

# GOLF IS ONCE AGAIN A FAMILY AFFAIR AT THE 2020 CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

Park Ridge, Illinois, October 8, 2020

By Dennis LaLiberty

Patrick Keegan of Morris Country Club fashioned a steady one over par round to earn a slim but solid victory in the *Richard E. Peterson Champion of Champions* tournament played at Park Ridge Country Club. There was plenty of competition as 72 golfers stepped up to the first tee, with three competitors finishing at two over par, just one stroke behind Keegan, who spent a nervous 60 minutes as leader in the clubhouse while his closest competitors were still out on the course.



Keegan designed his game plan after one practice round the previous Sunday and executed it with workmanlike consistency. As so often happens, it was the Park Ridge course's "Last Mile," the four finishing holes, which proved decisive. The 18<sup>th</sup> hole did take its toll on Keegan, who came to the tee at even par and left at one over after his third bogey in a round that featured birdies at #'s 2 and 13, with the previous two bogies coming at #'s 7 and 10.



For most of the day it looked as if Brian Hickey of Edgewood Valley Country Club might become the second lefthander to win since Park Ridge became the host club, but the final two holes proved his undoing. Hickey came to #17 at one under par and left #18 at two over after a double at #17 and bogey at #18. Hickey's playing partner, Brian Barrett of Royal Melbourne entered

the "Last Mile" at plus one, but recorded bogey at #15, then just missed a redeeming 6 footer for birdie at #16, which, after he played the last two holes in regulation, produced his two over round. And then there was one: Ted Pecora, last year's champion playing in the final group came to #17 at two over, needing one birdie to tie and two to win, a daunting task but not beyond his capabilities considering his

two under par performance in last year's victory. Pecora's tee ball on #17 flew the green and left him a dicey flop shot onto the top of the steeply sloped green. He executed the shot to near perfection leaving an uphill 8-footer for his par, which he promptly sank. Needing birdie 3 on #18 to tie and force a playoff, Pecora split the fairway with his drive and, from 180 yards out, put his ball pin high but some 30 feet left of the flag. His almost perfect putt missed by less than a foot and the resulting tap in earned him the second-place tie with Hickey and Barrett.

Evidently at Morris Country Club, the family that plays together wins together. This year's winner, Patrick Keegan, had his father, John, for his caddie. The winner in 2018, Ryan Cuitino, who as a returning champion, played in the last group with 2019 champion, Ted Pecora, once again had his wife Veronica as his caddie. We can also say with assurance that Patrick Keegan, a graduate of the "*The School of the Art Institute of Chicago*," is the first professional fashion designer to win the event (in fact we're equally certain he's the first to ever participate). Actually, though, Keegan has two strong connections to golf: his father spent 30 years as Director of Golf at Morris Country Club and Patrick today is employed by Greyson Clothiers, which makes a full line of high quality, high fashion golf clothing and accessories and is represented by such well-known professional golfers as Luke Donald, Morgan Hoffman, and Kelly Kraft (so quite possibly we're seeing some of Patrick's design work on display during PGA tournaments). With his victory, Patrick Keegan, at the age of 27, also became the youngest player to win the tournament since Park Ridge Country Club has been the host, eclipsing his fellow club member and former champion Ryan Cuitino, who was the previous youngest when he won at the age of 30 in 2018.



If you could have ordered it from a golf catalog, you couldn't have had a better day for golf: beautiful early fall weather, trees bursting with autumn colors, temps reaching the high 60s, and a cloudless Carolina Blue sky with a light but refreshing northeast wind. The players were once again complimentary of the Park Ridge course's greens for their immaculate

grooming, while they courageously accepted the challenge of their sometimes slippery slopes and subtle breaks. They also seemed to enjoy the course's new look with its recently reconfigured bunkers. One reason the bunkers might have been

slightly less threatening was a local rule allowing lift and place within one club length of the ball's position in the bunker (no nearer the hole), instituted because the newly installed sand had not yet fully settled.

Once again, the Club's Grounds and Greens and Food and Beverage staffs joined with the Golf Staff and Tournament Committee to create an inviting venue for the competition. Moreover, the many willing Club member volunteers made their traditional contribution to the event's ambience, welcoming the players at their arrival, managing the leader boards located at key points on the course for score updating, and as real-time scorers accompanying each Pairing.

2020 marks the 23rd year for Park Ridge CC to host the event. Chicagoland's *Champion of Champions* invitational golf tournament was first played in 1933 under the auspices of the Chicago District Golf Association (CDGA) and was held annually at various clubs until 1984. Park Ridge CC reinstated the tournament in 1998 and has been its annual host ever since. Invitations are extended to all the champions of private country clubs in the Chicago District, select public courses, various CDGA competitions, and returning champions. Since 2017 the tournament has an official new name, "*The Richard E. Peterson Champion of Champions*," honoring Club member Rich Peterson, who was one of the driving forces in reviving the event and bringing it to its now permanent Park Ridge Country Club home. The CDGA has remained a key supporter and so, too, has the Western Golf Association (WGA), who donated a traveling trophy for display at the home club of the winner.

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Richard E. Peterson

# Champion of Champions Golf Tournament

## Park Ridge Country Club

October 8, 2020

### Final Scores

6650yards  
Par 70

2020

71	Patrick Keegan	Morris Country Club	Brian Gryn	Twin Orchard Country Club
72	Brian Barrett	Royal Melbourne	Kirk Immens	Boulder Ridge Country Club
	Brian Hickey	Edgewood Valley Country Club	Blake Johnson	'17 C of C Champ [Glen View]
	Ted Pecora	'19 C of C Champ [Bob O'Link]	Brad Metzger	Park Ridge Country Club
73	Michael Madden	Glenview Park Golf Club	Keith Petri	St. Charles Country Club
74	Michael Castleforte	Chicago Golf Club	Corey Sell	The Club at Strawberry Creek
	Mike Higgason	Glen Flora Country Club	Scott Sternheimer	Lost Dunes Golf Club
75	A. J. Balulis	Itasca Country Club	81 Michael Bergerson	Long Beach Country Club
	Robert Dofflemyer	Mauh-Nah-Tee-See Country C	Bill Haggerty	River Forest Country Club
	Jason Marrs	Aurora Country Club	Tom Olcese	Rolling Green Country Club
76	Marty Hynes	'15 C of C Champ [Ridge]	Adam Seablom	Wilmette Golf Club
	Doug Meyer	Ivanhoe Club	Larry Silvestri	The Grove Country Club
	Ryan Wells	Lincolnshire Country Club	Tom Sweetwood	McHenry Country Club
77	Steve Cunningham	Hawthorn Woods Country Club	82 Scott Jardine	Bull Valley Golf Club
	John Gross	Bowes Creek Country Club	83 Brandon Bolling	Riverside Golf Club
	Mark Small	Prestwick Country Club	Michael Cooney	Lake Geneva Country Club
78	Joe Carlson	Inverness Golf Club	Michael Hurwitz	Sunset Ridge Country Club
	Ryan Cuitino	'18 C of C Champ [Morris]	Mike Treitler	Ravinia Green Country Club
	Paras Gautam	Oak Brook Golf Club	Alex Wendell	Naperville Country Club
	Andy Hegan	Innsbrook Country Club	85 Dutch Koldyke	Dunes Club
	Peter Song	Kemper Lakes Golf Club	Nolan Larson	Elgin Country Club
	Todd Staehle	Wynstone Golf Club	Rich Rizzo	Winnetka Golf Club
	Luke Waggoner	Crystal Lake Country Club	87 Shawn Gordon	Sunset Valley Golf Club
	Jon Zolecki	Harborside Intl Golf Center	Terry Levy	Deerfield Golf Club
79	Eric Anderson	Evanston Golf Club	Rickey Quick	Black Sheep Golf Club
	Greg Brehm	Ridgemoor Country Club	Eric Sloan	Pine Meadow Golf Club
	Anthony Fowler	Flossmoor Country Club	88 Dave Augle	Gleneagles Country Club
	Terry Gallaher	Midlothian Country Club	Bob Doerr	Prairie Landing Golf Club
	Jonathan Gerrard	Northmoor Country Club	Brad Walker	Sportsman's Country Club
	Alberto Moriondo	'14 CofC Champ [Kemper Lake]	90 Steve Cunningham	Deerpath Golf Club
	Ryan O'Malley	Ridge Country Club	Mark Gappa	Bartlett Hills Golf Club
	Danny Riskam	Olympia Fields Country Club	92 Steve Muscarello	Biltmore Country Club
	Joseph Skrabutenas	Briar Ridge Country Club	DNF Ed Sandrick	Cress Creek Country Club
	Craig Sopko	Exmoor Country Club	DNS Jonathan Novak	Medinah Country Club
	Eric Utterback	Eagle Brook Country Club		
	John Vernasco	Merit Club		
80	Charlie Douglas	Barrington Hills Country Club		
	Dave Feder	Conway Farms Golf Club		