

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (Feb. 25, 2021) – The United States Golf Association (USGA) has reached a key milestone in its efforts to support the long-term health of golf courses with the launch of Deacon, an innovative golf course management tool created to help operators improve the golfer experience by delivering better playing conditions while optimizing and prioritizing critical resource consumption.

Developed by the USGA’s Green Section and backed by its 100 years of hands-on industry experience, Deacon was designed to address two universal problems faced by golf courses: a gradual decline in participation due to a lack of satisfaction and rising maintenance costs. The digital tool is accessible online and available in both iOS and Android app stores.

The name is a tribute to Deacon Palmer, whose 50-year stewardship of Latrobe (Pa.) Country Club starting in 1926 – as superintendent and later golf professional – shaped a course that generations of golfers have enjoyed to this day. Latrobe is where Deacon taught his son Arnold to play the game on his way to becoming one of the most beloved figures in sports history, inspiring millions with his passion, character and values.

“In caring for Latrobe Country Club and influencing the life of one of the iconic figures in golf history, Deacon Palmer served the game in a way that matches our mission,” said Mike Davis, CEO of the USGA. “We are humbled that the Palmer family has entrusted the USGA with honoring his legacy.”

The tool contains 10 key features that will enhance a golf course manager’s ability to deliver accessible, enjoyable rounds to its golfers, including pace of play reports, GPS heat mapping, golf course condition management and hole locations. According to USGA research, golfer experience plays a vital role in the financial viability of facilities and the game’s long-term health and sustainability.

Complementing and expanding upon the USGA’s proven impact in turfgrass research, educational reach and on-site consultations, the tool will serve as an important supplement to the work done daily by golf course operators and empower them to make more efficient, data-driven decisions.

“Deacon represents the latest evolution in the USGA’s efforts to champion and advance the game,” said Davis. “The investment in this innovative technology will have a positive and long-lasting impact on the millions of golfers who visit green-grass facilities each year as well as thousands of golf course operators, the unsung backbone of our game.”

The USGA and the Palmer family share a long association dating to Arnold Palmer’s amateur career. Palmer cited his victory in the 1954 U.S. Amateur Championship as the turning point in his decision to become a professional golfer. The first player to win the U.S. Amateur, U.S. Open (1960) and U.S. Senior Open (1981), Palmer was honored in 1971 with the Bob Jones Award, the organization’s highest honor, and in 1975, he was named the honorary chairman of the USGA Members Program – a

position he held until his passing in 2016. His relationship with the USGA and his role in American golf history were further cemented in 2008 with the opening of the Arnold Palmer Center for Golf History at the USGA Golf Museum and Library in Liberty Corner, N.J.

“My father wanted to be remembered as a caretaker of golf because it was my grandfather, Deacon, who first taught him how to care for the game,” said Amy Palmer Saunders, chair of the Arnold & Winnie Palmer Foundation. “Our family is proud to continue this longstanding association with the USGA through the Deacon tool because it supports the same common-sense people – superintendents and professionals – my father and grandfather identified with so closely in their own lives.”

More information about Deacon can be found at gsshop.usga.org.

Since its inception in 1920, the [USGA Green Section](#) has developed and disseminated sustainable management practices that produce better playing conditions for everyday golfers through research, education and consulting visits.

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