

# Success Depends on PGA Professionals' Ongoing Involvement

Carolinas PGA members mark third year of support to McGladrey Team Championship by taking Section Championship to Kiawah Island

By Bob Denney

**P**GA Master Professional Brian Gerard of Kiawah Island, S.C., knows what it means to step up in merchandising a golf facility, and he also has a talent for marketing an event.

Gerard, the 2006 PGA Merchandiser of the Year for resort facilities, believes that the same principles which apply to attracting customers to renowned Kiawah Island Golf Resort also work in promoting The McGladrey Team Championship.

"Each year this Championship has grown," says Gerard, who is both PGA general manager and director of golf, overseeing five courses on Kiawah Island. "People that have experienced it realize that it is a great event. Regardless of the economic situation, they know that you have to be a part of it. The bottom line is that it is up to us, PGA Professionals, to get behind it and host Local Qualifying Events."

On June 27, Kiawah Island will host its third consecutive Local Qualifying Event, and on Aug. 4, Kiawah's Osprey Point will be the site of the Carolinas Section's McGladrey Team Championship.

"We think that the Championship is a wonderful program, and will continue to support it," says Gerard. "We stepped up to get the Section Championship here, and we're excited about it."

"I have not had the opportunity to be at the National Championship, but all who have been and those in our section reporting back tell us that it has been a great experience."

The Carolinas PGA Section, the largest PGA Section with nearly 1,600 members and more than 400 apprentices, fittingly is the host section for the National Championship, Oct. 26-28, at Pinehurst (N.C.) Resort.

"The McGladrey Team Championship is something that our Professionals and their amateur team members look forward to each year, because it's

truly a unique kind of championship experience," says Carolinas PGA Executive Director and PGA Professional Ron Schmid. "Here in the Carolinas, we've embraced it as a highlight of our tournament season, and each facility that takes part is proud to put their best team forward in hopes of making it to Pinehurst."

"Now, as Osprey Point has come on board for our Section Team Championship, we are excited to travel to beautiful Kiawah Island and give our competitors a new and different playing experience."

Terry Johnson, the PGA head professional at River Falls Plantation in Duncan, S.C., can confirm The McGladrey Team Championship "national"

experience. Johnson guided his club's foursome to a fourth-place finish in 2007 at the inaugural National Championship.

Last year, River Falls Plantation missed by one stroke in earning a return trip to Pinehurst. In the past two years, no team from North Carolina has gained a spot in the National Championship. The honors all go to South Carolina representatives.

"I told our team in 2007, 'Boys, short of courtesy cars, this is as close to a Tour event that you will ever be in,'" says Johnson, who has spent 17 seasons at River Falls Plantation.

"This Championship will continue to grow. It's an event now that our members know that they have something to play for, and it is worth their time to register."

To register for a Local Qualifying Event, visit [PGA.com/teamchampionship](http://PGA.com/teamchampionship).

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The PGA McGladrey Team Championship is the result of a partnership between The PGA of America and RSM McGladrey, the Official Accounting, Tax and Business Consulting firm of The PGA of America. RSM McGladrey is the fifth largest accounting, tax and business consulting firm in the country when considered with McGladrey & Pullen LLP (a partner-owned CPA firm). ■



**What:** The McGladrey Team Championship

**Where:** Pinehurst (N.C.) Resort

**When:** Oct. 26-28

**Who:** 41 four-member PGA Section Championship teams composed of three amateurs and a PGA Professional

**Web site:** [PGA.com/teamchampionship](http://PGA.com/teamchampionship)

Brian Gerard (pictured) played a vital role in securing Kiawah Island Golf Resort as host of the Carolinas PGA Section's McGladrey Team Championship in early August.