



COLUMBUS ELKS LODGE #1195

JULY 2025

NEWSLETTER

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Let's keep the celebrations coming

Happy Fourth of July! On behalf of the Elks' Lodge officers, I hope you and your families have a wonderful holiday. We have a lot to celebrate at the Elks in terms of memberships, activities, and future plans, and I'd like to highlight a few of them.

NEW MEMBERS. Welcome to the following individuals and families who joined us this spring. **Christian Atkinson; Beau Boryca; Jon and Amanda Brunott; Marcus Collins; Lauren and Dusty Jazwick; Mitchell Kuhlman; Chase and Ashley Piel; Cory Pilakowski; Ty and Brenda Sander; Cory and Stacey Schaefer; Kim and Chad Spohn; Craig and Natasha Ramaekers; Pete and Jane Streit; Kelly Walker; and Michael and Kaitlyn Ziola.** Thank you for joining the Elks! We are glad you are here!

SUCCESSFUL EVENTS. Events held at the Elks since the season started have also been noteworthy. Our men's and women's leagues are going well; the Couples Nights have been a hit; and we put another Hilltop Member-Guest in the books. Congratulations to **Shane Fleming** and **Lynn Craig** who won this year's tournament with a 2-day quota score of 13.5 and to **Mike Allen** who championed their win. **HILLTOPPERS IS UNDERWAY.** One of the most important achievements we can celebrate is passing along a love of golf through our Hilltoppers Jr. Golf Program.

This year, we had 40 young golfers participated in the clinics with the Hilltoppers 36 Academy & Play Days scheduled for July 3, 10, and 24. It's great to see young golfers playing the course with their friends or families. See more picture highlights on pages 5-7.

THE ELKS IS TURNING 60! Our founding members, including **Dick Tooley** and **Bob Emerson**, opened the Elks' doors to members in 1965. To celebrate, we are planning a special birthday party tentatively scheduled for Oct. 18. More information will be sent out, but I hope you and your family look forward to commemorating this important milestone.

VETERANS OUTING. Finally, I want to recognize our veterans. We enjoy independence and freedom because of them. To honor their service, the Lodge sponsors an annual Veterans Outing. This year's will be August 22.

All veterans and their families are invited to participate in a day of golf, camaraderie, two meals, and recognition. Please call or leave a message at 402-910-2313 to register. Veterans receive priority but Elk and non-veterans can also participate, and sponsors are always welcome. Proceeds to toward veteran scholarships and programs that benefit veterans.

COLUMBUS ELKS LODGE #1195

2025 VETERANS OUTING

AUGUST 22, 2025 11 A.M. REGISTRATION
ELKS COUNTRY CLUB NOON SHOTGUN
COLUMBUS, NE LUNCH AND PRESENTATION
BANQUET INCLUDED

★ COMPLETELY **FREE TO VETERANS** AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.

★ NON-VETERAN REGISTRATION IS FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE AFTER VETERAN REGISTRATIONS ARE COMPLETE.

- \$100 - ELKS MEMBER
- \$150 - NON-ELKS MEMBER

★ SPONSORSHIPS (MONETARY AND GIFT) ARE ENCOURAGED.

SPONSORS WILL BE RECOGNIZED IN PUBLICITY, ON THE COURSE, AND AT THE BANQUET.

TO REGISTER OR SPONSOR:
CALL 402-910-2313

MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

Dear Members,

It is with some hesitation that I write this month's column.

When I took this position about four years ago, I did so with two goals: 1) to make things better for you as members and 2) to be successful in a job I believed I would love. To do that, I knew I needed to be open to feedback, transparent in the decisions I and the managers make, and honest about what needs to change.

Those who have come to know me well know that I treat this club and property as my own. I take great pride in what the staff and I do here for members and for what the Elks Country Club offers Columbus. I realize it is not perfect and that every member has different beliefs and interests in what will make the Club better. I also realize that some changes and successes are more visible than others. Members can "see" new paint, light fixtures, and decor; stump removal, landscaped areas, and new cart paths. Members can look around a remodeled pro shop, an upstairs lounge, and see the beverage cart traveling across the course. But there are other things not visible to you: food and beverage orders, staffing schedules, pool requirements, and cost increases for everything from Apple Crown to Zep bathroom cleaner.

There are days when I wish members could come to work with me and see "behind the scenes" and some of the challenges that come with managing an older facility like this. Let's take the week of the Hilltop Member-Guest, one of the biggest events we host at the Elks.

It was Wednesday, a day before the practice round. I came to work and opened the back door to a "hissing" sound and a kitchen filled with steam. A pipe had burst. Water had flooded the kitchen, flowed into the banquet room, and rained through the floor vents into the men's locker room downstairs.

Immediately, we shut off the water; Eric replaced the pipe; we hired a contractor to remove water and dry out the rooms with large fans, and asked our insurance company to assess the damage.

Two days later, in an entirely separate issue, we discovered there was no water in the building. We called a contractor to assess the problem and learned there are a variety of issues we need to address:

- The building's well either has a motor or a pump (or both) that is so old it is not working properly.
- It could be a leak in a pipe between the well and the building.
- It could be all three issues happening at once.

In addition, our air conditioner needs water from the well to operate, which created yet another issue. It was the first official day of Hilltop, and we had no water and no air conditioning. It was a 100+ degree day, and we had as many as 150 people inside.

I have experienced a variety of building, pool, and course emergencies over the past 3 ½ years; however, these latest problems seemed more ominous, as if warning me of how much can go wrong in a very short time period. We are only halfway through the season, and there are several important events on the horizon. To say I am concerned is an understatement.

In the coming days and weeks, you will see the ducts cleared and purged, the carpet cleaned, the well system drained, and the leak repaired. The well motor, pump, and pipe into the building will be pulled, analyzed, and replaced, if necessary. Eventually, the men's locker room carpet will need to be replaced.

The cost for all these repairs is expected to be around \$20,000. Only the kitchen pipe and the water-damaged areas are covered by insurance. The water and air conditioning issue is an unbudgeted expense. We are operating on a tighter budget than last year and cannot afford to have more problems.

Yes, managing the Club's operations is my responsibility, and I still want to make things better for you as members. Yet, this won't happen without the support and commitment of the trustees, all Elks members, managers, and the staff.

It also can't happen if we don't acknowledge that this is a 60-year-old property. The unseen and unexpected will continue, and we need to either invest in repairs and replacements or consider building something new.

I am encouraged that 70% percent of those surveyed last fall said they would pay more to be a member of this Club. And I think it is time we start having a discussion of what that means and how it will make this place better for everyone.

-Trista

MESSAGE FROM OUR GOLF PRO

Hello from the golf shop!

Another memorable June has come and gone! It's a very busy time for the golf staff but it's a "fun kind of busy."

Let me start with a quick **THANK YOU** to all the members who played in the annual Hilltop Member-Guest. It's a special event every year, and a lot of that credit goes to everyone who participates and support the event. Congrats, also, to our winners **Shane Fleming** and **Lynn Craig**. You played some really good golf!



Lynn Craig and Shane Fleming took top honors in this year's Hilltop Member-Guest.

Secondly, I want to mention our Hilltoppers Junior Golf Program! We just wrapped up our skills clinics, and I need to give a special thank you to all my fellow coaches: **Brock Kuhlman, Brody Mickey, Nick Fleming, Patrick Arndt, Jackson Ceder, and Bryce Brown.**

I also cannot forget our fearless leader, **Anne Hughes**. We could not stay organized without her.

The summer will roll on with a new edition to our program: "Hilltoppers 36." It's our own spin on the popular national program called Operation 36.

The idea is to start close to the hole at designated levels (or yardages), and you do not graduate to the next level (yardage) until you shoot a target score of 36 or better for 9 holes.

The kids will be doing some testing throughout July in hopes of adding their names to the leaderboards in the old golf lounge.

The beauty of this program is, it's not just for juniors! Parents and grandparents are encouraged to bring out their Hilltoppers and compete with them from the same tees. In fact, I have challenged all our camp participants to come out with their parents/guardians when they can to pass their level! Just ask the golf shop for a Hilltoppers 36 scorecard.

Before I close, I offer a few reminders about upcoming events, along with encouragement to get registered to participate.

- **July 12 - Lady Luck - Ladies Member-Guest/ Member-Member**
- **July 26 - *NEW EVENT* Couples Member-Guest**

Ask the Golf Shop for more details! Both are good opportunities to invite friends, family, neighbors, or anyone who is not a member to consider joining the Elks.

No other organization in Columbus is like us. No one else offers summer recreational fun, a private, championship course you can enjoy almost anytime you want to, and menus for both kids and adults. Invite them to "Play here!"

-Derrick

COLUMBUS ELKS' COUNTRY CLUB

COUPLES' GOLF MEMBER-GUEST

SATURDAY

JULY 26

1 P.M.

- **CHECK-IN: NOON**
- **SHOTGUN START: 1 PM**
- **COCKTAIL HOUR**
- **PLATED FORMAL MEAL**

\$160 PER COUPLE

Format: One member couple and the invited guest couple will play an alternative shot scramble. Depending on the number of entries, the event will be flighted by handicap (maximum handicap of 36 for any player).



**Sign up
today!**

www.theelkscc.com
402.564-1451

MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

"Thank you!" to all the members and guests who played in this year's Hilltop. I hope you enjoyed the course. Even though the weather was hot and windy, the fairways and greens held up nicely.

We received a large amount of rain (more than 5 inches!) on the night of June 25. This made for a busy week, maintenance-wise, but the team did a great job!

- The lake on Hole 8 needed to be pumped out because the water was a couple of inches over the bridge.
- We also needed to pump out all of the bunkers and push the sand back to their edges.
- We sliced the fairways to help them dry out faster and ran two, 3-inch pumps for 30 straight hours to get the course playable for the Habitat for Humanity outing two days later.
- Then, to catch up on the day we had lost due to the rain, we mowed all of the rough on Friday before the H4H tournament began.

In addition to ongoing course management, the maintenance team is tackling a variety of projects, including the property line along the north side of the course. The grass is growing in, and we plan to install the fence sometime this month. The fence will run from the maintenance shed entrance to the northeast corner of the property adjacent to the men's tee box for Hole #14.

We could use your help, however.

As the turf becomes more stressed with the summer heat, it is very important to watch your cart traffic, use paths, replace or fill divots, and fix ball marks. A little TLC from the members will go a long way to maintaining the beauty of our course.

Lastly, I want to mention something the Strategic Planning Committee is exploring.

As you have probably heard, the Elks is a 60-year-old-course. It opened in 1965 as a 9-hole course and expanded five years later into an 18-hole course with the help of a bank loan and a \$3,500 assessment from each member. The funding provided enough collateral to develop the back nine.


In 1992, a masterplan was developed to guide course improvements that matched the changes and advancements taking place in golf, such as

2-PERSON TEAM
18 HOLES
LIGHTED BY
HANDICAP

\$125 PER PERSON
LUNCH INCLUDED


ONE NET BEST BALL
OF THE TWOSOME

FLIGHT WINNERS
WILL ADVANCE
TO A 3 - HOLE
DERBY AFTER
LUNCH TO
DETERMINE THE
OVERALL
CHAMPION

 **MEMBER-MEMBER
MEMORIAL
TOURNAMENT**

9 AM SHOTGUN

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16TH



**REX
PORTER**

the rules of golf, turf and grass varieties, course design, club and ball composites, and swing styles. Courses are designed and rated today with technology playing a role in everything from the equipment used in play and maintenance to the landscape, size, and visual aesthetics of a course's fairways, greens, and rough.

The Elks has made some changes to its bunkers, tee boxes, and fairways to add challenge, but the master plan of 1992 is no longer as viable.

As part of our assessment of future building and course improvement, we are seeking ideas from golf course architects. One drove the course, and another used a drone to collect more of an aerial assessment. Neither architect has provided any recommendations, and we may reach out to a third, but no decisions have been made on what we will do, if anything. We simply know the information will be helpful in determining how competitive and attractive the Elks can be to potential members, as other properties are developed around us.

Should the information be worth sharing, you can trust that the Strategic Planning Committee and/or management will communicate more at a future time.

-Eric

HILLTOPPERS

highlights

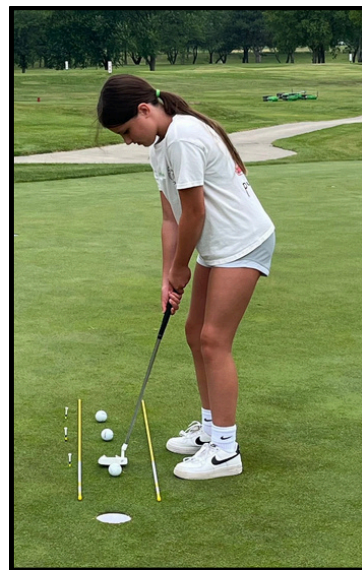
line up to the ball



"I loved junior golf."
-Nancy Lopez



head
down





be patient

“If I could go back in time, I would tell myself to be patient and keep trying to improve a little bit at a time.”

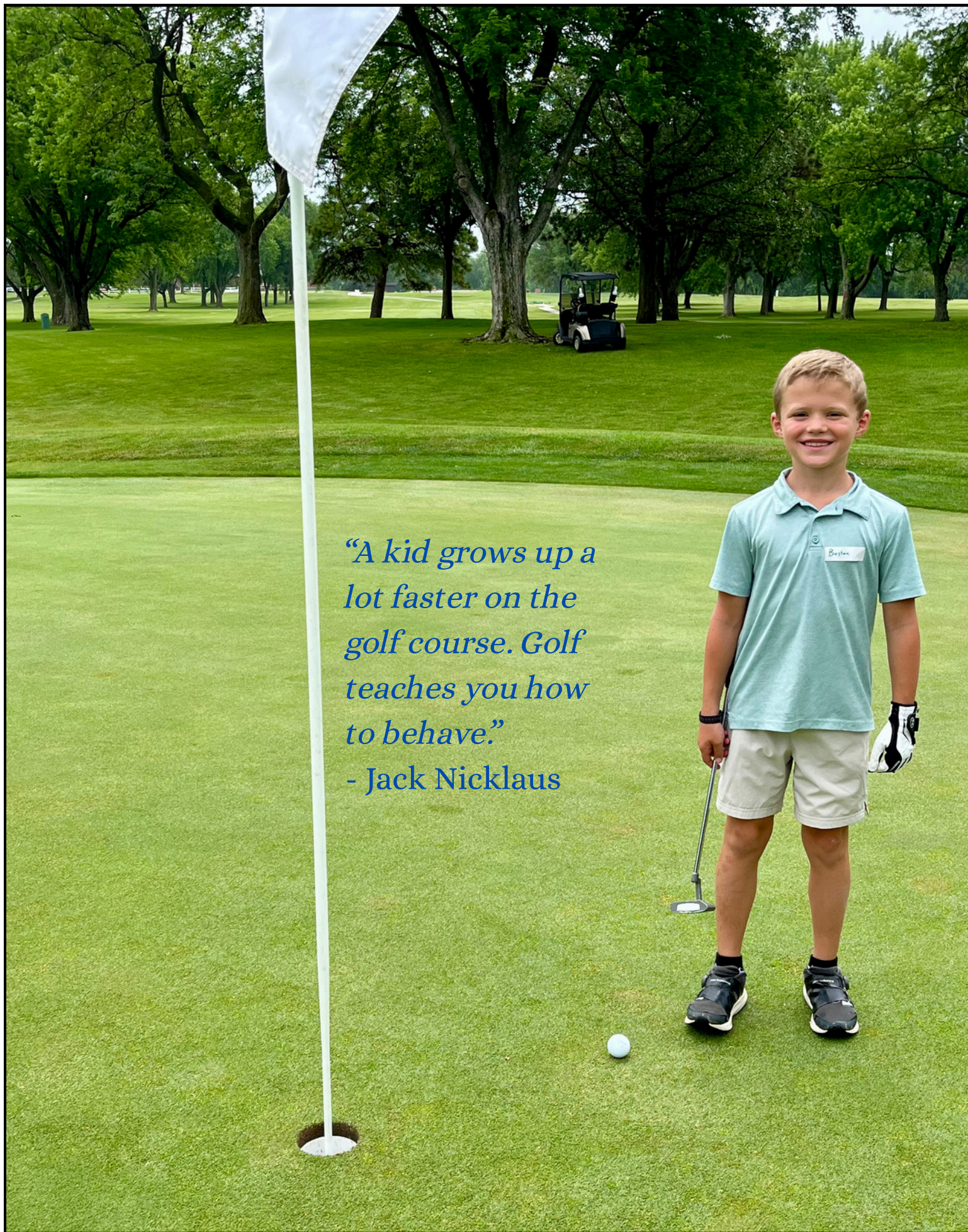
- Scottie Scheffler

swing through



*"You swing your
best when you
have the fewest
things to
think about."*
- Bobby Jones





*"A kid grows up a
lot faster on the
golf course. Golf
teaches you how
to behave."*

- Jack Nicklaus

More photos of the first week of Hilltoppers are available on the Elks' Country Club Facebook site:
<https://www.facebook.com/ElksCountryClubColumbusNE/>

HILLTOPPERS

highlights



most importantly, have fun



“As a kid, I might have been psycho, I guess, but I used to throw golf balls in the trees and try to somehow make par from them. I thought that was fun.” - Tiger Woods

ELKS COUNTRY CLUB

LADY LUCK

MEMBER/MEMBER &
MEMBER/GUEST



- \$150/team
- Optional practice round included on Friday (schedule a time)
- Morning juice, muffin, and post-tourney lunch included with entry
- Tee gift (30 oz Stanley tumbler filled with extras)
- 18-hole, 2-person scramble (flighted based on the number of entries)
- Handicapped (35% of 'A' player and 15% of 'B' player)



This year's
swag!

Lunch Is Open To All Ladies League Participants
\$15++ for non-tournament participants

CONTACT THE GOLF SHOP TO SIGN UP OR USE THE GOLF GENIUS ONLINE PORTAL

JULY 12TH - 8:30 AM SHOTGUN

JULY						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		Men's and Women's Leagues 1	Women's Blind Draw 2	Men's League 3		4 5
				HILLTOPPERS	Independence Day	
6	7	Men's and Women's Leagues 8	Women's Blind Draw 9	Men's League 10	11	12
	NJC NEBRASKA JUNIOR GOLF TOUR EVENT Tee times: 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.		BLOOD DRIVE WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025	HILLTOPPERS	ELKS' ANNUAL FLAG COMPETITION FRIDAY, JULY 11TH	LADY LUCK MEMBER/MEMBER & MEMBER/GUEST
13	14	Men's and Women's Leagues 15	Women's Blind Draw 16	Men's League 17	18	19
		OFC				
20	21	Men's and Women's Leagues 22	Women's Blind Draw 23	Men's League 24	25	1 p.m. Shotgun 26
				HILLTOPPERS		COUPLES' GOLF MEMBER-GUEST
27	28	Men's League PLAYOFFS 29	Women's Blind Draw 30	31		
			Cactus	JUNIOR CITY TOURNAMENT		