

# Local golf tournaments in full swing as weather changes



**Ralph Gaillard**  
GOLF-N-AROUND

As the weather is becoming more agreeable and springtime is upon us, the weekend calendars at local golf courses are filling up with tournaments. Most of the organizations putting on these tournaments donate the proceeds to local youth programs, scholarship funds, and other community activities that appreciate and/or need the financial support.

The Walkertown Wolf Pack Boosters Club will have its first annual Walkertown Wolf Pack Fundraiser Golf Tournament at Winston

Lake Golf Course Saturday, April 6. The captain's choice, team competition tournament will have a shotgun start at 9 a.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served, and a goody bag will be provided to all participants.

Team prizes will be awarded for first through third places. Individual prizes will be awarded for closest to the pin on several holes and the longest drive. The winner of a hole in one on hole number 12 will receive a Toyota sports utility vehicle. Pick up entry forms at the E. Jerry Jones Clubhouse at The Lake or call Greg Woods at (336) 724-4875 for details.

The NAACP 15th annual Sarah Marsh Scholarship Golf Classic will be held

April 20-21 at Winston Lake Golf Course. The tournament will have four flights, and prizes will be awarded to the top four finishers. There also will be an award for the longest drive. Pick up entry forms at the clubhouse at The Lake, or contact Bill Tatum at (336) 784-8836 for more information.

The NAACP tournament coincides with the dedication of the E. Jerry Jones Clubhouse at Winston Lake Golf Course. The dedication ceremony is scheduled to commence at 1 p.m. on April 20.

A permanent pictorial display will be placed on one of the walls in the entrance area of the clubhouse. The display will

depict historical events at the golf course since it was built in the early 1950s. Also, photographs with biographical information of eight PGA and LPGA players who have a connection with the golf course will be displayed in the concession area. Refreshments will be served after the dedication.

The Winston-Salem State Foundation will hold its annual WSSU Golf Classic at Bermuda Run Country Club on April 26. The captain's choice tournament will have a shotgun start at 9 a.m.

Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams, and there will be individual awards for closest to the pin and longest drive. Entry forms can be picked up at

the clubhouse at The Lake, or call (336) 750-3161 for details.

The Phi Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority will hold its Phi Omega Inc. Classic Golf Tournament on April 27 at Winston Lake Golf Course. The captain's choice tournament will have a shotgun start at 9 a.m. This annual tournament benefits low-income housing at the Ivy Arms Apartments.

Team and individual prizes will be awarded. Entry forms can be obtained at the clubhouse at The Lake. You can also contact Earnest Morris, golf professional at The Lake, (336) 727-2703, or Geneva B. Brown, tournament director, (336) 724-9336.

Most of these local events have registration deadlines for their tournaments. However, if there is still available space in the tournament you can usually obtain late entry by calling the contact telephone number. You also can take a chance and show up at the golf course the day of the tournament. In most instances, you and/or your team will be allowed to participate.

So get your teams or yourself together and play in these tournaments. You will meet some fine people, have too much fun, and will give something back to the community where you work and live.

Until next time, keep it in the fairway.

# Scholarships and pro careers entice kids – and parents

BY BETSY PEOPLES AND LEAH Y. LATIMER  
BET.COM

Think Kobe, Tiger Woods, Venus and Serena, Kordell Stewart. The successes of these sports phenoms are inspiring parents and kids around the country to dream what once only the exceptionally talented dared envision: free rides to college, lucrative careers and celebrity endorsements.

Such sports dreams are more than evident in the black community. Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport found that two-thirds of African-American boys aged 13 to 18 think they will make it to the ranks of professional athletes – even bench-warmers and borderline players. At the same time, the study found, African-American parents are four times more likely than other parents to share those sports dreams with their children.

While football and basketball are the most popular sports among black youths, Tiger Woods and the Williams sisters have broadened the sports horizons of many youths.

"What we have seen over the

last four years are more minority kids playing at the national level for junior golfers," said Barbara Douglas, managing director of the National Minority Golf Foundation.

Four of the NMGF juniors are on Golf magazine's top 100 list. One of them, Erica Battle of Columbia, S.C., just earned a full sports scholarship to the University of South Carolina. Thanks to her father, Battle started playing the game at age 7. Her goal is to play in the LPGA tour one day.

Most youngsters will never excel at such levels, but track coach Willie Maull feels the intensity from their families. "I have parents who get upset with me because their kids don't get scholarships," said Maull, track coach at Green Run High School in Virginia Beach, Va.

For most families sports are just a healthy outlet that builds body and character. In an age defined by absent black fathers, African-American men strike a high profile at youth athletic events in their communities. As coaches, league commissioners or just supportive fathers, they bond with their young sons and daughters in

scenes generally portrayed as white, suburban and middle-class.

Most families also make academics a priority. In the late 1990s, the NCAA stiffened academic eligibility requirements for receiving scholarships and playing intercollegiate sports. The new requirements, phased in during the late 1990s, involve a formula of standardized test scores and grades, based on "core" high school courses that include advanced math, lab sciences and social studies.

"I've seen so many parents who prepared their kids to be basketball players, but have no knowledge of academic rules and regulations for eligibility," said Charles Farrell, director of a Rainbow PUSH Coalition project to extend minority presence in professional sports. "If you're not preparing to take the SAT, ACT or not getting the right core courses, you're going to have trouble."

According to the NCAA, 157,000 high school seniors vie each year for 4,500 openings on college basketball teams. As for football, 281,000 graduating high school players seek 16,000 positions on col-

lege teams.

"If you have a child who demonstrates athletic prowess, there are certainly ways to pursue athletic scholarships," Farrell continued, "but I don't think that realistically anybody should bet the bank on just an athletic scholarship."

The odds are worse for professional careers. Only 1.3 percent of those who even make it to the college ranks will play at least a year in the NBA. Only 2 percent of college players play one year in the NFL. Superstars who leave college early or skip it altogether are even more rare.

Farrell and others advise families to explore untraditional sports: swimming, lacrosse, ice hockey, gymnastics and wrestling. In basketball and football, "you're competing for a very limited number of scholarships," said Vince Fudzic, author of "Your Mind Is a Muscle Too: How Student Athletes Succeed in College and in Life." A former football player at the University of Washington, he says colleges want to diversify their athletic programs, and African-American students can stand-out if they take on other sports.

Stephen Blanchard, 14, hopes to play in the NBA one day. He got cut from his team last fall, but he's playing for a community league now and plans to try out for his school team again next year.

"I try to get good grades, but sometimes they slip. I know what's at stake here. That's why I try to study more and stop joking around in class."

Most of his sister Stephanie's summers are spent at camps focused on track as she participates in meets around the country year-round.

"I have to work hard because I want to run in the Olympics someday," she said.

After school, both call to check in with their mom at work to run down their homework for the day. Blanchard reviews it when she gets home. Stephanie has a 3.0 grade point average; Stephen, a 2.5. Blanchard strives for a healthy balance because, in the end, she knows there's more to life than sports. "It's really all about keeping them busy and out of trouble," she said.

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