



*Michigan's longest continuously
operated golf course*



WAWASHKAMO GOLF CLUB
MACKINAC ISLAND'S MOST HISTORIC GOLF COURSE

For Immediate Release

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**Northern Michigan PGA Golf Professional Chuck Olson
Joins Historic Links Wawashkamo Golf Club on Mackinac Island**

(Mackinac Island, MI) October 29, 2011 – Long time Northern Michigan PGA Golf Professional Chuck Olson has recently been named to the position of head golf professional and general manager for one of Michigan's 'Most Historic Golf Courses' – **Wawashkamo Golf Club** on Mackinac Island.

Founded in 1898, and designed by Scottish golf professional from Carnoustie and two time U.S. Open winner Alex Smith, Wawashkamo Golf Club is Michigan's longest continually operated golf course. The links style course is noted as "One of America's Historic Golf Landmarks" by Golf Digest and sits on Michigan's Historic Register. Wawashkamo Golf Course is part of the Mackinac State Historic Parks. The development of Wawashkamo Golf Club and the survival of its unique brand of traditional golf runs parallel to the uncommon history of Mackinac Island, a place where much of the flavor of the nineteenth century survives.

Olson has been a PGA member for 29 years, most of which he served the golfing community in northern Michigan. He was head professional at Traverse City Golf & Country Club for 13 of those years. Olson partnered in the build of Bay Meadows Golf Course and The Leelanau Club at Bahle Farms, in addition to serving as General Manager and Head Golf Professional for King's Challenge Golf Club in Leelanau County for 7 years. "I am thrilled to be associated with Historic Wawashkamo Golf Club. I am honored to serve as the third PGA Golf Professional in the club's history. While serving its membership, I am looking forward to sharing this historic golf landmark with golf enthusiasts from around the world," said Olson.

A Peak at the History of Wawashkamo

The links-style layout utilized natural hazards as opposed to artificial ones. The fairways were designed to magnify the effects of slicing the ball. Bunkers were few but strategically placed. As with the St. Andrews links, the fairways were defined not by trees but by mowed grassy areas. Narrow strips of ground were smoothed with a horse-drawn road roller driven in a line between each tee and green, and the fairway areas to the side of each strip were allowed to retain their natural rolling topography. The holes were designed with straight fairways, with no doglegs and the green directly visible from the tee. The goal of this design, at a time when the gutta-percha golf ball was played more on the ground than a modern ball is, was to deceive the golfer into thinking that it could be effortlessly rolled right up to the green. Semi-visible challenges lay in wait for anyone adopting this attitude, such as the grassy ridge of earth known as the "circus ring" which loops around the 3rd green. This feature was in place before 1921 although it was originally much higher and encircled the green without a gap.

At the time Wawashkamo was designed, one major innovation by club-makers like Alex Smith was the multiplication of golf irons and the beginnings of standardization. The old "niblicks", "mashies" and "mid-irons" were being redefined into numbered irons contained in a cylindrical golf bag that could be carried by a caddie. Club selection thus became a key part of the game. Smith's use of rolling terrain at Wawashkamo, as well as numerous hidden and non-hidden roughs, was a homage to this new specialization of the golf iron. Smith, who knew irons because he hammered them out himself, designed the Wawashkamo course to encourage the golfer to pull every club out of the bag.

Alex Smith and Frank Rounds imported one major and enduring design element to Wawashkamo from the Scottish links pattern. The snuffbox-sized tees and exquisite, hard-to-hit greens, easier to maintain with the twelve-inch push mowers of the



1890s, remain practicable today under northern Great Lakes golfing conditions. No tees and greens meant to be played on for eight to twelve months a year could hold up to the intensive soil compaction and wear of continuous use on such small surface areas. Wawashkamo, however, was designed as a summer-only course. Ironically, this meant that it could retain its Victorian-dimension tees and greens long after most of America's older golf courses had found it necessary to redesign them to support the more intensive golf usage patterns of the late twentieth century. As Wawashkamo celebrated its first centennial in 1998, it remained faithful to the design heritage staked out by Alex Smith in 1898.

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