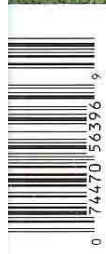


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2008 Wachovia Championship
Quail Hollow Club
April 28 - May 4



Stroke Of

The crowd watched the action on the 18th hole during last year's Wachovia Championship.


ature

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In 1997, No One Intended for Quail Hollow
To Host Another Tournament. But a Major
Overhaul of the Course Changed Everything.

Serendipity



C harlotte's already respected position in the pecking order of professional golf was solidified late on a Sunday afternoon last May. Tiger Woods, dressed in the bright blue championship blazer of the Wachovia Championship, lifted the winner's crystal trophy and flashed his luminescent smile. Having the world's dominant No. 1 player as your title holder is an unwhispered wish come true for tournament sponsors and organizers. Woods has achieved worldwide celebrity status that few athletes — only Muhammad Ali and Michael Jordan come to mind — have achieved. Association with his flourishing global brand delivers instant credibility and maximum exposure.

feature

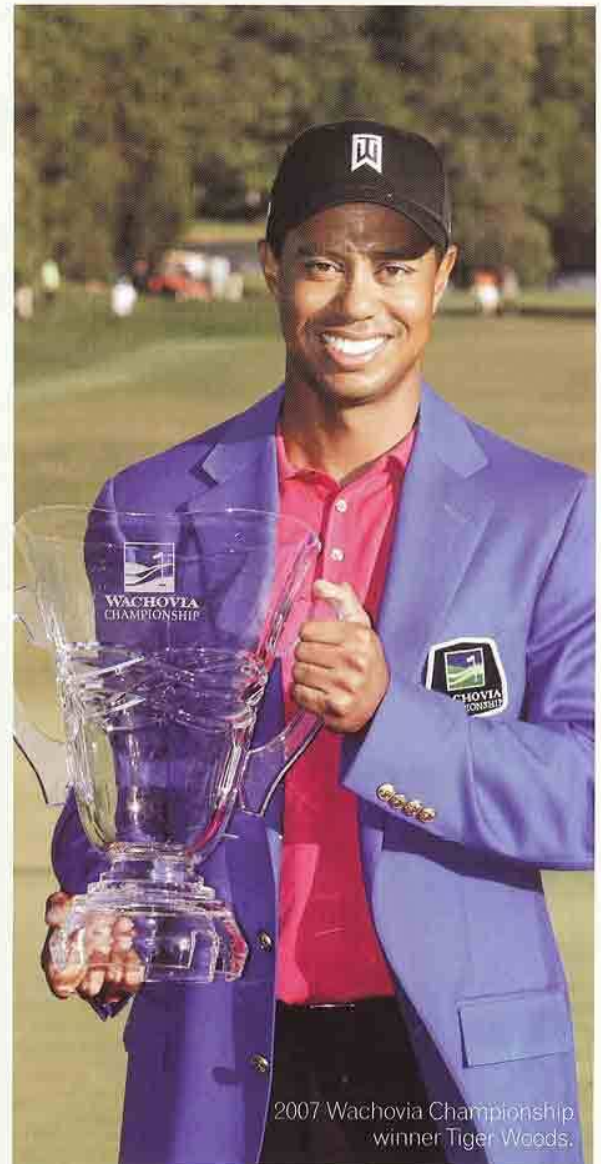
BY PATRICK JONES
PHOTOS BY SAM GREENWOOD/
GETTY IMAGES



The Wachovia Championship and host Quail Hollow Club had already zoomed up the chart of favorite P.G.A. (Professional Golfers' Association of America) Tour stops among players since the inaugural event in 2003. The addition of Woods as its 2007 champion was a welcomed bonus.

Kym Hougham, executive director of the Wachovia Championship, says he fully expects Woods to return this year, as does Johnny Harris, president of Quail Hollow Club.

"Historically, the defending champions at tournaments do defend," says Harris. "That is the tradition of the P.G.A. Tour.




2007 Wachovia Championship winner Tiger Woods.



feature

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The clubhouse at Quail Hollow Club.



It seems like a meteoric rise to prominence for Quail Hollow Club, but its journey has been almost half a century in the making.

It is not an absolute, but it is a tradition. It certainly helps that our golf tournament and our golf course is one that Tiger likes.”

The Wachovia Championship is scheduled this year for April 28 through May 4 at the private south Charlotte club.

Overnight Success, 50 Years in the Making

It seems like a meteoric rise to prominence for Quail Hollow Club, but its journey has been almost half a century in the making.

Quail Hollow Club’s inception was in 1959, launched by 25 former members of Charlotte Country Club and Myers Park Country Club looking for elbow room and additional tee times. George Cobb was Quail Hollow’s original designer. The club hosted the P.G.A. Tour’s

Kemper Open from 1969 through 1979. Arnold Palmer played an integral role in landing that event and he even made some course modifications in the 1980s, according to Harris. Quail Hollow was also the host club for the World Seniors Invitational from 1980 through 1989.

The club hummed along in the 1990s but with less of a spotlight due to the lack of a professional event. A catastrophic loss of its greens paved the path to its eventual renaissance.

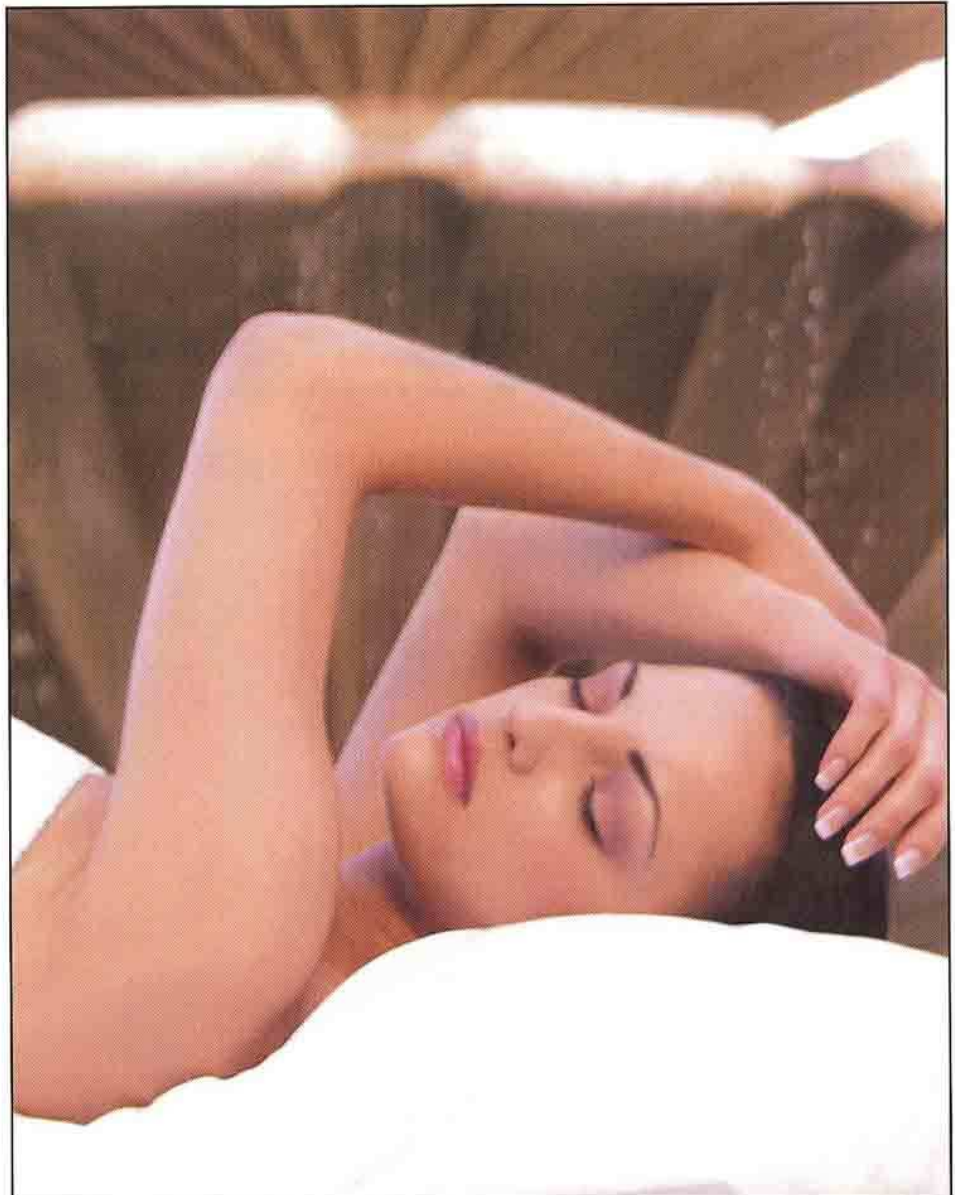


Johnny Harris.

Harris brought in architect Tom Fazio to perform a major overhaul that was completed in 1997. Five holes were completely rerouted. Tee boxes and green complexes were all reworked.

“Our initial plans were to build a golf course that could attract a one-time major golf event,” says Harris. “In the back of our mind, we thought that would be a P.G.A. Championship or a Ryder Cup. We initially had no intent to hold an annual tournament again. It turned out [the course] was something that [the P.G.A. Tour] loved.”

A meeting between Harris and P.G.A. Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem at The Masters, and a



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subsequent sponsorship agreement with homegrown Wachovia, sealed the deal.

"Anytime the world headquarters of your title sponsor is in the same community where the golf tournament is held, that makes for a strong presence," says Hougham. "[Wachovia] has taken ownership. Their employees have taken ownership. There is that sense of pride that reflects in their attitude and behavior. And we try to carry that attitude through all of our volunteers."

35,000 Tickets Sold Each Day

As Quail Hollow Club prepares to once again host the Wachovia Championship, Harris says the founders of Quail Hollow Club would "love the fact that the greatest golfers in the world are coming to the Carolinas and Charlotte to play."

In a state that nurtured Palmer during his collegiate days at Wake Forest University and developed one of the world's most popular golf destinations in Pinehurst, the Wachovia Championship has added

another layer to North Carolina's already prosperous golf history.

"Most tournaments do not receive the degree of spectator support as we do here," says Hougham. "The players comment on that all the time. There are so many fans on the golf course. We sell 35,000 tickets a day. There are tournaments that have larger numbers at times but not as consistently as we do. This is a golf-rich area and golf fans in Charlotte are a very knowledgeable group."

The tournament has carved an enviable niche on the P.G.A. Tour schedule and annually draws an impressive field loaded with the game's top-ranked golfers. "If you talk to the players, the one comment that keeps coming up is that the course is a classic, old-school golf course," says Hougham, explaining the tournament's popularity. "What is in front of you is how the course plays. There is nothing deceptive about it. It all starts with the golf course; it is so good and the players like it so much. ☺

For credits, see page 114.



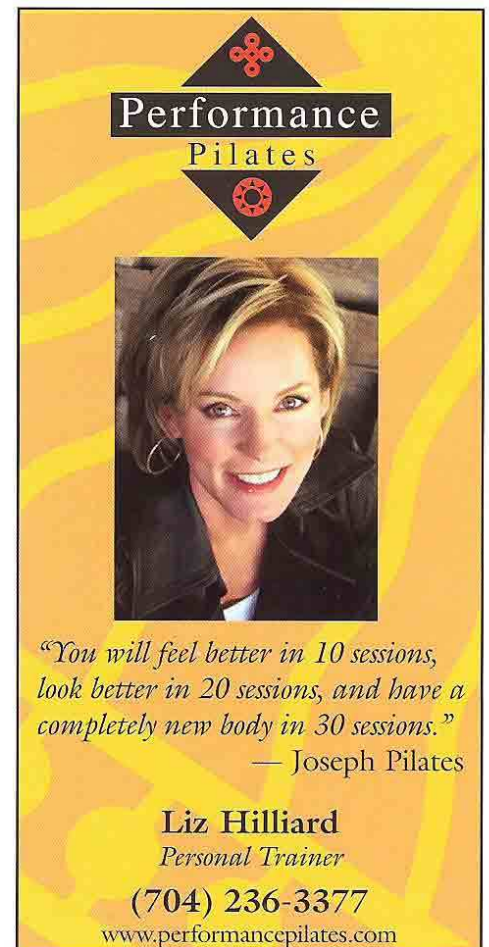
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