



MINNESOTA VALLEY
- country club -

121st MGA Amateur Championship

July 15-17, 2024, Minnesota
Valley Country Club,
Bloomington, Minn.

GENERAL INFO/FORMAT – The 121st MGA Amateur Championship will be held at Minnesota Valley Country Club, Monday through Wednesday, July 15-17. One hundred and fifty-six competitors will play 36 holes – 18 on Monday and 18 on Tuesday. After 36 holes, a cut will be made, and the remaining 60 players and ties will play 18 holes on Wednesday to determine the champion.

U.S. AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

The winner of the MGA Amateur Championship receives an exemption into the U.S. Amateur Championship, August 12-18, at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn.

LIVE SCORING ON THE WEB

Live Scoring will be available on the MGA website at www.mngolf.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE – Follow us for updates, photos, and results:

X (Twitter): [@MNGolfAssn](https://twitter.com/MNGolfAssn); #MGA Amateur

Instagram: [MNGolfAssn](https://www.instagram.com/MNGolfAssn)

Facebook: [Minnesota Golf Association](https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaGolfAssociation)

MINNESOTA VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB OFFICIALS – Steve Gilles, General Manager; Chad Johnson, Golf Course Superintendent; Craig Johnson, Club President; and Matt Paulius, Golf Professional.

MINNESOTA VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB – Built on what was once the Vassey homestead, the Bloomington Golf Club opened for play in the spring of 1925 to members of the American Automobile Association on the weekends and allowed public play on weekdays. Early advertisements billed it as the country’s “only private pay-as-you-go course.” After weathering the stock market crash of 1929 and struggling through the Great Depression years of the 1930s, the club was saved from financial insolvency when

a group of members purchased it in 1938 and renamed it the Minnesota Valley Country Club.

The golf course has gone through several renovations, with the most recent having been completed in 2023. With assistance from aerial photography, all of the course's bunkers were redesigned and rebuilt, eight greens were modified, the par-3 second green was completely rebuilt in the Redan style, and the par-4 third and fourth holes were fashioned after the "alps-punch bowl" and "narrows-maiden" styles, reminiscent of the Golden Era of golf architecture from the 1920s.

Minnesota Valley CC has hosted the Minnesota State Amateur Championship two times in the club's 100-year history. The first edition was conducted in 1955 as a match-play event with Tom Hadley defeating Neil Croonquist, 1-up. The second edition was held in 1991 as a stroke-play event with James Scheller posting a 6-under-par 213 (66-73-74), three shots better than Minnesota Golf Hall of Fame members John Harris and Tim Herron, to become the oldest winner of the event at 52-years-old.

LAST YEAR'S CHAMPIONSHIP – In what could be considered the best two weeks in the history of Minnesota golf, Caleb VanArragon began by winning the Minnesota State Open by nine strokes at Oak Ridge Country Club.

He then claimed the lowest round in Minnesota Golf Association Amateur Championship history — a 10-under 62 in the second round to take an eight-stroke lead into the final round and finished by carding a 7-under 65 to earn a record-breaking 12-stroke victory at Minneapolis Golf Club.

VanArragon became the fourth player in state history to win both championships during the same season, while setting tournament bests for 54-hole aggregate record at 193, and score in relation to par at 23-under.

VanArragon broke the course record with his second-round 62, as well as Bill Israelson's margin of victory from 1977, when he won by eight strokes at Interlachen Country Club.

VanArragon rolled in three consecutive birdies early in the final round, including a 20-footer at the par-4 fifth to reach 19-under for the championship.

Just short of the ninth green with his tee shot, VanArragon chipped inside of three feet and converted his fourth birdie of the front nine to take a 12-stroke lead to the back nine.

VanArragon carded three consecutive birdies beginning at the 12th, all of which coming from inside of 10 feet, to move to 23-under.

He would par his final four holes to finish at 23-under 193 for his sixth career victory.

Bryce Hanstad, the 2007 MGA Amateur champion, opened the championship with a 3-under 69 and followed it with a 5-under 67 during the second round.

Playing his first 12 holes in even par in the final round, Hanstad holed out for eagle at the par-4 13th, moving to 10-under for the championship.

A two-putt birdie at the par-5 15th would help Hanstad to a final-round 69, to finish alone in second at 11-under 205.

University of Notre Dame golfer Nate Stevens opened the championship with a 2-over 74, but battled back with rounds of 67 and 66, respectively, to finish in a tie for third with the University of Minnesota's Ben Warian at 9-under 207.

THE FIELD – There are a slew of formidable challengers including eight former MGA Amateur champions: **Jesse Bull**, Golden Valley Golf & Country Club (2014); **Dave Carothers**, Interlachen Country Club (2017); **Eric Deutsch**, Northland Country Club (2004); **Jon Dutoit**, Northland Country Club (2015); **Ben Greve**, Olympic Hills Golf Club (2022); **Bryce Hanstad**, Hazeltine National Golf Club (2007); **Clay Kucera**, Somerby Golf Club (2019), and **Trent Peterson**, Windsong Farm Golf Club (2008).

Notable competitors in the field include the 2023 MGA Senior Amateur champ, **Mark Aldrich** (Interlachen CC); the 2023 MPGA Public Links champ, **Matt Armstrong** (StoneRidge GC); the 2021 NJCAA Division II National Championship champ and 2020 and 2022 MGA Players' champ, **Cecil Belisle** (Red Wing GC); the 2023 Class AAA High School individual champ, **Jake Birdwell** (TPC Twin Cities); the 2022 MGA Senior Men's Players of the Year and 2022 MGA Senior Amateur champ, **John Brellenthin** (The Minikahda Club); the 2018 and 2020 MGA Mid-Players' champ and the 2019 MGA Mid-Amateur champ, **Justin Burleson** (Mendakota CC); the 2022 Minnesota Junior Boys' champ, **Peyton Coahran** (Little Crow CC); the 2024 MGA Players' champ, **Joe Conzemius** (Interlachen CC); the great grandsons of Carson Lee Herron, the 1933 MGA Amateur champ, and the sons of Tim Herron, the 1992 MGA Amateur champ and former PGA Tour player, **Carson** and **Mick Herron** (Wayzata CC); the 2023 Minnesota Junior Boys' champ, **Jack Holtz** (Geneva GC); 20-year-old amateur who qualified for the PGA Tour's 2023 and 2024 John Deere Classic, **Anders Larson** (Pine Island GC); the 2013 and 2014 MGA Senior Men's Player of the Year, the 2013, 2014, 2016, and 2018 MGA Senior Amateur champ and the 2019 MGA Senior Players' champ, **Jim Lehman** (Windsong Farm); the 2023 MGA Junior Boys' Player of the Year and 2024 Class AAA High School individual champ, **Torger Ohe** (Youth on Course MN); the 2021 MGA Senior Men's Player of the Year and 2023 MGA Senior Four-Ball champ, **Tim Peterson** (Forest Hills GC); the 2012 Minnesota Junior Boys' champ, **Jack Pexa** (Wilds GC); the 2023 Mr. Minnesota Golf, **Joseph Rohlwing** (Cannon GC); the 2021 Minnesota State Junior Boys' champ, **Mason Roloff** (TPC Twin Cities); the 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2023 MGA Senior Player of the year and 2023 MGA Senior Players' champ, **Jerry Rose**

(Alexandria GC); the 2019 Minnesota State Junior Boys' champ, **Ian Simonich** (Moorhead CC); the 2024 Mr. Golf Minnesota, **Ryan Stendahl** (Rush Creek GC); the 2020 MGA Junior Boys' Player of the Year, 2021 and 2022 Class AAA High School individual champ and 2022 Mr. Minnesota Golf, **Nate Stevens** (Northfield GC); the 2016, 2018, and 2022 MPGA State Public Links champ and 2021 MGA Players' champ, **Max Tylke** (Legends Club); the 2017 MGA Players' champ, **Jacques Wilson** (Chaska TC); and the 2023 MGA Players' champ, **Brock Winter** (Indian Hills GC).

COURSE SET UP – 7,004 yds, Par 36-37 – 73

Hole #1 – 504 yards, par 5	Hole #10 – 507 yards, par 5
Hole #2 – 206 yards, par 3	Hole #11 – 225 yards, par 3
Hole #3 – 448 yards, par 4	Hole #12 – 149 yards, par 3
Hole #4 – 379 yards, par 4	Hole #13 – 418 yards, par 4
Hole #5 – 553 yards, par 5	Hole #14 – 428 yards, par 4
Hole #6 – 360 yards, par 4	Hole #15 – 553 yards, par 5
Hole #7 – 160 yards, par 3	Hole #16 – 335 yards, par 4
Hole #8 – 297 yards, par 3	Hole #17 – 434 yards, par 4
Hole #9 – 448 yards, par 4	Hole #18 – 600 yards, par 5

Out – 3,355 yds Par 36 In – 3,649 yds Par 37
Course Rating/Slope Rating: 73.3/133

ELIGIBILITY – To enter the MGA Amateur Championship, a player must be an associate member of the MGA (through membership of an MGA member club) and carry a USGA Handicap Index of 6.4 or lower at the time of entry.

As of July 15, there are 124 players in the field with “plus” USGA Handicap Indexes (that is, having an index that is better than scratch), with **Jake Birdwell**, TPC Twin Cities, atop the list of competitors at +7.1.

The oldest competitor in the field is **Jim Lehman**, Windsong Farm, 66 years, 6 months and 14 days; the youngest, **Will Hacker**, Youth on Course MN, 15 years, 22 days.

PAIRINGS/NOTICE TO COMPETITORS

Complete pairings and the notice to competitors are available online at [https://www.mngolf.org/Tournament/121st MGA Amateur Championship](https://www.mngolf.org/Tournament/121st_MGA_Amateur_Championship)

ABOUT THE MGA

Founded in 1901, the Minnesota Golf Association is the governing body over amateur golf in the state, responsible for administering the *Rules of Golf*, and committed to uphold and promote the

game of golf and its values for all golfers in Minnesota. The MGA conducts 23 major amateur championships and 16 USGA qualifying events each year. Thanks to the support of its member clubs and associate members, and the efforts of its volunteers and staff, the MGA provides a variety of services such as handicapping, course rating and measuring, an online golf news and information resource, *mngolf.org*, and an official publication, ***Minnesota Golfer*** magazine, which benefits all golfers throughout Minnesota.