

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (February 26, 2025) – “The Prairie Raynor” by John Moran and Rand Jerris has been selected as the recipient of the USGA’s Herbert Warren Wind Award, recognizing the book as an outstanding work of golf literature. Through the authors’ storytelling, historic photos and original sketches, the book serves as the authoritative story on the course Seth Raynor built at Chicago Golf Club and his role in American golf course architecture.

“The Prairie Raynor” details Chicago Golf Club’s historic transformation – from its status as one of the USGA’s five founding clubs and host of eight national championships, its existential crisis in the wake of World War I, and its subsequent renaissance under Raynor’s masterful eye to its ultimate legacy as one of the nation’s most celebrated designs.

“This book reminds us of what it takes to stand the test of time,” said USGA CEO Mike Whan. “Chicago Golf Club is not just an iconic championship venue, but a beloved course that the greats in golf architecture and agronomy have given to America. The incredible care that John and Rand put forth in creating this book reminds us why the story is important, and why it’s deserving of recognition.”

The book details how the club’s founder, Charles Blair Macdonald, recommended that Chicago Golf Club hire Raynor to develop a new golf course after the original course had been eclipsed by more modern architectural principles and the longer, rubber-core ball. Primarily based on the East Coast, Raynor had little familiarity with the scale and grandeur of the American prairie. Upon arriving in Wheaton, Ill., he spent two days in the club’s clock tower admiring the expanse to gather inspiration for what is now the 18-hole championship layout. One hundred years later, the clock tower continues to serve as a sentinel to the club and reflects a defining moment in Raynor’s design journey.

“This engaging book embodies precisely what the Herbert Warren Wind Award seeks to recognize – an original and exceptional contribution to our understanding of golf’s history,” said Hilary Cronheim, senior director, USGA Museums and World Golf Hall of Fame. “John and Rand have beautifully written not only a history of Chicago Golf Club but a detailed account of an architectural masterpiece and its subsequent stewardship. ‘The Prairie Raynor’ instantly deserves to occupy a prominent place on library shelves.”

As Chicago Golf Club’s historian, Moran sought out Jerris for the project to lend his extensive expertise in golf architecture and history, which greatly aided in understanding and communicating the influence that Raynor’s design still has today. “The Prairie Raynor” has also been recognized for its role in serving as an educational resource for golf course architects and agronomists.

Moran has been intertwined in the club’s history for nearly five decades, first as a caddie in 1977 before becoming a member in 1986. Moran retired in 2021 from a career in both for-profit and non-profit management and currently serves on the board of Chicago Golf Club and works diligently to preserve the club’s rich legacy.

“Chicago Golf Club has been an important home for my family and me, and the opportunity to tell the story of its golf course with Rand Jerris has been a pleasure and a privilege,” said Moran. “My hope is that it helps our club, and other clubs like it, recognize and perpetuate the strong level of stewardship that has gone into the creation and decades of subsequent care that have made our golden-age course beautiful and still very relevant.”

A longtime student of golf-course architecture, Jerris is a noted sports historian and award-winning author who spent more than three decades with the USGA, including overseeing the USGA Golf Museum and Library and serving as a member of the organization’s executive leadership team. He currently consults for a number of prominent golf clubs and museums through his firm, Purple Valley Strategies.

“John and I challenged each other to find innovative ways to describe a golf course,” said Jerris. “Seth Raynor’s creative genius and the club’s exemplary stewardship of his masterpiece provided ample inspiration to do so. It is our hope that the book will spark meaningful conversations among golfers, golf architects, golf course superintendents, green committee chairs and historians about the meaning, value and stewardship of great golf architecture.”

Moran and Jerris will be formally recognized at the USGA's Annual Meeting on March 1 in Pinehurst, N.C., where they will be celebrated alongside other honorees, including Rod Lingle, this year's USGA Green Section Award recipient, and David Jacobsen, the USGA's Joe Dey Award recipient for outstanding volunteerism.

Published by Grant Books Ltd and laid out by noted book designers Alan and Andy Hughes, the book is available for purchase through [Grant Books Ltd's website](#) and [USGA Publications](#).

About the USGA:

The USGA is a mission-based golf organization whose purpose is to unify the golf community through handicapping and grassroots programs; to showcase the game's best talent through the U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open Presented By Ally and 13 other national championships and our museum; to provide unbiased global governance with The R&A through the playing, equipment and Amateur Status rules; and to advance issues important to golf's future, with a focus on driving sustainability, accessibility and inclusion. As a nonprofit association, our work and our team are driven to act for the good of the game. For more, visit www.usga.org.

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