USGA Media Center

FAR HILLS, N.J. (July 8, 2015) – Golf legends Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer have been named honorary co-chairmen of the 116th U.S. Open Championship, to be contested at Oakmont (Pa.) Country Club June 16-19, 2016.

The duo made golf history at the Pittsburgh area course in 1962, when Nicklaus, 22, defeated Palmer in an 18-hole playoff to win his first major championship, and the first of four U.S. Open Championships.

“Golf fans cannot help but connect these two extraordinary players to Oakmont,” said Thomas J. O’Toole Jr., USGA president. “They are ambassadors for our game, and it’s only fitting that they serve together as we bring our ninth U.S. Open to this storied venue.”

Nicklaus was recently honored by the USGA with the opening of the Jack Nicklaus Room in the USGA Museum at the association’s Far Hills, N.J., headquarters. Beyond his record 18 major-championship victories and 120 professional wins worldwide, Nicklaus captured 73 PGA Tour victories as well as two U.S. Amateurs and two U.S. Senior Opens. In 1975, he won the Bob Jones Award, the USGA’s highest honor. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2015. The U.S. Open gold medal, given to all U.S. Open champions, was named the Jack Nicklaus Medal in 2012.

“Hopefully I don’t sound presumptuous, but I am sure both Arnold and I are extremely honored to be asked to serve in these roles,” said Nicklaus. “Oakmont has always been such a very special place to both of us, and it was the backdrop for one of our great battles on the golf course. The victory I was fortunate to take away from the 1962 U.S. Open was essentially the start of my professional major-championship career. That week at Oakmont also represented the start of a healthy career-long rivalry with Arnold, but far more important, the start of a lifelong friendship.”

With 92 professional victories and seven major championships, Palmer became the pride of Pennsylvania with his three USGA titles – the 1954 U.S. Amateur, 1960 U.S. Open and 1981 U.S. Senior Open. His long relationship with the association also includes the 1971 Bob Jones Award. The honorary chairman of the USGA Members Program since its inception in 1975, he dedicated the newly renovated USGA Museum and Arnold Palmer Center for Golf History in 2008 in Far Hills.

Among Palmer’s many career accolades, he was recognized with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2004 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2012. He played in his 32nd and final U.S. Open at Oakmont in 1994.

“I have treasured Oakmont since I played there for the first time when I was just 12 years old,” said Palmer. “I certainly look forward to being back at Oakmont next year, even though I won’t be playing. It should be a great championship on the course as it now exists.”

In their honorary roles, Nicklaus and Palmer will support the 16th USGA championship to be held at Oakmont.

“Arnold and Jack are very much ingrained in the historic championship tradition of Oakmont Country Club,” said Robbie Hofmann and Bob Wagner, the club’s member championship chairmen. “We are delighted to have them serve as honorary chairmen of yet another memorable championship at our club.”

Spectator tickets for the 116th U.S. Open Championship are available at usga.org, along with corporate hospitality and other championship information.

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