



Get Golf Ready is Unveiled

Registration officially kicked off at the PGA Merchandise Show, which featured a Play Golf America Conference

By Tony L. Starks

On Friday, Jan. 30, during the 56th PGA Merchandise Show, the official launch of the facility application process for the industry-wide Get Golf Ready initiative was announced.

Attendees filled the seats at the PGA Equipment Forum Stage as a panel including PGA Past President M.G. Orender, World Golf Foundation Chairman and CEO Steve Mona, Golf 20/20 Executive Board Member Leigh Bader, and Golf 20/20 Director Cathy Harbin, communicated the objectives and details of Get Golf Ready. And if that day's turnout is any indication of how well the program will be received, the nationally-branded initiative can expect to be welcomed by open armed PGA Professionals.

"Get Golf Ready will give me a program for adult beginners that I really need," said Darrell Rego, PGA head professional at Ironwood Hills Golf Club in Molokai, Hawaii, who attended the Play Golf America: Get Golf Ready Conference. "In this economy, anything that helps us introduce adult golfers to the game and puts a few dollars in our cash registers is a win-win program."

In his opening comments, PGA President Jim Remy called Get Golf Ready "the next step for Play Golf America." Orender, the impetus behind the initial rise of Play Golf America, encouraged those in attendance to be proactive by utilizing player development programs to generate revenues. "We as PGA Professionals must capitalize

Get Golf Ready was officially introduced during the Play Golf America Conference at the PGA Merchandise Show.

adults into the game in a comfortable, enjoyable manner through a series of five introductory lessons in a small-group environment. Each of the five sessions feature significant on-course learning opportunities. The program will be offered in many locations at \$99, although pricing may vary by facility.

Get Golf Ready programs are projected to be offered at 700 facilities around the U.S. by the end of 2009, reaching up to 35,000 new participants. By the end of 2011, the expectation is that 3,000 facilities will be offering the program and reaching up to 150,000 new players annually.

In order to stimulate the launch of the program during its initial year, the World Golf Foundation will be offering a \$1,000 stipend to up to 700 golf facilities that become certified to offer the designated curriculum and use the Get Golf Ready brand in local market promotional efforts.

"We are enthused about Get Golf Ready and its potential to have a meaningful impact on our industry's customer base," said Joe Steranka, PGA of America CEO and chairman of Golf 20/20's Executive Committee. "Based on the extensive work and research that has been previously accomplished through industry initiatives such as Play Golf America and Link Up 2 Golf, we believe this program's approach and curriculum will have broad appeal. The PGA is delighted to make this our lead Play Golf America program for 2009."

Facilities may apply either online at PlayGolfAmerica.com, or by contacting the World Golf Foundation for information. As an integral part of Play Golf America, GetGolfReady.com will also serve as a resource site for interested consumers to learn more about the program and to get connected with participating facilities. ■