



**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Cantigny Golf Celebrates 25 Years!**

*Plans include the Anniversary Club, a loyalty program with season-long benefits*

**WHEATON, IL, April 22, 2014** — Cantigny Golf opened in 1989 and it didn't take long for the Wheaton course to receive some heady recognition. The January 1990 issue of *Golf Digest* named Cantigny the "Best New Public Course in America."

Twenty-five years later, Cantigny remains a favorite with area golfers and has big plans for its anniversary season, its first year in partnership with Northbrook-based KemperSports.

In July, for the fourth time, Cantigny will host the Illinois State Amateur Championship, conducted by the Chicago District Golf Association. In October, Cantigny welcomes back the Chicago Open, a pro-am tournament benefiting the Illinois Junior Golf Association.

Cantigny customers are invited to join the Anniversary Club, a loyalty program that rewards cardholders with valuable benefits up front and throughout the 2014 season. Details are posted online at [CantignyGolf.com](http://CantignyGolf.com). In addition, an anniversary-themed sweepstakes contest will launch in May.

Cantigny Golf was dedicated on June 5, 1989, with two-time U.S. Open Champion Andy North striking the inaugural tee shot. Two years prior, Mike Nass was hired to oversee construction, working with renowned golf course architect Roger Packard.

Nass, now Cantigny Golf's executive director, finds it a bit hard to believe his "baby" is now 25 years old.

"It's been fun watching this grow from the very beginning," he says, noting the 1999 addition of the Cantigny Youth Links, a 9-hole course just for kids, and the opening of the Cantigny Golf Academy in 2008.

"It's a larger operation now but we've maintained a service level that makes Cantigny a special place. Our staff members work very hard to deliver a great experience to everyone who visits. We're proud of the golf facilities but we are just as proud of our hospitality."

A first-time visitor might think that Cantigny is actually older than 25 years. The 27-hole layout has a mature look and feel thanks to the stately oaks and hickories lining the fairways and surrounding the greens. Golfers love that aspect of Cantigny, along with interesting "signature" features such as the flowering bridge boxes and the Dick Tracy bunker on Lakeside No. 9. A well-developed caddie program, unusual for a public golf facility, also sets Cantigny apart.

Cantigny's tournament history includes the 2007 U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship. The winner of that USGA-sponsored event, Colt Knost, earned an invitation to the 2008 Masters.

In addition to North, the list of famous visiting golfers includes Tom Watson, Lee Trevino, Fred Couples, Juli Inkster, Dave Stockton, Dustin Johnson and Sergio Garcia. The course attracts professional athletes from other sports, too, such as Bo Jackson, Ernie Banks, Ryne Sandberg, Greg Maddux and Brian Urlacher. Last year, Jonathan Toews played Cantigny just days after his Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup.

Current PGA Tour pro Kevin Streelman is the player most closely associated with Cantigny. The Wheaton native played, practiced and worked at Cantigny during his amateur days. He has returned several times to lead junior golf clinics and offer encouragement to area youth.

In fact, when asked what best distinguishes Cantigny from other golf courses in the area, Nass points to a deep commitment to children in the community. Some 1,400 young golfers learn the game (and sportsmanship) at Cantigny every season. Most of them hone their skills on the Youth Links. Still others join the caddie program.

"It's an amazing journey," says Nass, who has seen 11 of those caddies go on to win Chick Evans Foundation Scholarships, earning full college tuition and housing.

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### **About Cantigny Golf**

Cantigny Golf, managed by KemperSports and owned by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, celebrates 25 years in 2014. When it opened in 1989, *Golf Digest* magazine named Cantigny the "Best New Public Course in America." Cantigny hosted the 2007 U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship and the 2013 Chicago Open. In 2014, the Illinois State Amateur returns to Cantigny for the fourth time (July 15-17), and the Chicago Open tees off Oct. 5-7. The 300-acre Cantigny Golf complex includes 27 scenic holes, the year-round Cantigny Golf Academy, the 9-hole Cantigny Youth Links and a full-service clubhouse with dining and banquet facilities. For more information, please visit [CantignyGolf.com](http://CantignyGolf.com).

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