



From The Reds

by Tenille Slack

The Four 'P's' of Finding the Right Golf Instructor

How many woman golf professionals are in the state of Utah? If this question were asked to even the most experienced Utah golfer, one would possibly reply, are there any at all? After combining two lists and making several phone calls, I found at least twelve scattered from Salt Lake City to St. George! Some are members of the PGA, others are members of the LPGA, and some are even members of both associations.

Hearing this news may be the answer to some golfer's prayers, particularly women. Golf has often been considered a gentleman's sport, but over the past several years more and more women are picking up the game. Whether it is to spend more time with their significant other, to help gain an advantage in the business world, or to feed a competitive desire, women are looking for good instruction.

A common frustration for any golfer is finding the right teacher and though Utah has been blessed with many great male golf professionals, many women like the idea of a female instructor. After talking with several female teaching professionals in the state, I found four common suggestions to finding the right teacher for you, male or female. I refer to them as the four "P's."

PLACE

Begin looking at golf professionals near you. The closer they are the more likely you are to get lessons regularly. One cannot learn the game of golf in only three lessons.

PRICE

Be aware of pricing options. Single lessons may run anywhere from \$35 to \$150, but most professionals offer a series of lessons that bring the cost per lesson down. Before you commit to a series of lessons, make sure you click with your instructor. Do not be afraid to try someone else. Once you find someone you like, determine how committed you want to be and discuss with your professional how many lessons would be best for you in order to meet your goals and how much you are willing to spend.



Gina Higbee

PHILOSOPHY

Do some research and talk to the professional before you set up a lesson. Ask them what experience they have and get a feel for what their teaching philosophy is. There are many good professionals, but not all of them teach the same. For example, 16 year teaching veteran, Cynthia Brown at Park City Golf Course has always stuck by her philosophy, "Teach each person as an individual." Brown does not believe there is just one swing model. "Everyone is built differently and has different strengths and weaknesses. I teach

them the basics and then let them swing." Brown also finds it imperative to understand how her students learn. "I determine each student's style of learning, whether it is auditory, visual, or kinesthetic and teach them accordingly."

Golf professional Kami Terrion focuses on swing plane and impact position and always emphasizes the basics: grip and setup. Meanwhile, Darci Dehlin from Willow Creek Country Club stands by her motto, "less movement, less error." Dehlin likes a short compact swing and keeping instruction simple. She also likes giving her students drills so they can practice what she teaches even if she is not by their side.

PERSONALITY

Brown says, "Go to an instructor you understand. If they say the same thing over and over and it doesn't click, find someone who does make it click. Find someone that teaches the way you learn." Terrion adds, "Find someone that makes you feel comfortable."

Whether you are a beginner who needs work on the basics or an advanced player who wants to focus more on swing plane and technique, there is a professional out there for you. Hopefully, the four P's, Place, Price, Philosophy, and Personality, will help you find the right fit for you and your game. Good luck in your search! ♣

Tenille Slack is a former Women's State Amateur champion, a member of the Utah State Women's Golf Association board of directors and a new contributor to Fairways.

Utah Woman Golf Professionals

Name	Membership	Facility	Facility Phone
Sarah L. Bidney	PGA	Promontory Club	435-333-4010
Lindsay A. Browder	PGA	Glenwild Golf Club	435-615-9988
Cynthia Brown	LPGA	Park City	435-615-5800
Darci Dehlin	PGA	Willow Creek CC	801-942-1621
Gina Higbee	LPGA	Fox Hollow	801-756-3594
Sarah Hindi	PGA/LPGA	Coral Canyon Golf Club	435-688-1700
Judy Hollberg	LPGA	Glendale	801-974-2403
Lisa Imamura	PGA	Rose Park Golf Club	801-596-5030
Janet Lepera	LPGA	Jeremy G&CC	801-531-9000
Andree Martin	PGA	Promontory Club	435-333-4010
Kami J Terrion	PGA	Golf in the Round	801-973-2345
Melanie VanDelden	PGA/LPGA	Mulligan's South Jordan	801-254-3377

Your Turn for Success Golf School is taught by two of Utah County's most popular golf instructors, John Geertsen Jr. PGA Professional and Gina Higbee LPGA Professional.

John Geertsen Jr. has earned the Northern California PGA teacher of the year and one of Golf Magazine's Top 100 golf instructors during 1995-2000. John was the swing instructor for many years for Mike Reid.

Gina Higbee has been playing golf competitively since she was a member of the Utah Junior Golf Association at 12 years old. She played all through



high school and received a full ride golf scholarship to Idaho State University. Gina turned professional in 1994 and is currently a member of the LPGA and continues to have great passion for the game of golf and loves to teach and share that passion with others.

Gina was twice named golfer of the year by the Utah Junior Golf Association and was a member of the Jr. Americas Cup team three times. After playing high school golf for American Fork, Gina went to school at Utah Valley State College. Following two years there, she accepted a full ride scholarship to ISU where she was captain and played No. 1 for the

Big Sky Conference championship team.

She has worked at Thanksgiving Point Golf Club, Hidden Valley Country Club and in July of 2002 she was hired at Cedar Hills golf course and closely watched the young course take shape. She actually put the first cut on most of the greens, tees and fairways. Gina served as the Director of Golf, at Cedar Hills Golf Club until March 2005. She now teaches private lessons, Your Turn for Success Golf School and other clinics. She also serves as a board member for the Utah Junior Golf Association.

Currently a member of the LPGA, Gina continues to play with great passion for the game of golf and loves to teach and share that passion with others. Her golf clinics for women and juniors were a great success this year.

Joe Watts, executive director of the Utah Golf Association said, "We need more visible role models



like Gina. There's no reason why there shouldn't be more women golf administrators."

Legendary pro Jimmy Thompson, the former head pro at Tii City and a member of the Utah Golf Hall of Fame, was her main teacher and "played a big part in my game," said Higbee.

You can reach Gina through her website www.yourturnforsuccessgolf.com or by calling the Fox Hollow golf course.



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