



Raspberry Golf Management~Commitment to Excellence

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That black and silver west coast NFL team slogan, “Commitment to Excellence,” describes perfectly how Raspberry Golf Management (RGM) operates their business. The brain trust and leaders at RGM set goals to achieve long before the management company formed in 2007. I doubt that we’d be discussing a multi-course management team if they had not accomplished their initial successes in course development and ownership.



While the golf boom was in full force in the mid-90s, RGM’s Bob Swiger and investors selected Gary Player to design a golf course in Leesburg. They certainly set the bar high when they opened **Raspberry Golf & Hunt Club** in 1996. Raspberry was the first public golf course in the mid-Atlantic to have Bentgrass from tee to green.

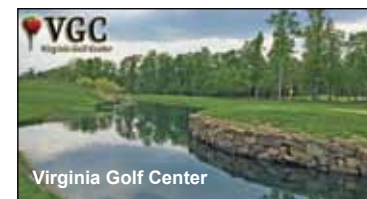
Other courses in the region followed suit, but Raspberry can hang their hat here as

being the trendsetter. Player sprinkled in some “across the Atlantic” magic on this spectacular layout to give the course a European feel with deep Scottish-style, stacked pot bunkers. According to Steve Clark, president of RGM and PGA member, they followed a simple concept at Raspberry Falls. “We wanted players to feel like members for a day with country-club-like conditions daily and customer service to back it up. Our focus was on the golfer and to deliver a quality experience.” In 2003 a second Northern Virginia golf property would open and become a sister course to Raspberry Falls.

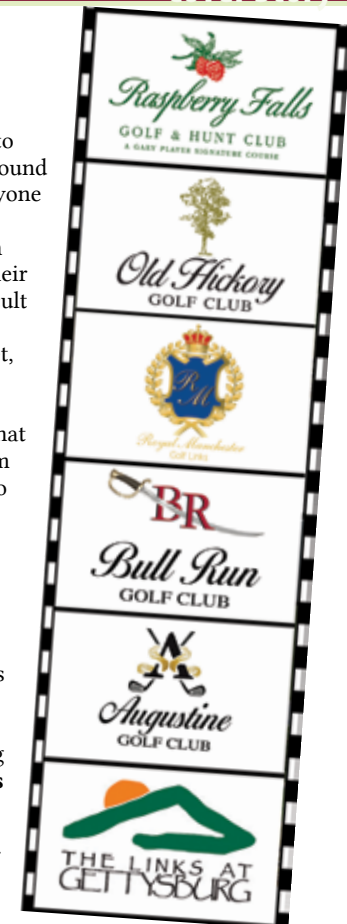
Old Hickory Golf Club in Woodbridge was designed by Tim Freeland, who worked closely with architect Player on the Raspberry project. “We want all of our golf courses to be anchors of the community. Like Harvey Penick said, ‘If you play golf, you are my friend,’” said Clark. Old Hickory truly embodies those statements. Located within a thriving golf course village adds to rather than distracts from this course’s strong layout. A third course, another Tim Freeland design, was developed near York, Pennsylvania, in 2010 as **Royal Manchester Golf Links**. This popular player-friendly course displays a heavy British influence with plenty of bump-and-run shots and fescue covered berms bordering many fairways.



RGM then sought out several of the region’s best courses to add to their management portfolio. “What better way to create a synergistic relationship with golfers than to surround them with the finest daily-fee courses. It just makes everyone and everything better,” Clark said. **Bull Run Golf Club** and **Augustine Golf Club**, two Rick Jacobson designs in Northern Virginia, received immediate accolades upon their openings. Alas, both courses suffered through some difficult times until RGM took over management. The turnaround has been glorious. Bull Run, a scenic course in Haymarket, spreads out across 300 acres of property. Everything here is big with acres of undeveloped scenic meadows, ponds, and woodlands. Augustine in Stafford really shows you that even the best can fall on hard times. Their story goes from riches to rags to riches again. When Augustine opened no better upscale golf course in the metro area existed. An inconsistent front office and flat economy led to sparse conditions and few customers. The new owners saw fit to close the course for several months to restore it to its prior condition. “Our focus continues to be on course quality, customer service, and growing the game at all our properties,” said Clark. We believe that Augustine has always offered golf as natural as golf gets. We were glad to see RGM step in and work their magic. This past year they added to their portfolio when they started managing another top regional course. **The Links At Gettysburg’s** stunning Lindsay Ervin design includes rock cliffs, lakes, waterfalls, and a magnificent multiple clubhouse setting that overlooks much of the back nine. They offer some of the most exciting golf in Pennsylvania.



The **Virginia Golf Center** (VGC) in Clifton is a unique property in the RGM portfolio. This is probably the best place to go if someone is looking to get started in the game. The double-decker driving range and adjacent 9-hole par 3 course are geared for family entertainment






and fun. The center has more than ten instructors on site and a multitude of programs for golfers of all levels. The VGC holds one of the largest “Drive, Chip, and Putt” qualifiers in the state as well as hosting two PGA Junior League teams, LPGA Girls Golf Clinics, and PGA Mini-Mulligan Tour events. For the non-traditional options to the game, Foot golf and Frisbee golf are also available.

RGM excels in their dedication to provide as many resources as possible to both educate players and assist them to improve. With just that in mind, the **Raspberry Golf Academy** (RGA) was founded in 2007 at Raspberry Falls, and since that time, locations have been added at each one of the previously mentioned RGM courses.



Elaborate and expansive practice areas and studios can be found at these facilities. The RGA’s most successful student, European Tour Champion Paul Peterson, currently approaches a top-100 world ranking. Despite not being a long hitter, Peterson has led the European Tour in birdies. Now that student has accomplished something great! Clark says, “from a tour level player to juniors and beginners, we have been able to develop an individual’s game while keeping it happy and fun.” Patrick McGuire is the director and innovator of the RGA, which now has 20 professional teachers and instructors. Custom golf fitting is probably the most important step anyone can take if they want to see their game improve, and RGA has every major club manufacturer represented. All RGA locations use Flight Scope technology to get the most accurate data for your swing.

RGM also started and continues to grow the very successful Raspberry Golf Trail (RGT), courses from throughout the mid-Atlantic region who have partnered to provide the best of public golf in their respective markets. The RGT unites 13 championship-caliber courses with a common bond of offering outstanding service, quality, and conditions. These cooperating golf sites are woven together across a three-state region, all with a common history and geography and are dedicated to making the game more enjoyable and more attainable for the adventurous player.

Steve Clark reminded me recently that it was in 2000 during the golf boom that Raspberry started the “Grow the Golf” campaign. Maybe they realized that you can never have enough people in the pipeline ready to play the game. Any way you cut it, that’s what Raspberry Golf Management still does today, albeit across a much grander and glorious platform. 

For more information visit raspberrygolfgmt.com

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