

## PGA Championship (PGA of America)

Valhalla Golf Club • Louisville, Ky. • May 16-19, 2024

### Golf Course Superintendent

**John Ballard, CGCS, GCSAA**

Years as GCSAA Member: 29

Years at Valhalla: 5

Years as a Superintendent: 25

Previous Courses: Audubon CC (super, 16 years),  
University of Louisville GC (director of golf, 4 years)

Hometown: Kingsport, Tenn.

Education: University of Tennessee

For superintendent contact info, contact Mike Strauss,  
GCSAA at [mstrauss@gcsaa.org](mailto:mstrauss@gcsaa.org) or 785-865-8444

### Other Key Golf Personnel

Phil Vineyard, Lead Assistant Superintendent

Justin Wilt, Front Nine Assistant Superintendent

Payton Hobby, Back Nine Assistant Superintendent

Assistants in Training – Ben Nelson, Josh Rippey, Jamie  
McGaugh, Kyle Sampson, Zach LeGrand, Nate Smith

Jason Newman, Equipment Manager

Kyle Cramer, PGA Professional

Number of Employees: 40

Number of Tournament Volunteers: 125

### Course Architect

Architect (year): Jack Nicklaus (1986)

Renovations: Rebuilt greens in 2011. Resurfaced tees  
and fairways from bentgrass to zoysiagrass in 2021.

New tees on No. 1, 12, 14 and 18

### X

Superintendent - @jballard1

Course - @ValhallaGolf

Tournament - @PGACHampionship

*Tournament Fact Sheets for the PGA TOUR, LPGA, PGA  
TOUR Champions, Korn Ferry and Epson Tours and  
USGA and PGA of America championships can be found  
at: <https://www.gcsaa.org/media/tournament-fact-sheets>*

### Tournament Set-up

Par: 35-36—71

Yardage: 7,609

Stimpmeter: 13

### Course Statistics

Average Green Size: 5,000 sq. ft.

Total Property Acres: 485

Acres of Fairway: 23

Acres of Rough: 60

Number of Sand Bunkers: 62

Number of Water Hazards: 5

Number of Holes Water is in Play: 7

Soil Conditions: USGA greens, sand-  
capped fairways

Water Sources: Effluent from on property  
waste water treatment plant

Drainage Conditions: Very good

### Turfgrass

Greens: T1 bentgrass .100"

Collars: None

Approaches: Zeon zoysiagrass .250"

Tees: Zeon zoysiagrass .350"

Fairways: Zeon zoysiagrass .450"

Rough: Tall fescue / bluegrass mix 4"

### Additional Notes

- Detailed renovation notes are on last two pages of this packet.
- Fairways and tee boxes were converted from bentgrass to Zeon zoysiagrass in 2021 for sustainability and playability.
- Valhalla has hosted 3 previous PGA Champs. (96, 00, 14), 2 Sr. PGA Champs. (04, 11) and 1 Ryder Cup (08).
- Read about Ballard and the renovations here: <https://tinyurl.com/GCM-Story>

(more on next pages)

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Since 1926 the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to 20,000 members in more than 78 countries. GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and improve communities through enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf.

## GCSAA Notes (PGA TOUR - Primary Courses Only)

**2024 Notable For Courses Played  
(thru Wells Fargo and Myrtle Beach, May 12)**  
*(does not include Mexico Open or Puerto Rico Open)*  
*(this week's course in red)*

### 2024 Longest Courses Played

7,765 – Torrey Pines South (Farmers Insurance)  
7,670 – Corales (Corales Puntacana)  
**7,609 – Valhalla (PGA Championship)**  
7,596 – Kapalua Plantation (Sentry)  
7,558 – Quail Hollow (Wells Fargo)  
7,545 – Augusta National (Masters)  
7,466 – Bay Hill (Arnold Palmer)  
7,435 – TPC Louisiana (Zurich Classic)  
7,414 – TPC Craig Ranch (Byron Nelson)

### 2024 Shortest Courses Played

6,972 – Pebble Beach (AT&T PB Pro-Am)  
7,044 – Waialae (Sony)  
7,147 – PGA National Champion (Cognizant)  
7,187 – PGA West Stadium (American Express)  
7,213 – Harbour Town (RBC Heritage)  
7,261 – TPC Scottsdale Stadium (WM Phoenix)  
7,275 – TPC Sawgrass Stadium (The Players)

### 2024 Largest Avg. Greens by sq. ft. Played

8,722 – Kapalua Plantation (Sentry)  
7,500 – Bay Hill (Arnold Palmer)  
7,500 – Riviera (Genesis)  
7,100 – Waialae (Sony)  
7,069 – TPC Scottsdale Stadium (WM Phoenix)  
7,000 – Memorial Park (Texas Children's)  
7,000 – PGA National Champion Cognizant)

### 2024 Smallest Avg. Greens by sq. ft. Played

3,500 – Pebble Beach (AT&T PB Pro-Am)  
3,700 – Harbour Town (RBC Heritage)  
**5,000 – Valhalla (PGA Championship)**  
5,000 – PGA West Stadium (American Express)  
5,000 – Torrey Pines South (Farmers Insurance)  
5,225 – TPC Louisiana (Zurich Classic)  
5,500 – TPC Sawgrass (The Players)  
5,822 – Innisbrook Copperhead (Valspar)

### 2024 Courses by Greens Turf Type Played

12 - Poa (American Express, Farmers Insurance, Pebble Beach, WM Phoenix, Genesis, The Players, Valspar, Texas Children's, RBC, Zurich, Wells Fargo)  
5 - Bermudagrass (Sentry, Sony, Cognizant, Arnold Palmer, Myrtle Beach)  
**3 – Bentgrass (Masters, Byron Nelson, PGA Championship)**  
1 – Supreme Paspalum (Corales Puntacana)

### 2024 Tournaments by State Played So Far

4 – Florida  
4 – California  
2 – Texas  
2 – Hawaii  
1 – Arizona  
1 – Georgia  
2 – South Carolina (RBC Heritage, Myrtle Beach)  
1 – Louisiana  
1 – North Carolina  
**1 – Kentucky**

### All 2024 Tournaments by State (multiple events)

5 – California  
4 – Florida  
4 – Texas  
3 – North Carolina (also U.S. Open and Wyndham)  
2 – Hawaii  
2 – Georgia  
2 – South Carolina (RBC Heritage, Myrtle Beach)

(more on next page)

## **GCSAA Notes** **(PGA TOUR - Primary Courses Only)**

### **2023 Full Year**

*(this week's events in red)*

#### **2023 Longest Courses (7,500+)**

7,765 – Torrey Pines (Farmers Insurance)  
7,670 – Puntacana Resort (Corales Puntacana)  
7,596 – Plantation Course (Sentry TOC)  
7,571 – Muirfield Village (the Memorial)  
7,545 – Augusta National (The Masters)  
7,538 – Quail Hollow (Wells Fargo)

#### **2023 Shortest Courses**

6,828 – Port Royal (Butterfield Bermuda)  
6,852 – TPC River Highlands (Travelers)  
6,972 – Pebble Beach (AT&T Pebble Beach)  
7,005 – Sea Island (The RSM Classic)  
7,044 – Waialae CC (Sony Open)

#### **2023 Largest Avg. Greens by sq. ft.**

8,722 – Plantation Course (Sentry TOC)  
8,300 – El Cardonal (World Wide Tech)  
8,000 – Port Royal (Butterfield Bermuda)  
7,500 – Riviera (Genesis Inv.)  
7,500 – Bay Hill (Arnold Palmer)  
7,400 – TPC Summerlin (Shriners)

#### **2023 Smallest Avg. Greens by sq. ft.**

3,500 – Pebble Beach (AT&T Pebble Beach)  
3,700 – Harbour Town (RBC Heritage)  
4,300 – TPC Southwind (FedEx St. Jude)  
4,500 – Albany (Hero World Challenge)  
4,500 – Oak Hill (PGA Championship)  
5,000 – PGA West Stadium (American Express)  
5,000 – Torrey Pines (Farmers Insurance)  
5,000 – Muirfield Village (the Memorial)  
5,000 – Colonial CC (Charles Schwab)  
5,000 – TPC River Highlands (Travelers)

### **2023 Course by Greens Turf Types**

16 – Bentgrass  
13 – Bermudagrass  
11 – Poa  
2 – Paspalum

## **GCSAA Notes** **(PGA TOUR - Primary Courses Only)**

### **Longest GCSAA Membership**

44 – Stanley Reedy, CGCS (Sanderson)  
41 – Sam MacKenzie, CGCS (BMW Champ)  
38 – Brian Sullivan, CGCS, MG (Am. Express)  
37 – William B. Owen III (Masters)  
35 – Roby Robertson, CGCS (Valero Texas)  
35 – Kevin Welker, CGCS (World Wide Tech)  
34 – Dale Hahn, CGCS (Shriners)

*Note: Avg. GCSAA membership years for host superintendents is 19.5.*

### **Superintendents by Alma Mater (if known)**

3 – Mississippi State  
3 – Ohio State  
3 – Penn State  
3 – Rutgers  
2 – University of Guelph (Canada)  
2 – Michigan State



## **Valhalla Golf Club 2014 to 2024**

### **Fairway Renovation**

An extensive fairway renovation was coordinated by the PGA of America in 2021.

- The project consisted of changing fairway turf and tee tops from bent grass to Zeon Zoysia. A total of 30 acres of Zeon Zoysia was installed in a three-month time frame.
- Zeon Zoysia is a warm season grass with a more narrow blade than traditional Zoysia grass which closely mimics the look of bent grass and tolerates much shorter mowing heights than traditional Zoysia.
- The reason for the change in grasses was threefold:
  - Bent grass is a difficult turf to manage in what is known as the transition zone. The area between mild conditions where cool season grasses thrive and hot humid conditions where warm season grasses thrive.
  - Zeon Zoysia fairways allow for firm fast playing conditions all season long as opposed to the seasonality of bent fairways.
  - Sustainability - Zoysia requires less water, pesticides, and fertility applications than does bent grass.

### **Championship Tee Construction**

In conjunction with the fairway renovation, the PGA Championship team with consultation from the Nicklaus Design team decided to add additional Championship tees in strategic areas.

- Hole #1 will add 38 yards for a total Championship yardage of 484 yards par 4
- Hole #12 will add 27 yards for a total Championship yardage of 494 yards par 4
- Hole #13 yardage will remain the same with the Championship tee lowered some 9 feet providing spectacular viewing.
- Hole #14 will add 37 yards for a total Championship yardage of 254 yards par 3
- Hole #18 will add 28 yards for a total Championship yardage of 570 yards par 5.
- The total length for the 2024 PGA Championship will be 7,609 yards, 151 yards longer than the 2014 yardage and play at par 71 just as it did in 2014 (hole #2 from par 5 to par 4)

### **Aesthetic Changes to the Course**

A number of aesthetic changes have been made which bring out many of the natural features of the golf course such as limestone outcropping. The list is as follows:

- Hole #13 - Exposed large limestone shelves that support the waterfall that skirts the green and Brush Run Creek.
- Hole #18 - When constructing the new Championship tee on hole 18 excavation was needed to create better sight lines which in turn exposed another amazing limestone outcropping.
- Hole #18 water feature has been enhanced to create a more dramatic look from the tee



### **Bluegrass Way**

- Bluegrass Way is the beginning of the Valhalla experience bringing the spirit of Kentucky to life.
  - Stone pillars framed with white four-board fence lead to the gated entrance featuring hand custom gates fabricated right here in Kentucky.
  - To the left you will find Valhalla Farm with a pasture and renowned Kentucky Thoroughbred horses. Valhalla has teamed with Second Stride, a local non-profit whose mission is to provide professional rehabilitation, retraining and placement of retired thoroughbred racehorses with qualified adopters.
  - Further up Bluegrass Way, you will find a continued taste of Kentucky with stacked stone walls and four board fence lining the drive.

### **Clubhouse**

A 13 month renovation of the clubhouse is just about complete. The look and feel of the renovated clubhouse continues the celebration of Kentucky.

- The new look continues the Kentucky feel with southern style architecture that has made the clubhouse feel like a home.
- Many of the interior finishes were created by local craftsmen helping us remain true to the Kentucky house farm feel.
- The view from the clubhouse back porch is arguably one of the finest in golf. The view provides stunning views of the 18th & 13th holes as well as the beautiful water feature along the 18th fairway.

### **Agronomy Center**

Along with the many other enhancements to the property the club has relocated and constructed a state-of-the-art Agronomy Center. This was done for several reasons:

- The facility was relocated from the middle of the property with high visibility. The previous location will provide future green space which is aesthetically pleasing and a valuable asset for future Championships.
- The new location has provided a dedicated entrance which will enhance the member experience with less traffic through popular member areas such as our practice facility.
- Not only will this provide a more efficient and effective work environment for our agronomy team but also serve to attract top talent with a visible commitment to providing tools for our agronomy team to succeed in providing a Championship golf experience each and every day.