Hacker’s Guide Completes the Review of its 400th Midwestern Golf Course

The Hacker’s Guide is now is in its third year of rating golf courses across the Midwest. During its first year Team Hacker rated 87 golf courses in the Twin Cities. In its second season they rated 283 courses and in the current season, a team of 60-100 Team Hacker members will be rating EVERY 18-hole public golf course across Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North & South Dakota for a total of 680+ courses over three years.

Minneapolis, MN (PRWEB) August 2, 2010 -- Hacker’s Guide, a Minneapolis-based golf course rating organization that is in the process of rating more than 680 public 18-hole golf courses across the Upper Midwest by late this fall, has just completed the review of its 400th golf course.

“We are excited by our progress this summer with our 400th course milestone, and can see the light at the end of the tunnel,” said Bruce Stasch, publisher of the Hacker’s Guide. “It’s a big job rating every 18-hole public golf course across Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota, but our Team Hacker raters have been up for the task.”

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To complete the job of reviewing these courses, it is up to Team Hacker to do it. This is a group of independent golfers that love the game and want to give back to it in some way. “We've had over 950 applicants for Team Hacker, and from that group we've so far selected 115 who fit everything we look for in our reviewers,” said Eric Hart, Director of Golf & Senior Writer for Hacker’s Guide.

As volunteer representatives of Hacker’s Guide, each Team Hacker member goes through a 5-step assessment process, including a one-on-one phone interview, before they even set foot on a course. In addition to their golf abilities, they are also selected for their commitment, writing and objective observational skills. “With almost 700 courses to cover this year, we figure the average reviewer will cover 5 to 10 courses each. It's a wonderful opportunity for the reviewers and gives us quite the multitude of perspectives in our rating guides,” said Eric Hart, Director of Golf & Senior Writer for Hacker’s Guide.

Each course is rated on 60 different factors and the Hackers Rating System is designed to assess each course on five different categories: Hospitality, Playability, Usability, Facilities and Value. These categories are then “weighted” and a final score (out of 1000) is given to a course. In addition, each course then receives a 400-word descriptive review of the experience.

According to Hart, “I interact with course owners and managers on a daily basis, and more and more I hear the respect they are beginning to have for our ratings. Many golf courses are starting to realize the great benefit to the Hacker's Guide visiting their course. From the top tier courses to the least known, we give most of them exposure no other media outlet does. A full page review is a full page review... and it's free to them.”
According to Beth Bloomquist, clubhouse manager of Viking Meadows in East Bethel, Minnesota, “The guide is really accurate and a good reflection of our course. It gives people access to our course so they have an idea of what they can expect when they get here. Playing for the first time is no longer intimidating.”

“We are rating 20-30 courses per week and the only thing that will stop us from completing our 680th golf course this year is the weather,” said Stasch. “I’m very excited about the job Team Hacker is doing. The more I talk to courses, the more important I think it is to have a golf course rating system like ours that takes a non-bias approach to course rating. We treat every course the same, regardless of its greens fee.”

Many good to great local courses never get the attention they deserve, overlooked by the big media organizations, or too far from major metropolitan areas. For comparison, the leading golf course review guides are GolfWeek (which only covers the Top 100 courses in any category) Zagat’s, and Golf Digest (which ceased publishing a ratings guide in 2006 and only has them online). For the state of Minnesota, Golf Digest listed 121 courses, Zagat’s only 17. Hacker’s Guide lists 248 courses.


“We fully expect to take this concept national in the next few years with thousands of courses rated by the Hacker’s Guide,” said Stasch.

About the Hacker’s Guide
Hacker’s GuideTM is the first complete state-by-state golf course rating system since the United States Golf Association established par and slope ratings. Starting with the Twin Cities Metro area as a test market, Hacker’s Guide is being rolled out to eventually include a review of the close to 9,000 public 18-hole golf courses nationwide.

Hacker’s Guide to Minnesota and Western Wisconsin Golf Courses ($19.95) and the Hacker’s Guide to Twin Cities Golf Courses ($14.95) are both being distributed by Adventure Publications, Cambridge, Minnesota, the region’s leading distributor of local titles, and can be found at major retailers like Barnes & Noble, Borders, Nevada Bob’s, Play It Again Sports, Golf Galaxy, Golf USA, Holiday Station stores, Love from Minnesota, online at Amazon.com, more than 50 area golf courses or at and www.hackerscentralonline.com.

About Hacker’s Guide Founder
Bruce Stasch is the founder of Apex Golf Enterprises and originator of Hacker’s GuideTM, a rating system which has been created to rate all 18-hole public golf courses in the country and eliminate the mystery of choosing a golf course appropriate for a golfer’s game. In addition, Stasch operates a blog and podcast about golf and equipment called Golf Gear News, and he was a frequent contributor to Tee Times Minnesota Golf & Living, Worldgolf.com and Minnesota Meetings & Events.

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