



2021 **U.S. HICKORY OPEN**<sup>™</sup>  
HOSTED BY NORTHWEST HICKORY PLAYERS

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[HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES PROVIDED HERE](#)

## **2021 U.S. HICKORY OPEN TO BE HELD AT HISTORIC WEST COAST GEARHART GOLF LINKS IN OREGON**

**NORTHWEST HICKORY PLAYERS HOST 14TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

SEATTLE, WA - **The U.S. Hickory Open** (USHO) is the premier hickory golf tournament in the United States, presented each year by the **Society of Hickory Golfers** (SoHG). In its 14th year in 2021, the U.S. Hickory Open is scheduled for September 12-14 on the historic 1892 Gearhart Golf Links in Gearhart, Oregon. This marks only the second time the USHO will be contested in the western United States, the first being at Pebble Beach Resorts' 1897 Del Monte Golf Course in 2017, also hosted by Northwest Hickory Players.

"We are thrilled to return to the West Coast," said Society President, and Wisconsin resident, Greg Smith. "In 2020 the sold-out Open is welcoming hickory golf enthusiasts from over 22 states, and Canada, at Happy Hollow Golf Club in Omaha, Nebraska. This represents the eighth state in ten years to host this acclaimed event. The chance to visit the Oregon Coast and play the brilliant and historic links at Gearhart is something very special for our international members."



"Gearhart Golf Links is an exceptional venue for this tournament," says Northwest Hickory Players tournament organizer and Olympia (WA) resident, Rob Ahlschwede. "David McLay-Kidd, acclaimed architect of Bandon Dunes and Mammoth Dunes, ranked Gearhart in his "Top 10 Favorite Places" in the March 2020 edition of Golf Magazine. Golf Professional, Jason Bangild, is also one of the best in the business, and has welcomed NWHP's three-day Gearhart Hickory Classic to the course every July since 2015. The seaside course offers a true links-style experience, perfectly suited to the original equipment used by global hickory golf collectors and enthusiasts."

The 2019 USHO was held at the Belvedere Golf Club in Charlevoix, Michigan, where Rick Woeckener won to notch his second USHO title with rounds of 75 and 78 for a total score of 153. Woeckener is a perennial challenger for the title, having won it nine years earlier at Mimosa Hills (North Carolina). He was second both in 2011 at French Lick (Indiana) and in 2014 at the Country Club of Ashville (North Carolina). The 2018 USHO was held at Sedgfield Country Club in Greensboro, N.C.

Players must be a member of the Society of Hickory Golfers to compete, but anyone may join. Initial membership is \$50 for the year (plus a one-time initiation fee), and offers access to multiple Championship



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Series national tournaments throughout the United States, regional events and outings, the official worldwide hickory handicap system, and issues of *The Golf*, the quarterly magazine of the SoHG and Golf Heritage Society.

### **U.S. HICKORY OPEN RULES**

Players must use pre-1935 authentic wood-shafted clubs, or SoHG-approved replicas. All USGA rules are in effect, except as they are modified under local rules set forth and enforced by the tournament committee. Local rules modifications are intended to help hickory enthusiasts experience the game as closely as possible to the way it was played in the heyday of hickory golf. **Winners will be determined by 36 holes of stroke play.** Contestants must enter one of the following divisions:

**Open Division** (Championship) will play from a distance no greater than 6,200 yards.

**Senior Division** (ages 60-69) will play from a distance no greater than 5,800 yards.

**Super Senior Division** (age 70+) will play from the same as seniors.

**Ladies Division** will play from a distance no greater than 5,000 yards.

In each division, there will be a Gross and Reserve (handicapped) tally. Only those playing in the Open/Championship Division will be eligible to win the USHO. Each division must have a minimum of four contestants. If four contestants cannot be achieved, the tournament committee will allocate applicants into an appropriate division prior to the first day of play.

### **ABOUT THE SOCIETY OF HICKORY GOLFERS**

The mission of the [Society of Hickory Golfers](#) is to promote and encourage the playing of Hickory Golf.

- To establish a worldwide society of like-minded hickory players;
- To assist members and others in discovering the playing characteristics of wood shaft golf clubs;
- To promote the experience of golf in a manner consistent with how the 'royal and ancient game' was played in the hickory era;
- To establish guidelines for organizing hickory golf tournaments;
- To provide a centralized scheduling system for world wide hickory competitions;
- To provide a hosting service for the establishment and maintenance of hickory handicaps; and
- To develop and maintain equipment standards for hickory play.

### **ABOUT GEARHART GOLF LINKS**

Legend has it that [Gearhart Golf Links](#) began life in about 1888, starting out as three holes of true links-style golf amongst the seaside meadows that characterize the North Oregon coast. Golf, somewhat new to the U.S., came to Gearhart by way of visitors to the bustling resort who had experienced the game in Europe and found Gearhart's meadows a perfect setting. By 1892, golf was a regular pastime for guests of the Hotel Gearhart on the three-hole course just across the street. With this history, Gearhart Golf Links claims the mantle of The Oldest Golf Course West of the Mississippi River and shares the early spotlight with such



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courses as Victoria Golf Club (1893), Tacoma Country and Golf Club (1894) and Del Monte Golf Club (1897). From its original three holes, Gearhart Golf Links has stayed true to its Scottish roots and offers a pleasurable round (now 18 holes) for all golfers. To this day, the course retains that classic links-style flavor, with a hint of traditional Northwest design features.

#### **ABOUT NORTHWEST HICKORY PLAYERS**

After a successful three-day event in Portland in July of 2013, [Northwest Hickory Players](#) was officially organized on January 1, 2014 following an outing at Chambers Bay in Tacoma, Washington. The goal of this group is to preserve and promote hickory golf in the traditions of bygone days when golfers, wearing knickers and other period clothing, played with brassies, spoons mashies and niblicks. NWHP is exclusively dedicated to hickory golf. That's it. No modern events, no hybrid events, just pre-1935 hickory play for the love of the game. The group serves members from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia and routinely attracts hickory golfers from all parts of the United States for their year-long schedule of tournaments and recreational outings across the Northwest region.

#### **PAST U.S. HICKORY OPEN VENUES**

- 2008 – Mimosa Hills CC, Morganton, N.C. (Dr. Jay Harris winner)
- 2009 – Mimosa Hills CC, Morganton, N.C. (Roger Andrews, winner)
- 2010 – Mimosa Hills CC, Morganton, N.C. (Rick Woeckener, winner)
- 2011 – Donald Ross Course, French Lick, Ind. (Alan Grieve, winner)
- 2012 – Donald Ross Course, French Lick, Ind. (Tony Smarrelli, winner)
- 2013 – Bay Course, Seaview Resort, Galloway, N.J. (Jeremy Moe, winner)
- 2014 – Country Club of Asheville, Asheville, N.C. (Jeremy Moe, winner)
- 2015 – Miami Valley Golf Club, Dayton, Ohio (Jeremy Moe, winner)
- 2016 – Links of Lawsonia, Green Lake, Wisc. (Jeremy Moe, winner)
- 2017 – Del Monte Golf Course, Monterey, CA (Nico Bollini, winner)
- 2018 - Sedgfield Country Club, Greensboro, N.C. (Taylor Jones, winner)
- 2019 - Belvedere Golf Club, Charlevoix, Michigan (Rick Woeckener, winner)
- 2020 – Happy Hollow Club, Omaha, Nebraska (October 4-6, 2020)

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For other high-resolution photos, please contact Robert Birman at [rob.birman@gmail.com](mailto:rob.birman@gmail.com).  
Gearhart Golf Links photo credits: *Don Frank Photography*