

# TPC Network Adopts Get Golf Ready, as do Others

Management companies are touting the importance of structured programming when it comes to player development

**T**he TPC Network operates more than 30 courses across the U.S., many of which are among the most recognizable layouts in golf. Throughout the PGA Tour season, golf fans line the fairways at these pristine venues to view the world's greatest players vie for a World Golf Championship while facing a Blue Monster or competing for the crown of Players Champion on perhaps the most famous par 3 in all of golf.

But the operators of the TPC Network believe that their commitment to golf extends far beyond hosting compelling championships for the world's finest players. They also have a commitment to growing the game at the grassroots level.

"It's every PGA Professional's responsibility to grow the game and expose it to as many people as possible," says Bill Whaley, PGA general manager at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn., and also regional director of golf operations for the TPC Network. "The TPC Network is layered with PGA Professionals. That's why we believe it's so important for us to support initiatives like Get Golf Ready and others from The PGA of America in being custodians of the game."

Beginning two years ago, the TPC Network made it mandatory for their golf professionals to implement Get Golf Ready into the business plan for their respective facilities. The first year resulted in more than 500 participants completing Get Golf Ready at one the 30-plus TPC facilities. The second year: nearly 1,200. Whaley says they are planning to eclipse the 2,000 mark in the third year.

"Our professionals have really embraced it," Whaley says. "Everyone from our president, David Pillsbury, to the last assistant professional hired knows that this program is working to bring new people to our game. It's a win for the game, a win for our business and a win for our guests and members. We passionately believe in it."

Much like the TPC Network has already done, golf course management company Applied Golf is in the process of implementing the mandatory application of Get Golf Ready at the 13 facilities it operates in eastern half of the United States. At the helm is PGA Professional Mike Attara, the PGA general manager at Eagle Ridge Golf Club in Lakewood, N.J., and vice president of Applied Golf.

Attara is widely respected for his player development efforts. This five-time winner of the New Jersey PGA Section President's Plaque Award serves as Chair of his Section's Growth of the Game Committee.

"Considering the past success I've had with Play Golf America programming and Get Golf Ready, I understand that these initiatives are great tools for

bringing people to the game," says Attara. "If we can implement them on a broader scale in a uniformed fashion through our management company, the opportunity for growth can multiply tenfold."

One way the TPC Network has spread the word of Get Golf Ready's success is through an internal best practices website. PGA Professionals at TPC locations can log on to share ideas with their peers across the country pertaining to various business topics.

Whaley cited several best practices linked to Get Golf Ready, such as targeting the parents of juniors in local First Tee programs. "If we can get mom or dad or both playing there's a better chance that the entire family continues playing golf," he says.

Another idea that's worked well is hosting Get Golf Ready sessions on Monday's during charity pro-ams – most of which were tied to PGA Tour events. If a golfer wanted to participate but could not dedicate the five hours needed for a scramble, they could sign up for an hour-long Get Golf Ready class instead.

"One of our big pushes this year is tracking what we generate in terms income and activity levels through Get Golf Ready, and being able to tell that story," says Whaley. "We changed our entire POS system to support that. Our job, as a higher profile facility than maybe a stand-alone club, is to show that these programs are for real and they truly deliver quantifiable prospects for the game." ■

Log onto  
PGAmagazine.com

To view a special Get Golf Ready promotional video, log onto [www.PGAmagazine.com](http://www.PGAmagazine.com). Contact Le Ann Finger at [lfinger@pgahq.com](mailto:lfinger@pgahq.com) for a complimentary copy of the Get Golf Ready DVD.



TPC Southwind in Memphis, Tenn., utilizes Get Golf Ready as an introductory program for women golfers.

