



# MSGA Newsletter

PO Box 4306, Helena MT 59604-4306 (406) 458-3359

July/August 2014 - Volume 4, Issue 4

## August Tournaments

August 1

Allegiance  
Missoula CC (Missoula)

August 1

Happy Caddy Cup  
Lake Hills (Billings)

August 1-2

2-Man Best Ball  
Pine Meadows GC (Lewistown)

August 1-3

2 Man Best Ball Tournament  
Stillwater GC (Columbus)

August 2

Bud Light Scramble  
Miles City Town & CC (Miles City)

August 2

Cassidy's Tournament  
Plentywood GC (Plentywood)

August 2

Greens Keeper Fundraiser  
Airport GC (Wolf Point)

August 2

Tournament  
Signal Point GC (Fort Benton)

August 2-3

Bitterroot Open  
Hamilton GC (Hamilton)

August 2-3

Coca-Cola Classic  
Butte CC (Butte)

August 2-3

Jubilee  
Laurel GC (Laurel)

August 2-3

Tobacco Root Classic  
Headwaters GC (Three Forks)

August 3

Guys & Dolls  
Deer Park GC (Deer Lodge)

August 4

PNWPGA (WMC) Pro-Am  
Double Arrow Resort (Seeley Lake)

## In Support of Golf: An Interview With Pete Grass

Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director



A consistent battle is waged in the area of public perception and the game of golf. To many, the game is one played only by those who can afford the luxuries of expensive private courses. While this is far from a reality, the truth is that 70% of golf is played on a day-to-day basis on public courses by players much closer in resemblance to a middle-class weekend warrior.

As a caretaker for the game in Montana, the MSGA understands the importance of all golfers, public and private alike. Growing the game can only be done when *everyone* is involved. One area where exclusion did exist, and everyone was certainly not involved at the decision table, was that of the golf industry when federal disaster relief legislation was drafted.

The MSGA recently caught up with Pete Grass, Superintendent of Hilands GC in Billings, who attended National Golf Day in Washington D.C. this past May.

**MSGA:** Pete, tell us a little about the reason for attending National Golf Day and the creation of the "We Are Golf" Coalition.



On the Capital steps with Jack and Barbara Nicklaus in the front middle.

**PG:** In the post-Hurricane Katrina time period, legislation was drafted to deal with the devastation of the hurricane and the damage done around the Gulf States. Golf courses and, by association, the game of golf, were impacted in that they were completely excluded from disaster relief. The perception was that golf was just a high-end activity that didn't need economic help, and that these courses were insulated from the impact of the disaster. Admittedly, there are some clubs that this could be true for, but they are the minority, not the majority. Most golf is played at public courses and additionally, a great many are owned and operated by individuals or families. These golf courses operate no differently from that of a small business, yet they were left out. The golf community knew it wasn't right, and thus the formation of the coalition came about.

**MSGA:** In a past issue, you discussed the impact that golf has and the significant economic driver that it is (nearly \$69 billion). Who all came together for the coalition?

...Continued on the next page

## **INTERVIEW** ...continued from previous page

**PG:** Golf is an immense industry. The coalition included the PGA, the PGA Tour, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GSCAA), the Club Managers Association, the National Golf Courses Owner Association, the US Golf Manufacturers Council, and the World Golf Foundation. That's seven strong partners and we now have the organization to command attention and talk about the state of the industry of golf. The coalition began in 2009 and, since that time, representatives of each group have attended National Golf Day in D.C. annually, and discussed the important issues around golf with Senators and Representatives from their state.

**MSG:** How successful has the coalition been? Do you feel your voice is being heard?

**PG:** What we were faced with initially, and even now, is the misperception of golf as an exclusive game that is immune from economic downturns, disasters, and other factors that affect all industries. Since that time, there has been a re-education of members of Congress. We feel that our efforts have had an incredible impact. Last year's flash floods in Colorado were devastating to some areas, and golf courses in the area had been included in Federal relief programs. This is a direct benefit of the rewriting of past legislation, so we feel that's a wonderful victory for everyone involved.

**MSG:** What were the main topics for this year's visit?

**PG:** The main topic is referred to as WOTUS (Waters of the United States). A proposed rule driven in combination of the EPA and the Corps of Engineers calls to expand the Clean Water Act to include all bodies of water. For example, a pond on a golf course would be included, even if it doesn't feed into any other waterways. The goal of stopping the proposed new rule is to keep golf course features out of the realm of the Clean Water Act's requirement for permits and fees. Golf course superintendents are great stewards of their properties and are always looking to be conscious and respectful of the environment. But, we believe that too much governmental regulation in this area will cost facilities in many ways—extra time for repairs (waiting for permit approval and fees) and potential lost revenue. In general, the rule could open the door for what we feel would be many unnecessary expenses to an industry that is already struggling to attract new players, keep existing ones, and control costs.

**MSG:** How do you feel the discussion went?

**PG:** We feel great about the headway that we have made and the recognition that golf is a very important industry, one that employs just under 2 million people. At this time, the comment period has been extended for a repeal of the proposed change in the WOTUS rule, so that's encouraging.

*In addition to his duties as Superintendent at Hilands Golf Club, Pete is the Secretary/Treasurer of the GCSAA and chairs its Government Relations Committee. That committee meets every year in conjunction with the National Golf Day in Washington D.C.*

### **vTOUR RAINFLEX CLASSIC, June 1 - 15 -- WINNERS...**

**GRAND PRIZE:** Rainflex Rainsuits -- Men, Doug Cuffe (Northern Pines); Women, Kathy Siegried (Village Greens); **RANDOM PARTICIPATION**

**PRIZES:** (Valuables and Shoe Bags) -- Men, Billy Blackford (Cottonwood Hills), Alex Lindstrom (Ranch Club); Women, Vicki Berg (Riverside), Nancy Dimeola (Madison Meadows)



**August 4**

Windfall Classic (RMSPGA)

Crane Creek CC (Boise, ID)

**August 5-6**

Montana Cup Matches (RMSPGA)

Meadow Lark CC (Great Falls)

**August 5-7**

State Senior Championship

Buffalo Hill, Village Greens, Whitefish

**August 6**

Helen Tremper Women's Invitational

Missoula CC (Missoula)

**August 7**

Flathead Valley Junior Golf Champ

Eagle Bend GC (Big Fork)

**August 7**

Kiwanis

Lake Hills (Billings)

**August 7**

Ladies Invitational

Madison Meadows (Ennis)

**August 8-10**

Member-Guest

Old Baldy GC (Townsend)

**August 9**

Childrens Tumor Foundation Benefit

Eaglerock GC (Billings)

**August 9**

Clubhouse Bar/Casino

Signal Point GC (Fort Benton)

**August 9**

Tammy Sorenson Memorial Scramble

Forsyth CC (Forsyth)

**August 9**

Tree Hugger

Pine Ridge GC (Roundup)

**August 9-10**

Hamilton Ladies Invitational

Hamilton GC (Hamilton)

**August 9-10**

Member Guest

Cabinet View GC (Libby)

**August 11**

PNWPGA (WMC) Pro-Am

Canyon River GC (Missoula)

**August 11**

RMSPGA (YC) Pro Am

Powder Horn, The (Sheridan, WY)

**August 11**

Southwest Montana Junior Tour

Old Works GC (Anaconda)

**August 11**

Sportsmans Scramble

Madison Meadows (Ennis)

**August 11-13**

Montana-Alberta Junior Ryder Cup

Whitefish Lake GC (Whitefish)

**August 12**

Ladies Invitational

Green Meadow CC (Helena)

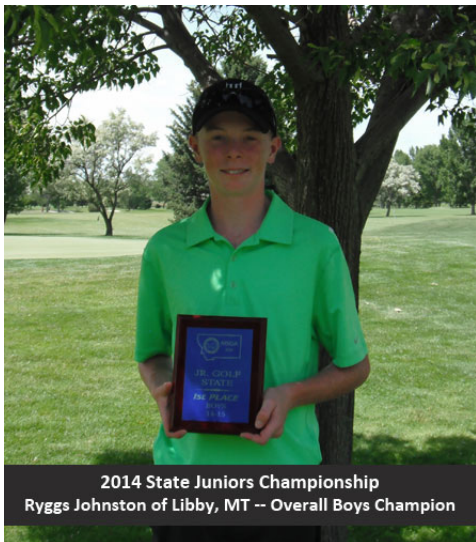
# Montana State Champion Tournament Results

Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director



On June 23-24, Laurel Golf Club hosted some of the top junior golfers from around the state of Montana. With three age groups for boys and girls, qualifiers were determined earlier in the spring and the remaining young guns put their games on display.

## Results from the MSGA State Junior Championships:



2014 State Juniors Championship  
Ryggs Johnston of Libby, MT -- Overall Boys Champion

**Boys:** Top four overall - Ryggs Johnston, Libby, 74-75 - 149; Payton Stott, Billings, 75-76 - 151; Caleb Stetzner, Anaconda, 72-79 - 151; Cody Babinecz 76-76 - 152.

**Girls:** Top four overall - Teigan Avery, Kalispell, 73-77 - 150; Hannah Zwemke, Billings, 81-77 - 158; Coral Schulz, Helena, 78-80 - 158; Shealyn Hafer, Butte, 80-83 - 163.

### Division Winners:

#### (13 and Under)

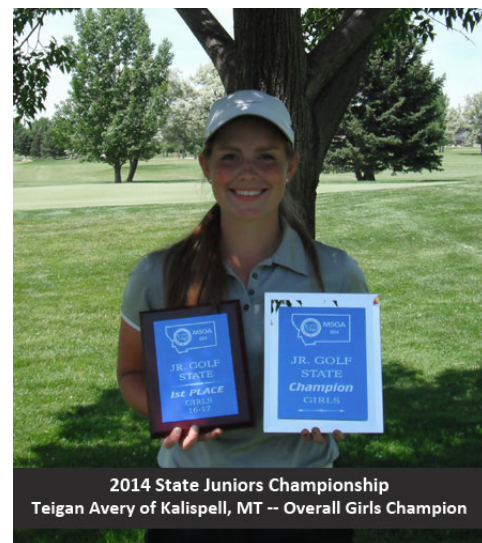
Paul O'Neil 79-77, 156  
Tricia Joyce 94-99, 193

#### (14 & 15)

Ryggs Johnston 74-75, 149  
Catrina Babinecz 87-93, 180

#### (16 & 17)

Payton Stott 75-76, 151  
Tiegan Avery 73-77, 150



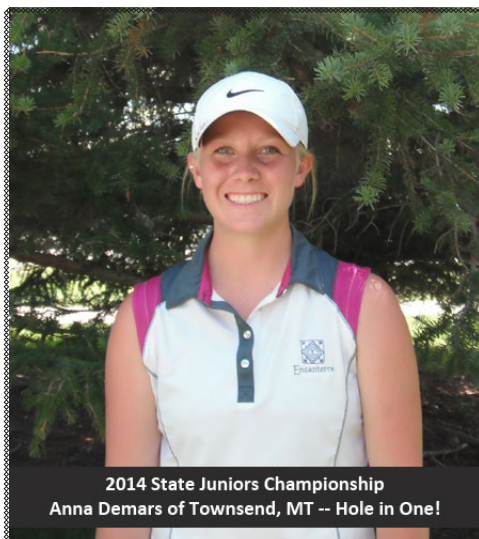
2014 State Juniors Championship  
Teigan Avery of Kalispell, MT -- Overall Girls Champion

By virtue of the top performances at the MSGA Juniors, *The Junior America's Cup Teams* have been selected based on the tournament results.

The **boys division** will compete at the Shaughnessy Country Club in Vancouver, British Columbia, on July 27. Boys Junior America's Cup team - Ryggs Johnston, Payton Stott, Caleb Stetzner and Cody Babinecz. The **girls division** will compete in Walla Walla, Washington, at the Walla Walla Country Club. Girls Junior America's Cup team - Teigan Avery, Hannah Zwemke, Coral Schulz, Shealyn Hafer.

Additionally, the teams for *Montana/Alberta Junior Ryder Cup* on August 11 at Whitefish Lake Golf Club were selected based on performance:

Montana/Alberta Cup **Girls Team** - Teigan Avery, Shealyn Hafer, Coral Schulz, Kortney McNeil, Catrina Babinecz and Casey Babinecz. Montana/Alberta Cup **Boys Team** - Cody Babinecz, Caleb Stetzner, Payton Stott, Austin Walter, Ryggs Johnston and Caleb Trost.



2014 State Juniors Championship  
Anna Demars of Townsend, MT -- Hole in One!

### HOLE IN ONE!

At the State Juniors Tournament, Anna Demars (of Townsend) was playing hole 13 on the 1st day of the championship when she aced the hole with a solid golf shot to the green. Her playing partners commented that it was looking good all the way and disappeared into the hole. On day two, she managed only a birdie 2 on the same hole. It seems like 13 is her lucky number. A great and gracious gal and very respectful of others involved in the game.

Contributed by Sparkey McLean, MSGA State Juniors Director

Full scoring results and pictures for the State Juniors Tournament can be found on the MSGA Website ([www.msgagolf.org](http://www.msgagolf.org)), Tournaments, 2014 Tournament Results



### Support Junior Golf!

Proceeds from MSGA Specialty Plates are used to help support Junior Golf Programs and Tournaments in Montana.

**August 13**  
 Cabinet View Ladies Invitational  
 Cabinet View GC (Libby)

**August 13**  
 Sc-RAM-ble (Ram Scramble)  
 Lake Hills (Billings)

**August 14-16**  
 Men's Mid-Amateur  
 Butte CC (Butte)

**August 15**  
 FPCC  
 Airport GC (Wolf Point)

**August 15**  
 RMSPGA (YC) Ladies Pro Am  
 Riverside CC (Bozeman)

**August 15-17**  
 Couples Tournament  
 Miles City Town & CC (Miles City)

**August 16**  
 Fort Peck Community College  
 Airport GC (Wolf Point)

**August 16**  
 Frybread Open  
 Eaglerock GC (Billings)

**August 16**  
 Peplinski Memorial  
 Plentywood GC (Plentywood)

**August 16-17**  
 Big Sky Open/Club Championship  
 Big Sky GC (Big Sky)

**August 16-17**  
 MCC Couple's Chapman  
 Missoula CC (Missoula)

**August 18**  
 AHS Invitational  
 Old Works GC (Anaconda)

**August 18**  
 PNWPGA (WMC) Pro-Am  
 Cabinet View GC (Libby)

**August 18-19**  
 RMSPGA Section Championship  
 Black Bull (Bozeman)

**August 19**  
 Sara Nutting Invitational  
 Laurel GC (Laurel)

**August 20**  
 Ladies Invitational  
 Anaconda CC (Anaconda)

**August 22**  
 Western Conference Open  
 Lake Hills (Billings)

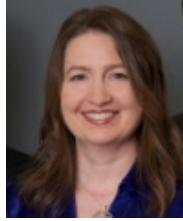
**August 22-24**  
 Club Championship  
 Trestle Creek GC (St. Regis)

**August 23**  
 Parent-Child  
 Plentywood GC (Plentywood)

**August 23**  
 Wear Your Colors Tournament  
 Deer Park GC (Deer Lodge)

## Golf Etiquette 101

Emily Hulsey, MTS Services, Handicapping and Website Coordinator



Are you new to the game of golf? Unlike many sports, golf is usually played without the supervision of a referee or umpire. It's understood that players will have integrity, show consideration for other players, and abide by the rules. The game of golf dictates that one will demonstrate courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, no matter how competitive a person may be.

New or not, it's always a good idea to review golf etiquette, and how you can apply it while still having fun. Some things might seem obvious to you, but maybe not to others.

### SAFETY

Players should ensure that no one is standing close by or in a position to be hit by the club, the ball or any stones, pebbles, or twigs when they make a stroke or practice swing. Players should not play until the players in front are out of range. If a player plays a ball in a direction where there is a danger of hitting someone, he should immediately shout a warning, such as "fore".

### NO DISTURBANCE OR DISTRACTION

Players should not disturb other players by moving, talking, or making any unnecessary noise while they are taking their shot. They should ensure that any electronic device taken onto the course doesn't distract other players.

### BE READY TO PLAY

Players should be ready to play as soon as it is their turn. When playing on or near the putting green, they should leave their bags or carts in such a position as will enable quick movement off the green and towards the next tee.

### ON THE PUTTING GREEN

Players should not stand on another player's line of putt or when he is making a stroke, cast a shadow over his line of putt. They should remain on or close to the green until all other players in the group have holed out.

The MSGA Website covers many other areas of Golf Etiquette, like Scoring, Play at Good Pace and Keep up, Lost Ball, Priority On The Course, Care of The Course (Repair of Divots), and Preventing Unnecessary Damage. There are

also **LINKS TO USGA VIDEOS** that demonstrate each area of etiquette. At [www.msgagolf.org](http://www.msgagolf.org), go to Golfer Tools, then Golf Etiquette 101.



MSGA  
 Smartphone APP  
 "MSGAGOLF"

Look for more tips and information each month! You can contact Emily at [golf@montana.net](mailto:golf@montana.net).



Scan the QR Code or  
 go to [www.msgagolf.org](http://www.msgagolf.org)



## Montana's Toughest Holes

George Geise, MSGA Vice President and retired sports editor for the Great Falls Tribune



There are few things more subjective in the golf world than a discussion of the quality and playability of certain holes. One golfer's favorite hole frequently is another player's worst nightmare. But if a little chunk of real estate can conjure up such feelings, the topic must have considerable value.

The purpose of this story is to recognize one golfer's version of some of his most memorable Montana golf holes, or at least the ones played during a career that has spanned nearly four decades. There are more than 100 golf courses in the Treasure State, and unfortunately, your humble scribe hasn't played them all (yet).

We're hoping that MSGA members across Montana will respond to this story and will share their own favorite holes with other golfers.

The holes listed are the actual numbered holes on the courses. An effort was made to get a geographic cross-section of the state, and no golf course has more than one hole listed, although some of our top facilities could easily have four or five holes recognized. This would be quite an 18-hole round, even if it took a month to complete. Come to think of it, that's not a bad idea. The yardages listed reflect the tees most of us would use, not the championship tees favored by the pros.

### No. 1 – Buffalo Hill Golf Course, Kalispell.

This 400-yard par-4 requires a blind tee shot over towering pine trees, or a big hook around those same trees. Either of those shots is hard to pull off on the first swing of the round.

### No. 2 – Meadow Lark Country Club, Great Falls.

The par-4 measures only about 390 yards, but it's been the No. 1 handicap hole at the classic course for many years. Even though several trees down the right side have been trimmed, and a nasty sand trap in the middle of the fairway was moved a decade ago, it's still a tight driving hole and the green is perhaps the most challenging on the course.

### No. 3 – Old Works Golf Course, Anaconda.

The Jack Nicklaus-designed facility has four exceptional par-5 holes, but this 555-yard beauty stands out because the uphill, dogleg-right hole ends at a green that has deep swails and contains diabolical pin placements.

No. 4 – Butte Country Club. This 400-yard par-4 requires a tee shot down the left side of the fairway, since a forest guards the right side. The elevated, mounded green is the slipperiest on the course and balls frequently roll off the putting surface.

No. 5 – Whitefish Lake South Course, Whitefish. This dogleg-left par-4 measures only 389 yards, but it's the No. 1 handicap hole for a reason. Too many golfers try to get heroic and cut 100 yards off with a tee shot over a residence on the corner.

No. 6 – Polson Bay Golf Course, Polson. This hole offers a stunning view of Flathead Lake on the left, but it also requires a solid tee shot and accurate layup just to get on the large green in three shots.

No. 7 – Signal Point Golf Course, Fort Benton. The scorecard says this par-3 hole plays 200 yards but it seems like 250 yards many days, because it's usually dead into the wind. The tri-level green is guarded by two sand traps and par feels like a birdie most rounds.

No. 8 – Eagle Bend Golf Club, Bigfork. Golfers who usually play the traditional 18-hole

layout will miss this gem on the Eagle Nine at the 27-hole facility. The dogleg-left hole plays around a large water hazard, and most golfers won't try to reach the green in two on a hole that stretches 554 yards.

No. 9 – The Wilderness Club, Eureka. The par-4 hole measures between 438 and 509 yards, but most of it is downhill, so distance isn't the main challenge. If you can fade a 280-yard drive around the corner (good luck with that), your reward is a long-iron approach shot to a well-trapped green with out-of-bounds lurking nearby.

No. 10 – Anaconda Hills, Great Falls. Many of the par-4s on this course are narrow and tree-lined with tiny greens, but this is a 420-yard monster that heads straight uphill for the last 100 yards. The approach shot is often blind on this hole, and an extra club is recommended.

No. 11 – Missoula Country Club. This is the signature par-4 at the tight, well-manicured course, a 400-yard dogleg-right hole that requires a straight drive off the tee and an accurate approach to a well-trapped green. Avoiding the out-of-bounds down the left side is another challenge.

### No. 12 – Whitefish Lake North Course, Whitefish.

The venerable old 18 offers several memorable short par-4s, and this 391-yard hole requires a right-to-left tee shot to a fairway that slants left-to-right. A severe uphill approach shot to an elevated green awaits the lucky golfer who finds the fairway.

No. 13 – The Briarwood Golf Club, Billings. Few holes in Montana spark more controversy than this one, the first of three uphill, tricky par-4s known as the Three Witches. No golfer in his right mind would use a wood off the tee on the 375-yard hole, since the object is to find a level lie in a tiny fairway for a severely uphill approach to a devilish green.

### No. 14 – Green Meadow Country Club, Helena.

This is the only drivable par-4 on the list of memorable holes. A gutsy player who

can carry his tee shot 275 yards may go for the green over a big water hazard, but most players will use a 7-iron off the tee and a wedge to a long, narrow green. Big and little numbers are common on this hole.

No. 15 – Laurel Golf Club, Laurel. The Billings-area course features several excellent par-4 holes, but this 450-yarder is perhaps the most challenging. The downhill tee shot offers the opportunity for good roll, but the approach shot can't travel too far or it's in the water.

No. 16 – Marias Valley Golf and Country Club, Shelby. Most of the greens on this course are huge and hard to putt, but this par-3 hole can be a 195-yard monster if you're not on the correct tier. If the pin is located at the far left portion of the green, any score below 5 is acceptable.

No. 17 – Bridger Creek Golf Course, Bozeman. Every course needs an interesting, short par-3 hole, and this fits the bill. The 120-yarder is located between two tough finishing holes and offers a good chance for a deuce if club selection is correct.

No. 18 – Eagle Falls, Great Falls. The installation of a large irrigation pond several years ago made this par-4 the toughest finishing hole in northcentral Montana. Golfers can't hit their tee shots more than 245 yards, or they risk a wet fate. The split-level green is among the biggest and toughest on the public course.

*Send us your opinions of the toughest holes in Montana. Chime in on Facebook and Twitter.*

*Have you picked up your MSGA poker chip yet? They are free to all MSGA members and available at your home course Pro Shop.*



## Tournament Golf: Make It Count

Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

As we enter mid-July, the thick of tournament season is quickly upon us. Whether it is MSGA, MWSGA or MSSGA events, the unifying characteristic is that the competitors in these events take golf seriously. This doesn't mean that fields are made up of stone-faced, unfriendly duffers, but more so, the seriousness of the competitors is revealed in their sacrifices of schedule and commitments to playing competitively.

Golf is a lengthy sport. As you all know, not all 18-hole rounds are created equal and the time to play these can begin to add up especially when the "gimmes" go out the window and the nerves lead to a few extra shots. At the State Level, events stretch to three rounds and usually take up two to three work days (practice round) and stretch to four or five days when you add in travel days for those not within easy driving distance of home.

This year, the Montana State Amateur dropped a day, from four days of stroke play to three. This change was purposeful to encourage more players to commit to playing in the State's prominent event and is less restrictive to those without substantial vacation days to spend.

If you haven't played a tournament round of golf in your life, have we scared you off yet? Hopefully not, for tournament golf can be the most rewarding and enjoyable of experiences within the game we love. Golf is difficult; it requires fundamentals... practice, patience and many other qualities that serve one well in most endeavors. Patience is key. If you haven't played in a large-scale event, start small.

Substitute for a local league. One step better, join a league team and get some 9-hole events under your belt. Compete in local events at your home course or club championship. Tournament golf is an altogether different animal than simply teeing off on the weekend with friends, golfing with clients or the occasional fundraiser. Every shot counts, every day is a learning experience. The opportunities for growth as a golfer are immense as are the opportunities to play courses unknown to you at an affordable rate.

While it is always daunting to tee it up for the first time knowing that your score is going up on the proverbial "big board" at the end of the day, challenging yourself and competing against the best rivals you can have--the course and yourself—is an experience every golfer should know. Your score might not be what you envisioned, you'll assuredly remember some holes less fondly than others, but the opportunity to play new courses, meet new players and understand the new experience is something to give serious consideration to.

As we report the latest results from the state tournaments, remember that it's not the scores or the names that you need remember. It's the fact that they competed, tested themselves and understood what tournament golf is all about – providing the platform to see how you perform under the most demanding conditions accessible to you.

The vast majority of us will never know what it's like to tee it up at "golf's toughest test", but the beauty of tournament golf is that whatever tournament you enter, it can be *your* toughest test, your U.S. Open. So, get out there and see how you fare. You'll never know what you're capable of until you try!

August 23-24

Club Championship  
Bill Roberts GC (Helena)

August 23-24

Club Championship  
Stillwater GC (Columbus)

August 23-24

MCC Club Championship  
Missoula CC (Missoula)

August 23-24

Member Guest  
Whitefish Lake GC (Whitefish)

August 23-24

Mens and Ladies City Tournament  
Forsyth CC (Forsyth)

August 23-24

Ryder Cup  
Jawbone Creek GC (Harlowton)

August 23-24

Women's Montana Open  
Cottonwood Hills GC (Bozeman)

August 25

PNWPGA (WMC) Pro-Am  
Village Greens GC (Kalispell)

August 30

Glow Ball Backwards 9  
Plentywood GC (Plentywood)

August 30

Patriot Golf Day Fundraiser  
Big Sky GC (Big Sky)

August 30-31

Coors Light Two Person Challenge  
Anaconda CC (Anaconda)

August 30-31

Labor Day 2 Person Team Up  
Cottonwood CC (Glendive)

August 30-31

Old Works Passholder Championship  
Old Works GC (Anaconda)

August 30-Sept 1

77th Labor Day Tournament  
Buffalo Hill GC (Kalispell)

August 30-Sept 1

Labor Day Classic  
Butte CC (Butte)

August 31

Greens Keepers Revenge  
Signal Point GC (Fort Benton)

August 31

Labor Day Classic (Par 3 Tournament)  
Scobey GC (Scobey)

August 31

Labor Day Par 3 Tournament  
Forsyth CC (Forsyth)

**Do you want something in  
the newsletter?**

Contact Nick Dietzen at:  
ndietzen@gmail.com  
(406) 459-3459