

Q and A: Why Sand Valley?

RELATED VIDEO: The Making of The Lido at Sand Valley Resort

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (Dec. 12, 2023) – The United States Golf Association (USGA) today announced that Sand Valley Resort, in Nekoosa, Wis., will be the host site for four USGA championships, beginning with the U.S. Mid-Amateur in 2026. The 2029 U.S. Junior Amateur, 2030 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur and 2034 U.S. Girls' Junior will also be conducted at the resort.

"The USGA is excited to begin this commitment with Sand Valley Resort, and we look forward to a long and fulfilling relationship," said Mark Hill, USGA managing director, Championships. "The Keiser family has been committed to hosting national championships and promoting amateur competitions. We know that the resort's courses will challenge and thoroughly impress the world's best players."

Sand Valley Resort is owned and operated by Michael and Chris Keiser, sons of Bandon Dunes founder Mike Keiser. The resort occupies more than 12,000 acres of wilderness in the Central Sands of Wisconsin, with dramatic dunes, sand barrens, native pine forest and restored timberland. The resort is located 100 miles north of Madison, 170 miles northwest from Milwaukee and 220 miles from the Chicago area.

Sand Valley Resort features five acclaimed golf courses. The Lido, the primary course for the 2026 U.S. Mid-Amateur and the 2029 U.S. Junior Amateur, is a private club that welcomes limited resort play. It is an exacting re-creation by Tom Doak and Brian Schneider, with the Renaissance Golf team, of the legendary links originally designed by inaugural U.S. Amateur champion Charles B. Macdonald on Long Island that opened for play in 1917. The new Lido course opened for play earlier this year. The original course on Long Island was repurposed by the U.S. Navy during World War II and closed in 1942. Doak and Schneider worked with golf historian and software designer Peter Flory, utilizing historical surveys, engineering records and photographs to guide the project.

The resort is also home to Sand Valley, designed in 2017 by Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw; Mammoth Dunes, designed in 2018 by David McLay Kidd; and Sedge Valley, another Doak design, which is scheduled to open in 2024. Coore and Crenshaw also designed The Sandbox, a 17-hole par-3 course that opened in 2018.

"We have looked forward to this day for a long time," said Chris Keiser, co-owner of Sand Valley. "Amateur golf is the heart of the game. To have the opportunity to host these elite men and women over the next 10 years is a great honor, and we are thrilled to become part of the history of these great championships."

Sand Valley Resort, which hosted the 2022 Wisconsin State Amateur, also features a comprehensive practice facility, a tennis center with 15 grass courts and court tennis, casual to fine dining and lodging ranging from clubhouse rooms to

spacious cottages and private homes.

There have been 17 USGA championships contested in the state of Wisconsin through the 2023 season, including two U.S. Mid-Amateurs (2008, 2022) and one U.S. Girls' Junior (2019). Erin Hills, outside of Milwaukee, will host the 2025 U.S. Women's Open, following the 2008 U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links, 2011 U.S. Amateur and 2017 U.S. Open.

The U.S. Mid-Amateur is open to any amateur who is 25 years old by the start of the championship with a Handicap Index® not exceeding 3.4. The field of 264 players will compete in two rounds of stroke play, after which the field will be reduced to the low 64 scorers for six rounds of match play. The U.S. Junior Amateur follows the same format with a field of comparable size. A competitor must have a Handicap Index® not exceeding 4.4, and not reached his 19th birthday by completion of the championship. The Mid-Amateur and Junior Amateur champions earn exemptions into the following year's U.S. Open.

The U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur is open to female amateur golfers with a Handicap Index® not exceeding 9.4 and who have reached their 25th birthday by the start of the championship. The field of 132 players competes in two rounds of stroke play, after which the field is reduced to the low 64 scorers for six rounds of match play. The U.S. Girls' Junior is conducted in the same format, but with a 156-player field. It is open to any female amateur players who have not reached the age of 19 by the completion of championship and whose Handicap Index® does not exceed 9.4. The Women's Mid-Amateur and Girls' Junior champions receive exemptions into the following year's U.S. Women's Open.

USGA Championships at Sand Valley Resort

2026 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship, Sept. 26-Oct. 1

2029 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship, July 23-28

2030 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Championship, Sept. 7-12

2034 U.S. Girls' Junior Championship, July 17-22

Photo Credit: Brandon Carter/Sand Valley Resort

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, N.J., is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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