

Pine Needles to Host 2022 U.S. Women's Open **North Carolina course will become the first to host the championship four times**

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CORNER, N.J. (Feb. 27, 2018) – Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club in Southern Pines, N.C., has been selected by the USGA as the host site for the 77th U.S. Women's Open in 2022. The championship, considered the ultimate test in women's golf, will be held May 31–June 5.

The 2022 U.S. Women's Open will be the seventh USGA championship and record fourth U.S. Women's Open contested at Pine Needles, which is also set to host the 2nd U.S. Senior Women's Open in 2019. The USGA was last at Pine Needles for the 2007 U.S. Women's Open, when Cristie Kerr won the first of her two majors with a two-stroke victory over Lorena Ochoa and Angela Park.

“We are thrilled to bring another U.S. Women's Open to one of the most respected courses in the United States,” said Stuart Francis, USGA Championship Committee chairman. “Three great USGA champions have conquered the ultimate test in women's golf at Pine Needles, and we look forward to adding the 77th U.S. Women's Open champion to that illustrious list.”

In addition to Kerr's victory in 2007, Pine Needles also played host to the 2001 U.S. Women's Open, won by Karrie Webb, and the 1996 U.S. Women's Open, won by Annika Sorenstam.

“Pine Needles is, if not my favorite U.S. Women's Open venue, it's in the top

three,” said Webb, whose 2001 victory was her second straight Women’s Open title. “Pine Needles [in 1996] was my very first U.S. Open I ever played in, and then when we went back in 2001, I was so excited to be there as a defending champion. Obviously, it was a special week where I played fantastic golf at a tremendous golf course. I’ll always have special memories of Pine Needles.”

Designed by Donald Ross and opened in 1928, Pine Needles was renovated in 2004 by John Fought, who oversaw the restoration of greens and bunkers to their original forms with the aid of vintage aerial photos. In the summer of 2016, Kyle Franz was brought in to assist with a greens rebuilding and bunker restoration project that aimed to maximize hole locations. The club, which was owned by women’s golf advocate, renowned instructor and LPGA Tour charter member Peggy Kirk Bell from 1953 until her death in 2016, also hosted the 1989 U.S. Girls’ Junior and 1991 U.S. Senior Women’s Amateur championships.

“To host the most prestigious event in women’s golf for the fourth time speaks to our longstanding relationship with the USGA, and we’re honored they accepted our invitation to host the Women’s Open in 2022,” said Kelly Miller, president and CEO of Pine Needles. “The Donald-Ross designed course has already crowned three memorable Women’s Open champions, and we’re confident it will again be a welcoming yet challenging host for the world’s best players. I can only imagine how happy Mrs. Bell would have been to host another Women’s Open.”

Bell is largely credited with being the driving force behind Pine Needles hosting its first three U.S. Women’s Opens.

This will be the 34th USGA championship contested in North Carolina, which most recently hosted the 2017 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball Championship at Pinehurst Resort & Country Club, in the Village of Pinehurst. Upcoming USGA championships in the Tar Heel State include the 2018 U.S. Mid-Amateur at Charlotte Country Club, the 2019 U.S. Senior Women’s Open, the 2019 U.S. Amateur at Pinehurst and the 2019 U.S. Senior Amateur at Old Chatham Golf Club. Pinehurst No. 2 will also host the 2024 U.S. Open.

Upcoming U.S. Women’s Open Championships will be contested May 31-June 3, 2018, at Shoal Creek (Ala.); May 30-June 2, 2019, at the Country Club of Charleston (S.C.); June 4-7, 2020, at Champions Golf Club in Houston, Texas; June 3-6, 2021, at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, Calif.; and June 1-4, 2023, at Pebble Beach (Calif.) Golf Links in Pebble Beach.

The U.S. Women’s Open is one of 14 national championships conducted annually by the USGA. It is open to professional female golfers and amateur females with a Handicap Index® not exceeding 2.4. The championship was first conducted in 1946 and its winners include Babe Didrikson Zaharias, Betsy Rawls, Mickey Wright, Hollis Stacy, Annika Sorenstam, Se Ri Pak, Juli Inkster, Cristie Kerr and Inbee Park.

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