



HICKORY
GOLF MASTERS

13th-14th May

Hickory Masters 2026

Circolo Golf Villa d'Este

The Hickory Masters 2026

The Hickory Masters is the first major golf championship for hickory golfers. It is the world's premier event in the world for hickory golfers with ambitions to compete against the best original hickory club players in the world. It will be first time played in May 2026, marking the birth of a legendary new tradition. Become part of it for a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The most successful hickory golfers of our time strive to lift the trophy, the '«silver Rake Niblick». It is a matter of honour, tradition and love for the great old game.

Unlike other hickory tournaments, the Hickory Masters is played exclusively with original hickory golf clubs built before 1935. Not only will the tournament be played with original clubs, but the players will also be dressed in period clothing from the early 1930s.

The Hickory Masters features a diverse range of specially invited players and offers a professional prize fund of 30,000 euros. As it is an invitational event designed to provide a great experience for both players and spectators, the field is smaller than at the major championships in modern golf.

«Although it's about the sport, the game of golf, it's also about the attitude of the participants. The dress code is part of that – we dress up for the tournament», Sergey Sarkisants, a Hickory Golf Masters SA partner, says. By adhering to the dress code, hickory golfers show respect for the game and their fellow players. Something that was taken for granted in the sport 100 years ago – and is still justified today.



The Trophy

The Silver Rake Niblick

A handmade, one-of-a-kind item, created from a more than 100-year-old idea for a golf club that works both in sand and tall grass. The first hybrid club – decades ahead of its time.

A special Challenge full silver sterling club hand made by Italian silversmiths, which will bear the name of each year's winner, has been created as a 1:1 replica of the very rare and valuable Higgs Delivered by Stewart Rake Niblick made by Willie Aveston, originally a member of the PGA and professional to the Marquis of Northampton at Castle Ashby from 1908-1917. This particular club had a provisional patent no. 1904 issued in 1895, but was never marketed as Mr. Higgs decided not to pursue the patent for this particular Niblick, which was designed to work in sand or tall grass. (A handful were produced, one of which is owned by the Hickory Golf Masters Company and can be seen in the museum in Lugano.) This makes the club a rare historical item and the Challenge a unique and extraordinary testimony to the Hickory Golf Masters Company's commitment to the history of golf.

The champion will receive the same 1:4 scale miniature golf club in gold plated silver. In the Amateur and Senior's Amateur categories, the best gross score & net will be awarded the same 1:4 scale miniature golf club in silver. The silver trophies are handmade by Guanziroli Giorgio & C., Artgenteria Artistica Artigianale, Alzate Brianza (Como/Italy), five kilometres from Villa d'Este Golf. It is also a reference for the appreciation of traditional craftsmanship.



The Venue

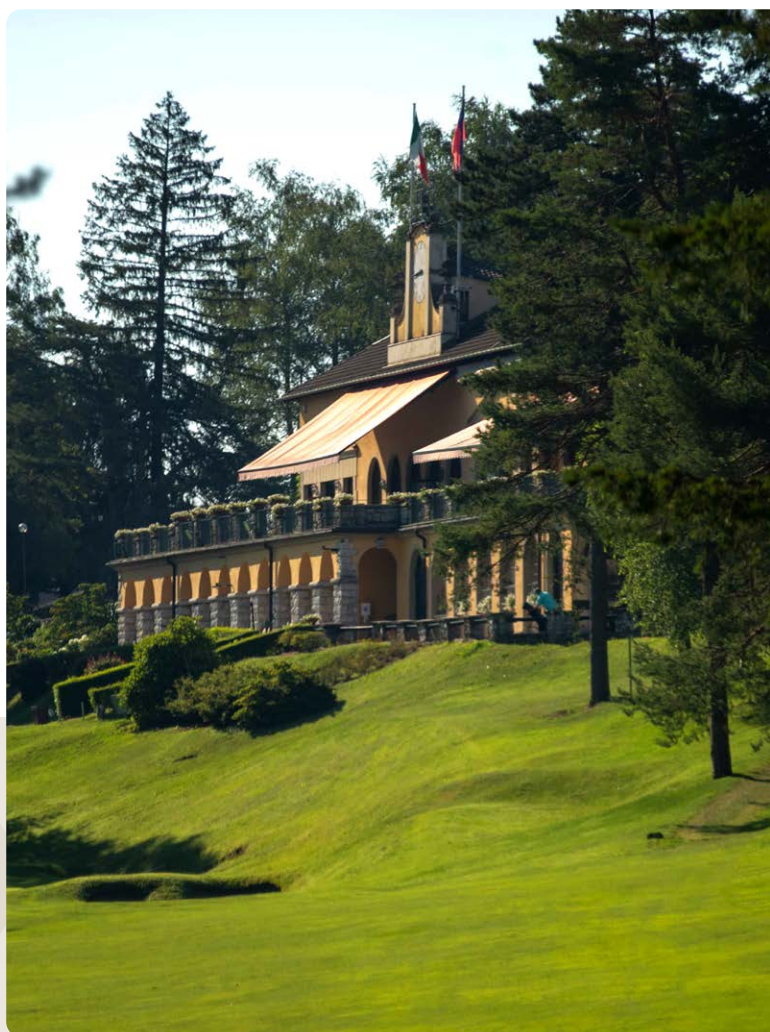
Circolo Golf Villa d'Este

The first Hickory Masters will enjoy the scenery of a prestigious and historical golf course that has maintained a design and layout which are the perfect test for any hickory player.

We are privileged to be hosted by Circolo Golf Villa d'Este near Lake Como for its 100th Anniversary, and to be able to share our passion with its members.

This is a rare opportunity to walk in the footsteps of great champions that have participated in past Italian Opens and Internationals Amateurs Championships.

The course was designed in 1926 by Peter Gannon, it covers a distance of 5,760 metres with a par of 69 strokes. 18 holes, dotted with carefully designed natural obstacles, challenge the skills, offering an unforgettable experience. Circolo Golf Villa d'Este is of the most evocative natural and scenic settings in the world: over 30,000 trees – pines, chestnuts, birches – the Pre-Alps in the background and glimpses of Lake Montorfano.



Hickory Masters 2026

The Tournament

THE COMPETITION

The Hickory Golf Masters Open unfolds over two consecutive days of 18-hole stroke play. The tournament features a limited field where sporting ambition, enjoyment and the joy of playing are all equally important. Players compete in three main categories: Professionals, Amateurs, and Senior Amateurs. Each round is played with original hickory clubs and supported by caddies, just as it was in major tournaments 100 years ago. Final standings are determined by cumulative scores over the two days.

THE RULES

All participants must use authentic hickory-shafted clubs manufactured prior to 1935; modern replicas are not permitted. Period attire from the early 1930s is mandatory throughout the competition. The event is played from the original tees when available, with a maximum course length of 6,200 yards. Caddies are required for all players. The pace of play and etiquette will follow traditional standards of sportsmanship, in line with the spirit of historic golf.



The Programme

Tuesday 12 May

- 9:00 AM** At the Club House of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este.
Registration and individual practice round to be booked in advance.
- 7:00 PM** At the Club House of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este.
Welcome Dinner.

Wednesday 13 May

- 9:00 AM** At Tee 1 & Tee 10 of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este.
1st Round of the tournament starting from two tees.
- Dinner & evening free.**

Thursday 14 May

- 9:00 AM** At Tee 1 & Tee 10 of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este.
2st Round starting from two tees in ranking order (best out last).
- 5:00 PM** At the Club House of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este.
Prize Giving and Gala Dinner will close the event
- 10:30 PM** At the Club House of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este .
End of event. Official greetings and closing of the event.

JOIN THE TRADITION

Share the pleasure, embrace emotions, enjoy the walk, play the game:

The Hickory Masters 2026!

Save your spot in the small field of this unique invitational event, that offers a professional purse of 30'000 Euros and is designed to provide a great experience for players and spectators.



Register now

Hickory Golf in the 21st Century



Hickory golf has enjoyed a worldwide revival since the 1990s. In recent years, major events have been organised using historic equipment. The late Lionel Freedman created the World Hickory Open in 2005, the world championship for hickory golfers. The tournament has grown considerably in a short space of time, from a few dozen players in 2005 to a field of 156 today. The tournament has attracted attention beyond the hickory community when Sandy Lyle was crowned World Hickory Champion in 2014 and 2016. (Lyle won The Open at Royal St George's in 1985 and the US Masters at Augusta National in 1988.) In 2015, Andrew Marshall, another former European Tour player, won this Hickory World Championship.

Hickory golf is big in the USA and growing fast in Asia; in Europe, the hickory golf strongholds are in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Germany, France and the Netherlands. National Hickory Golf Championships are held in these countries. Switzerland is becoming a Hickory Golf hotspot: Paolo Quirici (2013) and Roberto Francioni (2024), two winners of the World Hickory Open, come from Switzerland. With the motto 'Turn Back Time' in mind, Miguel Ángel Jiménez, Lee Westwood, Danny Willett and Paolo Quirici showcased their impressive golfing abilities using historic clubs as part of the Hickory Golf Challenge at the 2016 European Masters in Crans-Montana.

Interest in the history of golf and fascination with the traditions of this sport are growing. In November 2025, the (maybe) largest hickory golf museum in Central Europe is set to open in Lugano. This permanent exhibition will showcase the work of Scottish club maker Tom Stewart. The Lugano museum has a comprehensive collection of Stewart clubs.

Preserving the origins of Golf

Hickory Golf Masters SA is a Swiss company devoted to honoring golf's earliest traditions. From materials to etiquette, we uphold the authentic spirit of the game – without compromise.

FOUNDED BY TRUE BELIEVERS

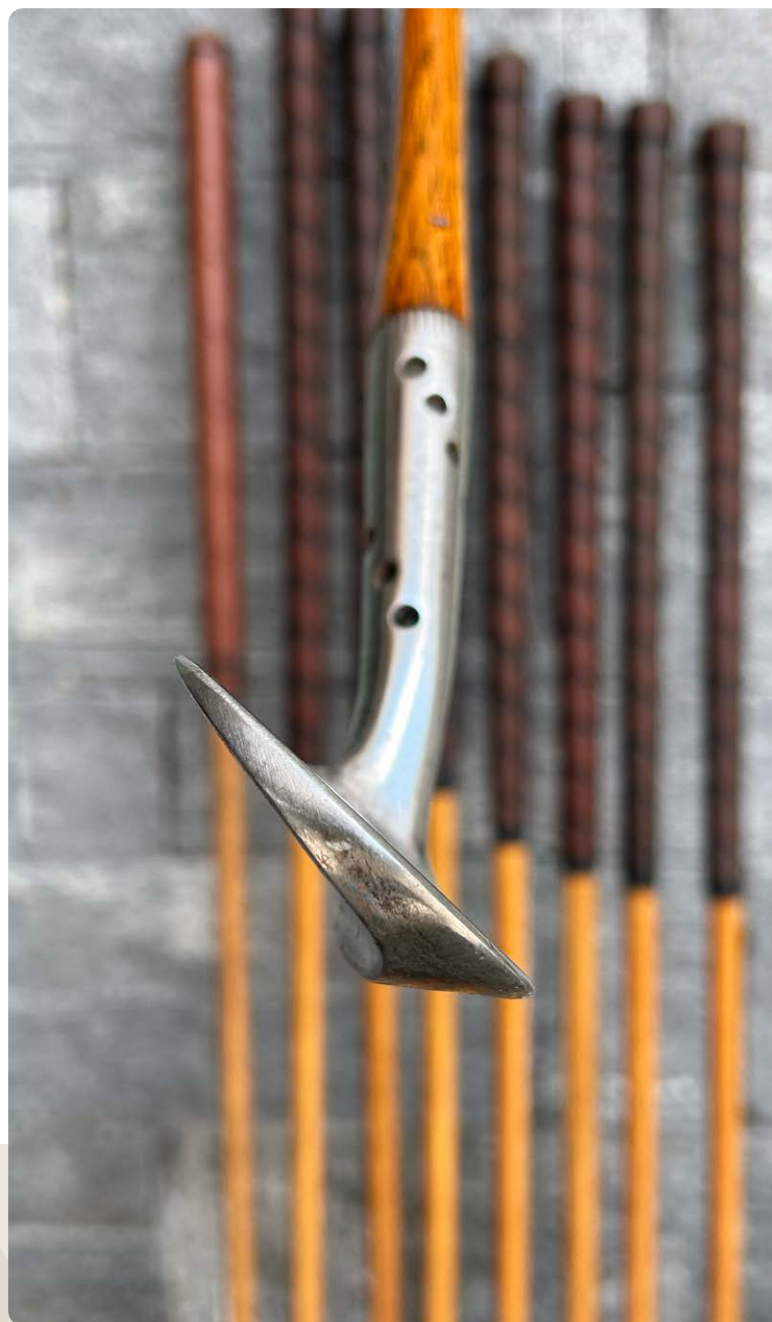
HGM was co-founded by Paolo Quirici, Switzerland's most accomplished professional golfer and 2013 World Open Hickory Champion. His deep passion for hickory golf defines our vision. Alongside him stands Sergey Sarkisants, fellow enthusiast and strategic mind behind the company's development. Together, they embody our dual pursuits: heritage and excellence.

WHERE GOLF'S SOUL ENDURERS

Hickory Golf Masters is more than just a brand. It is a custodian of tradition: a gathering-place for those who play, not to follow fashion, but to honor the game's timeless spirit. Our community welcomes all golfers who enjoy playing the game with style.

MISSION

Hickory Golf Masters is dedicated to the daily custodianship of golf's authentic form. Through its four divisions, HGM upholds hickory golf's rules of play, etiquette, materials (including clubs from the Phil Gibbs Collection, gathered over 30 years of dedicated collecting), and cultural heritage, while building a global community that shares its devotion. We do not merely preserve history; we continue it.





*Register and take part in this unique tournament
to become part of an historical event.
This unique event will be a memorable moment
to any avid hickory player.*