playoff.

Garcia birdied the first hole, eagled the second and birdied the sixth. Curtis, birdied the sixth to get to 4-under par and maintain a one-stroke lead over Garcia. But his consecutive bogeys at the eighth and ninth holes knocked him out of first and Garcia went to the 10th tee with a one-stroke lead over Curtis and a three-stroke lead over Harrington.

Harrington then began his onslaught of one-putt greens. He one-putted everything but Nos. 14 and 15 coming in, including a huge par from 20 feet at No. 16 to tie for the lead when Garcia made bogey. Harrington then took the lead for good when he birdied the 17th.

When Garcia looks back on the loss, he can first pinpoint the missed 10-foot birdie putt at the 15th – after his 6-iron approach from 172 yards

## Motown legends and industry admirers celebrate Dennis Walters, recipient of the 2008 PGA Distinguished Service Award

The PGA of America and Motown's legendary Four Tops combined to celebrate PGA Honorary Member Dennis Walters on Aug. 6, an evening that hit all the high notes for a man who overcame tragedy to find a pathway to reconnecting to the game of golf.

Walters, 58, the 2008 PGA Distinguished Service Award winner from Jupiter, Fla., was honored at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Max M. Fisher Music Center. The ceremony attracted an audience of 1,200, featuring representatives of the nation's premier allied golf associations, manufacturers and professional colleagues – all of whom Walters had touched in some way over a 32-year career as one of golf's most unique ambassadors.

"This is the greatest night of my life," said Walters, in an emotional address following his being awarded The PGA of America's highest annual honor. Walters, who was left a paraplegic following a golf cart accident in July 21, 1974, resurrected his dream of a "tour professional's life" by learning to hit golf balls on a seat that was designed for the side of a golf car.

He developed a trick shot repertoire in 1976, and has performed in 49 states, traveling more than three million miles and covering more than 2,700 programs to audiences large and small, of all ages, including veterans returning home from war, the seriously ill, underprivileged children and the physically challenged.

"I had my dream of being a tour professional end, but I learned that you can never stop dreaming," said Walters (pictured,

right, with PGA President Brian Whitcomb). "You just have to get a new dream. To have had the opportunity to influence others over these past 32 years has made it better.



"My goal is to hit great shots today and better shots tomorrow. Vince Lombardi once said in a speech to his players, 'We are going to relentlessly chase perfection. We will not catch it, but in the process we will reach excellence.' Those words have helped me know that I can improve every day."

The PGA of America video presentation honoring Walters included comments from Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods, along with Walters' sister, Barbara Walters Herman of Davie, Fla., and PGA Professional Wayne Warms of Brielle, N.J., who became Walters' closest friend and counsel following that 1974 accident.

"There was no question that Dennis Walters would have been the greatest

professional to come out of New Jersey," said Warms. "But, when he suffered his accident, he was forced to look to other means to achieve his dream. He did so, and remains one of the most remarkable people I have ever met."

Walters said that when the time comes that he must trim his exhaustive cross-country travels, he would like to ask the industry to allow him to help grow the game of golf.

"I would love to grow the game, especially to those with disabilities," said Walters. "Golf has such wide-ranging ramifications in people's lives. I also am inspired, as I travel, to have had a personal influence on junior golfers. I look forward to the coming years and what we all can do to help golf."

PGA of America President Brian Whitcomb said that Walters represents "the essence of this game and the spirit of man."

The Four Tops opened the evening by addressing Walters and praising him for "touching both the young and the old," and dedicating the evening's repertoire of hits to him. It wasn't a coincidence that The Four Tops led with one of their biggest hits, "Reach Out, I'll Be There," as that song could easily be a theme for Walters, who found salvation through golf and has spread his message so well over 30 years.

The PGA Distinguished Service Award, inaugurated in 1988, honors outstanding individuals who display leadership and humanitarian qualities, including integrity, sportsmanship and enthusiasm for the game of golf.

—Bob Denney



## TOP FINISHERS

### 90th PGA Championship

Oakland Hills Country Club, Bloomfield Township, Mich., Aug. 7-10



Finish	Player	Scoring to Par	Rounds				Total
			1	2	3	4	
1	Padraig Harrington	-3	71	74	66	66	277
T2	Sergio Garcia	-1	69	73	69	68	279
T2	Ben Curtis	-1	73	67	68	71	279
T4	Camilo Villegas	+1	74	72	67	68	281
T4	Henrik Stenson	+1	71	70	68	72	281
6	Steve Flesch	+2	72	70	70	69	282
T7	Phil Mickelson	+4	70	73	71	70	284
T7	Andres Romero	+4	69	78	65	72	284
T9	Alastair Forsyth	+5	73	72	70	70	285
T9	Justin Rose	+5	73	67	74	71	285
T9	Jeev Milkha Singh	+5	68	74	70	73	285
T9	Charlie Wi	+5	70	70	71	74	285
T13	Ken Duke	+6	69	73	73	71	286
T13	Aaron Baddeley	+6	71	71	71	73	286
T15	Paul Casey	+7	72	74	72	69	287
T15	Stuart Appleby	+7	76	70	69	72	287
T15	Prayad Marksang	+7	76	70	68	73	287
T15	Graeme McDowell	+7	74	72	68	73	287
T15	David Toms	+7	72	69	72	74	287
T20	Brian Gay	+8	70	74	72	72	288
T20	Robert Karlsson	+8	68	77	71	72	288
T20	Angel Cabrera	+8	70	72	72	74	288
T20	Boo Weekley	+8	72	71	79	66	288

hit the flagstick – which would have expanded his lead to two strokes over Curtis and Harrington. And he can remember the 6-iron at the 16th that bounced into the only real water hazard at Oakland Hills. And then there will be his miss of a 4-foot putt at the 17th, which will probably be with him longer than the other unpleasant memories.

It was at the 238-yard par-3 17th hole, when he, Garcia and Curtis were tied at 2-under, that Harrington threw down his boldest challenge of the day, a 5-iron shot that soared about 225 yards, rolled out and stopped about 10 feet from the cup.

“I really felt I’d won the PGA there with that shot,” said Harrington. “I knew that if I holed this putt, I probably would win the PGA, and if I didn’t, that Sergio probably would win the PGA.”

Garcia also recognized the importance of answering Harrington at that moment.

“Yeah, obviously I saw that he hit a good 5-iron,” said Garcia. “So I knew I had to put a good swing there and try to hit it up there on that right tier.”

Garcia’s 5-iron to four feet elicited one of the loudest roars of the day from a gallery that had endured the elements to see just such a shot.

But Harrington grabbed the momentum back, calmly stroking the putt in the middle. With a chance to counter, Garcia could not convert. His putt, a right-to-left breaker that Garcia started on a line about four inches outside the left edge, barely hit the edge and rolled past.

“I felt like I responded well and he was obviously very good on the back nine and things just happened his way,” said Garcia, who has yet to earn a major championship. “There’s guys that get a little bit fortunate. They get in contention in a major and manage to get things going their way, either because they play well or because somebody else comes back. And unfortunately, it hasn’t happened to me.”

### Michigan PGA Section Professionals Turn Out in Force

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Camilo Villegas put himself in position for a tie for fourth, his best finish in a major championship.

sionals opened PGA Championship week by offering golf instruction to a new crop of thoroughbreds.

The Oakland University Golf and Learning

Center in Rochester, Mich., entertained some 200 guests, young and old, from southeast Michigan at a Play Golf America Day. Some 20 PGA Professionals, including three PGA Officers, all

### How PGA Professionals Fared in the 90th PGA Championship

Name/Hometown	Home Facility	Finish/MC
Frank Esposito Jr., Monroe, N.J.	Brooklake Country Club, Florham Park, N.J.	71-78—149
Don Yrene, Scottsdale, Ariz.	The Golf Club of Scottsdale (Ariz.)	75-76—151
Alan Morin, Royal Palm Beach, Fla.	The Falls Country Club, Lake Worth, Fla.	76-76—152
Sonny Skinner, Sylvester, Ga.	River Pointe Golf Club, Albany, Ga.	78-75—153
Tim Weinhart, Suwanee, Ga.	St. Marlo Country Club, Duluth, Ga.	74-79—153
Sam Arnold, Cincinnati, Ohio	The Vineyard Golf Course, Cincinnati	80-74—154
Ryan Benzel, Bothell, Wash.	Mill Creek (Wash.) Country Club	77-78—155
Jim Estes, Germantown, Md.	Olney (Md.) Golf Park	79-76—155
Scott Hebert, Traverse City, Mich.	Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, Acme, Mich.	80-76—156
Rick Leibovich, Salinas, Calif.	Tehama Golf Club in Carmel, Calif.	78-78—156
Tim Thelen, College Station, Texas	Traditions Golf Club at Texas A&M, Bryan, Texas	81-76—157
Jeff Martin, Warwick, R.I.	Point Judith Country Club, Naragansett, R.I.	78-79—157
Kyle Flinton, Oklahoma City, Okla.	Quail Creek Golf & Country Club, Oklahoma City	79-79—158
Brad Martin, Portland, Ore.	The Portland (Ore.) Golf Club	77-81—158
Curt Sanders, Wilmington, N.C.	Eagle Point Golf Club, Wilmington, N.C.	78-80—158
Eric Dugas, Brewster, Mass.	Old Sandwich Golf Club, Plymouth, Mass.	87-74—161
David Long, Bowie, Md.	The Country Club at Woodmore, Bowie, Md.	80-82—162
Vince Jewell, Euless, Texas	Brook Hollow Golf Club, Dallas	85-78—163
Eric Manning, Cortland, N.Y.	Cortland (N.Y.) Country Club	81-88—169
Brad Dean, Thompsonville, Mich.	Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville, Mich.	86-84—170

## Fifty years later – Dow Finsterwald's major celebration continues at PGA Championship Exhibit presented by RBS

**D**ow Finsterwald strolled through the entrance of the PGA Championship Exhibit presented by RBS at Oakland Hills and immediately spotted a black and white photo embedded in a large cherry wood shadow box. The photo captured Finsterwald's moment of triumph 50 years



ago at Llanerch Country Club in Havertown, Pa. It was a landmark PGA Championship – the first to be conducted at stroke play and the first to be televised by network television.

"That [the Championship] certainly changed my life," said Finsterwald, who toured the exhibit in perfect timing as a video reel recounted his triumph. "We had a great

night at Llanerch this past July to celebrate. I'll never forget it."

Though the years have slipped by quickly, time has not eroded the magic of a championship for Finsterwald, now 78, and many of the key moments of victory.

"I remember the seventh hole, where I approached over a tall tree and made a birdie," he said of a final-round 67.

"I remember being able to stop the bleeding after a bogey on 11 and going on to win with a 36 on the back side. When I did win, I didn't realize how many opportunities would open up for me. I have always cherished that and the fact that I can come back to a PGA Championship and the Champions' Dinner."

Finsterwald said he made his career on tour as a conservative player who followed one of the precepts of Ben Hogan in course management: "Never start a ball at a penalty situation. You would never see Hogan start a shot over a lake."

Finsterwald said that he enjoyed the PGA Championship Exhibit and has "always felt a great kinship for the Association. The many PGA

Professionals in the country, I certainly admire all that they have done for the game. And, the average person would be amazed to know how many hours of work it takes for the great golfers you see today who are fortunate to complete four rounds of golf in a major. There is no guaranteed prize money in this country; you have to earn it."

stepped on to the practice range to provide expert instruction.

Created to showcase the game of golf in a fun and relaxed atmosphere, PGA Play Golf America Days are presented by The PGA of America with presenting sponsors American Express, Buick and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Launched in 2004, PGA Play Golf America Days are designed to provide free expert instruction to golfers of all ages and skill levels, introduce new golfers to the game and provide equipment testing from the best brands in the game. At Oakland University's pristine setting, 2008 PGA Distinguished Service Award recipient Dennis Walters, a nationally-known trick shot artist, and 2007 PGA Teacher of the Year Jim Hardy, were featured presenters.

"We had some 150 total Michigan PGA Professionals volunteer to be part of PGA Championship week," said

Michigan PGA Section President Dave Kendall of Saline, Mich. "We feel that once in a generation do you get to host something like this. You ask all your fellow PGA Professionals to put their best foot forward."

PGA of America President Brian Whitcomb, Vice President Jim Remy, and Secretary Allen Wronowski each pitched in by helping any spectators who requested their assistance on the range. One amateur was frustrated by the results of his swing, and Whitcomb spent extra time to ensure that the final shot he would take this day was solid. Thus, there was one more player leaving PGA Play Golf America Day with a smile on his face.

### PGA Patrons Had a Major Presence

Just as Oakland Hills Country Club inspired competitors to raise their

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games, the 90th PGA Championship was also the catalyst for major efforts from PGA of America Patrons American Express and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) during Championship Week.

"The amount of energy, effort, and creativity that our Official Patrons put into activating our partnership illustrates the tremendous value they see in The PGA of America, our PGA Professionals, and our major championships," said Kevin Carter, senior director of business development for The PGA. "These category-leading corporations recognize our ability to deliver some of the game's leading championships, as well as a grassroots connection with consumers through which they can grow their business. No other organization in sports is as uniquely positioned as The PGA to accomplish this."

American Express sponsored the PGA Learning Center near the spectator entrance at Oakland Hills, which featured four hitting bays, a full-size chipping and putting green and free 10-minute lessons from PGA Professionals. More than 18,000 spectators were given lessons by the 100 PGA Professionals who volunteered their time during the week. In addition, the American Express Cardmember Club, located between the 8th and 12th fairways at the center of the Oakland Hills South Course, offered a place for Cardmembers to enjoy an exclusive indoor lounge area with complimentary food and beverage items. Cardmembers were also able to borrow complimentary Championship Vision handheld TV units that offered the live telecast of the event, as well as real-time stats and player locations across the course. American Express also provided commemorative PGA Championship posters to Cardmembers who spent \$175 or more in the PGA Golf Shop.

Meanwhile, RBS sponsored a unique initiative to bring the PGA Championship atmosphere to the heart of downtown Detroit, 30 minutes south of Oakland Hills. RBS hosted the PGA Championship Experience – a golf oasis at Campus Martius, the park located at the historic center of the city near the corporate headquarters of companies such as General Motors, Comerica Bank and Compuware. From Monday through Friday of Championship Week, Michigan PGA Section profes-

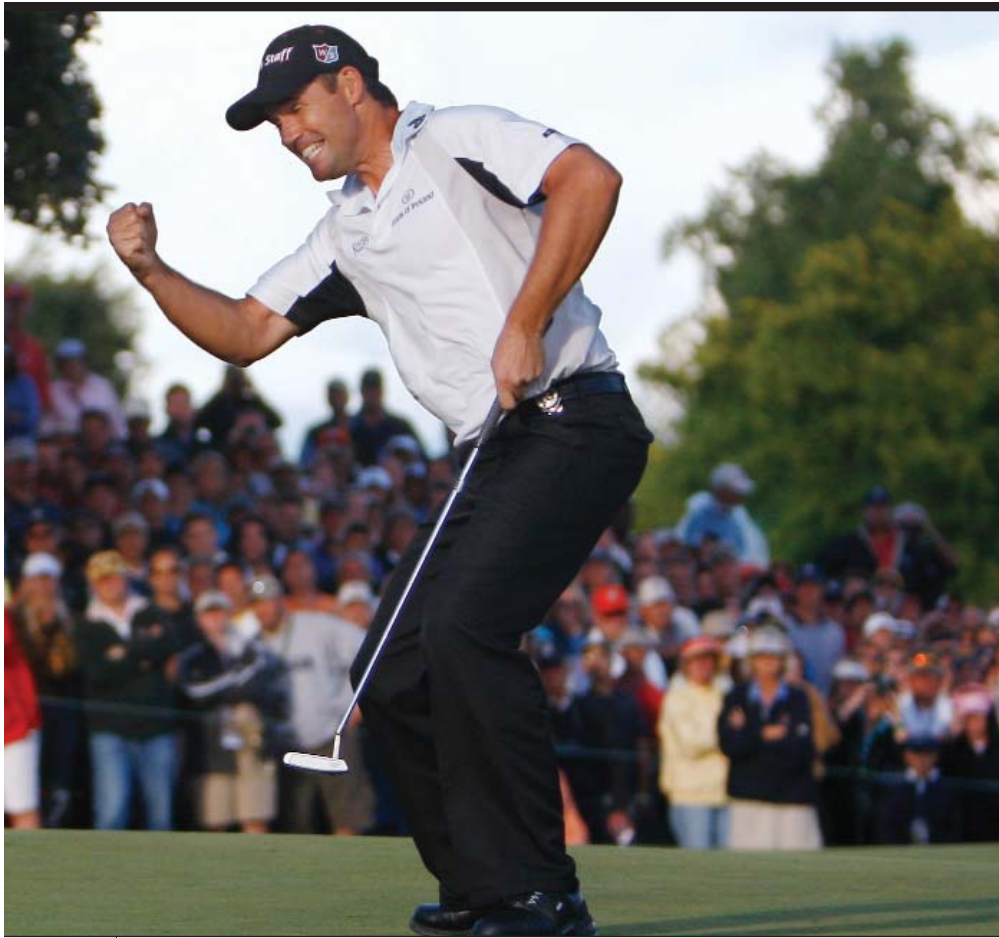


sionals were on hand to man hitting stations and a putting green where city residents and businesspeople took 10-minute lessons. A giant leaderboard and TV monitors allowed people to follow the action, while the RBS Jack Nicklaus Majors Challenge used a state-of-the-art simulator to allow visitors to take a shot at the 9th green on the South Course at Oakland Hills. RBS also presented the PGA Championship Exhibit that was on display next to the PGA Golf Shop at Oakland Hills during the week.

### Esposito Narrowly Misses Playing the Weekend

PGA Professional Frank Esposito Jr. of Monroe, N.J., had fought hard to get a berth in his first PGA Championship. He was one of five in a sudden-death playoff in June at the PGA Professional National Championship, going to a third extra hole before securing a berth at Oakland Hills Country Club.

On Friday afternoon Esposito was near the finish line, needing a bogey on the 18th hole to become the only PGA Professional of 20 in the field to make



Padraig Harrington (above) reacts to sinking his putt on the 18th hole to win the 90th PGA Championship. Frank Esposito Jr. (below) came up one stroke short of making the 36-hole cut.

the cut of 8-over-par 148.

Moments later, Esposito's dream finish of playing the weekend in the season's final major slipped away.

The 45-year-old PGA head professional at Brooklake Country Club in Florham Park, N.J., Esposito struggled to a double-bogey 6 on the final hole, finishing with a 78 and a 36-hole total of 149.

"I was the last guy into this (from the



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PGA Professional National Championship) and to be able to bump up to the top, and have a chance to be here for the weekend, was a good accomplishment," said Esposito.

Esposito saw his chance fade away when his tee shot landed in a left-side fairway bunker. From there, he hit a thin recovery shot out to 66 yards short of the hole on an elevated green.

But, his sand wedge approach ran over the green into the back fringe, from where he chipped 12 feet past the hole.

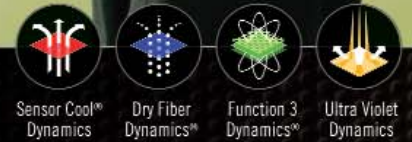
"I hit the approach too hard. It must have been a little adrenaline," said Esposito. A bogey putt that he needed trickled up and just right of the hole.

"I didn't know what the cut mark was until I got into the scoring area and looked on the monitor," said Esposito. "It wouldn't have dictated how I played, had I known. I thought I played hard and fought hard. It was a great experience for me." ■

**Bob Denney** is The PGA of America's Senior Association Writer.



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