

Iowa Golf Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Six to Be Added to the Iowa Golf Hall of Fame in 2010

The Iowa Golf Association is pleased to announce the election of six new members to the Iowa Golf Hall of Fame, including two individuals added under the Historical category. The “Class of 2010” will raise the total membership in the Iowa Golf Hall of Fame to 49.

Current PGA Champions Tour star Lonnie Nielsen of Belle Plaine and renowned PGA Tour instructor Mike Bender, a Waterloo native, will be joined by two-time Iowa PGA Golf Professional of the Year Jim Hasley of Davenport and golf turf industry leader Steve Tyler of Waverly.

In the historical category former Des Moines area club professional Jack Hall and 1920’s era Des Moines amateur Bob McKee will be inducted. The date and other details for the induction ceremony will be announced in the near future.

Complete information about the Iowa Golf Hall of Fame can be found online at www.iowagolf.org.

Lonnie Nielsen

Nielsen grew up playing on sand greens in Belle Plaine and went on to attend the University of Iowa. He won several amateur events in Iowa, including the 1975 Iowa Amateur, and was named Iowa Player of the Year that year.

He turned pro in 1976 and competed for a brief time on the PGA Tour highlighted by two top ten finishes before pursuing a career as a club pro. Nielsen was a dominant player in the Western New York Section PGA winning its Section Championship nine times and the Match Play Championship 10 times from 1984 through 2002

Lonnie has played the PGA Champions Tour full time since 2006 winning two titles and has amassed almost \$5 million in winnings. Nielsen’s best year was 2008 when he finished 11th on the money list with over \$1.2 million in cash.

Mike Bender

Mike Bender grew up in Waterloo and has had a distinguished career as both a player and a swing instructor. Bender was a three-time NCAA Division III All-American (1978-1980) and won the individual championship in 1979 and 1980 at California State University Stanislaus.

In 1986 Bender was Iowa PGA Section Player of the Year and then played on the PGA Tour for three seasons (1987-89). He was North Florida PGA Section Player of the Year in 1995 and won the section Match Play Championship in 1998.

But it is in teaching that Bender has found his true calling. He has achieved worldwide recognition as one of the game's top instructors. His most famous students are 2007 Masters Champion Zach Johnson and two-time U. S. Open Champion Lee Janzen. He has also worked with LPGA tour winners Seon Hwa Lee and Joo Mi Kim.

Bender was named one of the Top 10 Greatest Teachers in America by Golf Digest in 2007 and in 2009 he was recognized as the PGA of America National Teacher of the Year.

Jim Hasley

Jim Hasley has had a long and distinguished career as a club professional and has been named the Iowa Section PGA Golf Professional of the Year twice, first in 1985 and again in 2001.

Mr. Hasley served as the Head Professional at Emeis Golf Course in Davenport for more than 30 years and stepped down from that position at the end of 2001. However, he stayed involved by taking over the 9-hole Red Hawk Golf Course in Davenport and was a key figure in the development of The First Tee Chapter of the Quad Cities at that location. Hasley's love of the game shines through when he is on the lesson tee with the kids of The First Tee program.

An indication of the esteem that Hasley has earned in his career is the fact that the Ryder Cup style matches held each year by the Quad Cities Amateur Tour between teams from Illinois and Iowa are named "The Hasley Cup Matches".

Steve Tyler

Steve Tyler has been involved in the Iowa Turf Industry since he was a teenager. His first job was at Washington Park Golf Course in Cedar Falls. Tyler became a member of the Iowa Golf Course Superintendent Association (IGCSA) in 1967. In 1971 he took on the job of building Pheasant Ridge Golf Course in Cedar Falls and became the Golf Superintendent for the City of Cedar Falls when the course opened in 1972.

He was on the IGCSA Board of Directors from 1976-1979 and was President in 1978. Tyler was a Charter Trustee of the Iowa Turfgrass Institute (ITI) and served as its first President in 1980 and continued on the Board of Directors until 1995.

Tyler was awarded the IGCSA Distinguished Service Award in 1985 and in 2009 Tyler received the Iowa Turfgrass Institute Meritorious Service Award.

Since 1981 Tyler has been the New Product Director and Regional Sales Manager for Standard Golf Company in Cedar Falls. His leadership in the establishment of the Iowa Turfgrass Institute helped unite Iowa's turf related businesses and has resulted in the Iowa Turf Industry's standing as one of the most respected in the country.

Jack Hall

Jack Hall devoted 41 years of service to golfers in Iowa and to the game of golf. Hall became a pro during the Depression in the 1930's and was the head professional at Waveland Golf Course in Des Moines until 1955. He moved to Hyperion Field Club and served as head professional there until 1973. He served as Iowa Section PGA President from 1949-1950.

Hall made his presence known as a player in Iowa winning the Iowa Masters three times (1944, 1948, and 1954). He also won the Waterloo Open in 1947.

Jack Hall was a very dedicated and encouraging teacher who touched the lives of many golfers in the state of Iowa and earned the respect and admiration of his peers in the profession.

Bob McKee

Bob McKee was born and raised in Des Moines and is one of only two players to win the Iowa Amateur in three different decades. His entire family played golf so the game came naturally to him. His father Bert was the Des Moines City Champion in 1908 and both Bob and his younger brother Craig followed in his footsteps. Bob's sister Lucille was also involved in women's golf in Des Moines.

McKee played golf at Drake University and led his team to a first round lead at the 1920 Intercollegiate Golf Championship in Greenwich, Connecticut. Later that year he won the prestigious Trans-Mississippi Championship and a year later he won the individual title at the Western Intercollegiate Championship in Chicago.

McKee won the Iowa Amateur four times over a 12 year period between 1919 and 1931. He won the Des Moines City Championship six times.