

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE



PGATM

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PRO TO PRO

By Jason Scott Deegan

Golf Interest Drives Record Amounts of Play



Video Updates Create Coaching Demand

*Greg Wrobel,
PGA Head Professional,
May River Golf Club,
Bluffton, South Carolina*

When Montage Palmetto Bluff Resort temporarily closed its lodging, spa and restaurants during the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a blessing in disguise for the May River Golf Club, a scenic Jack Nicklaus design affiliated with the resort in Bluffton, South Carolina.

May River PGA Head Golf Professional Greg Wrobel says the golf staff was able to focus solely on its membership while there were no resort guests.

Roughly half of the club's 350 members live on property, and many turned to golf as their sole source of entertainment and exercise.

"Our member rounds basically doubled in April and May. That's crazy," Wrobel says. "Golf was the only activity available, so rounds went up. We kept developing relationships and developing trust."

In that spirit, May River launched a series of videos called "Quarantine With the Club." Multiple departments at the facility – food & beverage, the shooting club and golf – pitched in. Wrobel (*pictured, above left*) is featured in several YouTube videos offering tips that have been well received. All the videos are kept short, roughly 45 to 90 seconds, and involve the short game: chipping, putting, pitching and bunker play.

"It was great," he says. "During this time, it was

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both strange and unique. It gave us a great opportunity to connect with the membership rather than being stuck in the office. We were out seeing the members and having more conversations. We built more trust and relationships in 30 days than we did in the previous six months.”

Wrobel adds that the video tips have helped maintain a steady flow of lessons, despite the spring closure of the practice facility. May River does have an extensive short game facility for practice and lessons. He’s also done more playing lessons on the course in one month than he normally does in a year.

“Through the videos, I’ve had a number of inquiries,” Wrobel says. “People say, ‘That was a great tip. I’d love to have a lesson from you to teach me that.’”

“I’ve had a handful of new lessons come from the videos. Some people gravitate to video more than the written word. We’ve never done videos at the club. It’s been a good opportunity to try something new.” ■

Meal Donation Program Supports First Responders

*Chris Weinhold,
PGA Head Professional,
TPC Twin Cities,
Blaine, Minnesota*

TPC Twin Cities in Blaine, Minnesota, launched a meal donation initiative in April, delivering food to frontline responders at local hospitals dur-



ing the COVID-19 pandemic (*pictured*). PGA Head Professional Chris Weinhold spearheaded many of the logistics, all while handling some of the busiest early season weeks TPC Twin Cities has ever seen.

The meal donation started thanks to five members who are executives at HOM Furniture. Their stores started a promotion to donate \$50 for meals for purchases of \$500 or more. Weinhold created a GoFundMe campaign with an additional goal of \$25,000 in donations.

The original plan called for the club’s food & beverage staff to create the meals, but the scale of the project grew so quickly that Weinhold hired a third-party service to make salads and sandwiches delivered to the club and stored in its coolers. Weinhold personally delivered the meals before other staff members got involved. From April 16 to May 8, TPC Twin Cities delivered 11,425 meals to



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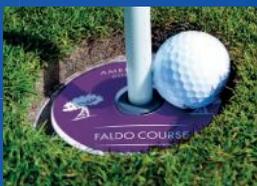
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