

GOLF GUIDE

Michigan Amateur tournament returns to Charlevoix

BY DENNIS CHASE

Record-Eagle sports editor

CHARLEVOIX — Charlevoix will roll out the welcome mat next month by hosting the Michigan Amateur for the first time since 1988.

The Amateur was played at the Belvedere Golf Club for nearly 30 consecutive years before the Golf Association of Michigan (GAM) decided to move the tournament around the state.

"People are looking forward to having it back here," said Tom Conlan, Belvedere's general manager. "The difference in having it here, as opposed to downstate, is that when they (golfers) came up here, they turned it into a week's vacation, whether they qualified or not. They didn't go home the next day. We're trying to rekindle that."

The Amateur will be held June 17-21.

Belvedere officials made a pitch to GAM to get the Amateur back in 1999.

"They (GAM) schedule

three to four years in advance," Conlan said. "It was probably good for the tournament to share it (with other parts of the state), but we want to get back in the regular rotation."

Conlan said the city is embracing the Amateur's return. In fact, two service groups, the Lions and Rotary, will be involved in providing meals. All finalists from the previous tournaments have been invited to the Sweet 16 dinner on Thursday evening. They'll follow that up by playing an exhibition Friday.

The Amateur is one of several major tournaments that will be played on northern Michigan courses this summer.

Also on the docket:

■ The Michigan Open returns to The Bear at Grand Traverse Resort and Spa June 23-26.

Scott Hebert has won the event four consecutive years. He saw a six-stroke lead shrink to one with two holes to play last summer before nailing a 50-foot sand



Record-Eagle file photo

Tom Werkmeister contemplates a shot at the 2002 Michigan Open.

shot on the 17th hole, securing the victory and a \$14,500 paycheck. He finished with a 14-under 274, a score that broke his own tournament record.

■ Fred Couples, a former Masters champion and a two-time PGA Tour Player of the Year, will return to

the Treetops Resort in Gaylord to defend his title at the Par-3 Shootout, June 30 and July 1.

Couples will face the fourth-ranked player in the world, Phil Mickelson, 2001 champion and \$1 million hole-in-one winner Lee Trevino and two-time major

championship winner Fuzzy Zoeller at the Par-3 Threetops Course.

The event will be televised by ESPN on Monday, June 30, from 10 p.m. to midnight, and on Tuesday, July 1, from 8 p.m.-10 p.m. Roger

PLEASE SEE PAGE 48

Golf courses

With more than 100 courses woven into its tapestry, northwestern Lower Michigan is a golfer's paradise. Choose your favorite links below and tee off:

ANTRIM

A-Ga-Ming Overlooking Torch Lake, this is one of the most picturesque courses in the state. A new 18-hole course, The Torch, is slated to open in 2004.

Located 10 miles north of Elk Rapids off U.S. 31 North. 264-5081.

Antrim Dells This 18-hole championship course was designed by Jerry Matthews. Plays to 6,670 yards from championship tees. Located 35 miles north of Traverse City on U.S. 31. 599-2679.

Bellaire Golf Club This 18-hole course has been face-lifted over the last few years. It's slightly rolling with a new back nine. Located two miles south of Bellaire on M-88. 533-8942.

Elk Rapids Golf Club The course offers a view of Elk Lake, and some of the holes have been redesigned over the past few years. 264-8891.

Centennial Farm Golf Club The front nine features rolling hills, and the back nine plays through hardwoods. Located near Bellaire and close to several other Antrim County courses. 533-6886.

Hawk's Eye Designed by John Robinson, the architect on the companion course, The Chief. This player-friendly course has earned rave reviews for its imaginative layout that utilizes the hilly terrain around Lake Bellaire. The first nine holes opened last summer, the second nine will open in July.

Lakes of the North An 18-hole

layout with a 71 par. From championship tees, the course plays to 6,922 yards. Located on County Rd. 38, 10 miles west of Old 27. 585-6800.

Schuss Mountain Golf Club The 18-hole course, cut out of Antrim County forest, has sand traps and five water hazards to add to the difficulty. The course has a driving range available. Four miles west of Mancelona on M-88. (800) 678-4111.

Cedar River Golf Club The Tom Weiskopf-designed course opened a few years ago at Shanty Creek to rave reviews. The course plays to 6,989 yards from the back tees, 6,528 from the blue, 5,963 from the white and 5,315 from the red. (800) 678-4111.

Summit Golf Club This hilly, 18-hole course of 6,559 yards features sand traps on each hole. The greens are lightning fast. Located off M-88 near Bellaire. (800) 678-4111.

The Chief Golf Course Bellaire's

newest 18-hole championship course was designed by John Robinson and plays from 4,708 to 6,541 yards. All carts feature GPS. The Chief is located on Shanty Creek Rd., 200 feet east of the entrance to Shanty Creek. (888) 483-5465.

The Legend Golf Club Designed by Arnold Palmer and plays to 6,764 yards. The combination of heavily-treed fairways, sand traps and water hazards creates difficult shots on a tight course. Three ponds are formed by the headwaters of Shanty Creek, which winds through numerous other holes. (800) 678-4111.

Windmill Farms One of two par-three courses in the area, Windmill Farms of Mancelona not only offers nine holes of golf, but a fine restaurant as well. 587-5258.

BENZIE

Champion Hill Located on 350 acres of the highest land in

Benzie County, this new course offers scenic, open, rolling and heather-lined fairways and picturesque views of four lakes. The 18-hole, par-72 course plays to 6,887 yards. Located 2.5 miles south of U.S. 31 on Marshall Rd., just west of Honor. 882-9200.

Crystal Downs This private course is recognized as one of the finest in the United States. Located near Frankfort.

Crystal Lake Golf Club The 18-hole layout takes golfers through heather, orchards and hardwoods. It overlooks Crystal Lake and features a new practice facility. Located one-half mile north of Beulah on U.S. 31. 882-4061.

Crystal Mountain The year-round resort on M-115 near Thompsonville offers 36 championship holes cut out of Benzie County woods. Features the Mountain Ridge course and the Betsie Valley course. Driving range available. 378-2911.

PLEASE SEE PAGE 48