

## Chiropractic Wellness Center Hits a Hole in One With the LPGA

DUBLIN, Ohio - The week of Aug. 4-10, 2003 marked the fifth year of the Wendy's Championship for Children, one of the top tournaments on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour. For the members and staff of Tartan Fields Golf Club, it was their second year to extend hospitality to the only professional women's sporting event in Central Ohio. Considerable thought and preparation goes into making this tournament a memorable one for all involved. More than 1,000 people from surrounding communities volunteered for this event, resulting in a donation of \$500,000 by Wendy's International to the Children's Hospital of Columbus (\$25,000 more than was raised last year).

On Monday the 4th, a field of 144 players began to converge on Tartan Fields for the qualifying tournament, and by Tuesday, most were in town starting their practice rounds. In the clubhouse parking area, we could see players' cars and SUVs sporting license plates from a variety of states. At this point in the season, many of the players have been on the road traveling from tour site to tour site, and weariness can set in. There is something very infectious, however, about being around those who love what they do; you notice a confidence in their walk and a firmness in their handshake that tells you that you are in the presence of high achievers. This level of assurance was certainly exuded by this year's winners, Hee-Won Han and Wendy Ward. [The two golfers were tied after 54 holes of regulation play; Ms. Han won after three sudden-death playoff holes.]

Wendy's Championship arranged for a chiropractic wellness center to be available to the players at Tartan Fields, and it was converted from a small fitness room for the purpose of serving the tournament. It was well-received at this year's event, and featured chiropractic adjustments; massage therapy; nutrition counseling; and diagnostic equipment that can monitor how well the body performs in different areas. This is especially beneficial for athletes, in since the absence of pain is not an indicator of optimal health.

One of the most fascinating pieces of equipment in the center is the surface EMG scanning unit. By means of a handheld scanner that detects how well the motor nerves are working, a color-coded report is printed out of the readings of the current found in the muscles along the spine. In addition, a thermal scan is also conducted that provides information to monitor the autonomic system for proper function. The doctor can now use this information to identify nerve interference that ultimately can affect the body - even down to the cellular level.

The clinic's nutritional diagnostic lab was also the center of attention with the players. Urine samples that they would bring in were tested to identify levels of digestion, oxidation, minerals, vitamins and adrenals. Based on this information, recommendations could be made for proper supplementation and dietary adjustments.

Early one morning, as I and a colleague entered the wellness center adjacent to the players' locker room; we were startled to find someone already waiting for us. "Hi!" she said with a smile. "I'm Maggie Will." With that, she strode over to shake our hands. "I just came in early to workout and get ready for practice rounds. Tell me, what do you have going on here?" Maggie is a 14-year

veteran of the LPGA tour, and in the last few years, she has taken a serious look at holistic and natural methods of getting well - and staying that way. [Maggie finished tied for 37th at the Wendy's Championship.] The windowsill of the center was lined with books on wellness, fitness and age-erasing techniques, and Maggie had been reading one of them when we arrived.

Doug Darr, DC, one of the center's wellness coaches, gave Maggie a brief tour, then sat down with her to discuss her personal health goals. This is part of the treatment strategy for a care plan that helps athletes find a healthy balance in mind, body and spirit. For this reason, the initial interview is key to giving the wellness coach insight into the mind and spirit of the person with whom he or she will be working.

The benefit in working with elite athletes is that they don't lack motivation. Many professional athletes know preventive health care is the wisest investment in time and money they can make. Unfortunately for some, that decision comes after investing thousands of dollars in surgery and medication, accompanied by long-term side-effects that interfere with their reaching peak performance. At that point, some have complex problems, as they have been taking medication that may interact with supplements or diet changes. Wellness coaches also look at what side-effects past medications have done to patients and how they can get back to a healthy balance in the body, biochemically. Health problems detract from a person's spirit, and inevitably, his or her focus on what we are doing. This is especially critical for athletes who make a living with their bodies. They are always looking for the best way to reach optimal performance, and stay at that level for as long as possible. Several players on the tour are over 50 years of age, and are still in the game and loving it.

Drs. Darr; Mitch Harville; Alisha Booher; T.J. Corbin; John Moore; Andrew Mowry; and Cynthia Frazier - all members of the Central Ohio Chiropractic Association - donated their services at the wellness center at this year's event. One player wrote a thank-you note after the tournament that said, "I was so happy to see a chiropractor at this event - I needed it. With golf being such a repetitive, one-sided motion, a chiropractic wellness center is a must! And having all these fields of massage, nutrition and reflexology is awesome - cutting-edge - very up-to-date."

This overall concept of wellness care also attracted the attention of Bill Frank, executive producer of a health and fitness TV show, "Forever Young." The program aired from 1999-2001 on the Fox Sports Channel; this fall, it is in the lineup for a cable network with a potential 73-million-viewer audience. I contacted Mr. Frank early in the year and invited him to bring his show to this year's event at Tartan Fields. Sitting down with the Wendy's Championship Team and the Tartan Fields staff, he outlined a storyboard concept. They were very responsive to the idea. Mr. Frank was on hand with his camera crew on Wednesday and Thursday of tournament week, interviewing the players as to what they did to stay in top shape; what physical challenges they experienced; and ultimately, "Is being on tour with the LPGA everything you expected it to be?"

*[Editor's note: The episode of Forever Young with the Tartan Fields segment is scheduled to air on the Discovery Network in February 2004. For more information, visit [www.billfrank.com](http://www.billfrank.com)]*

Tom Anderson, managing partner of the Tartan Fields Golf Company, commented on the number of compliments he received this year about the provision of a wellness center for the players. On the drawing boards in the near future for Tartan Fields may be a permanent center to be enjoyed by members and those in the community.

We also distributed a petition on the final day of the tournament to as many of the players still at Tartan Fields. (Many had already moved on to the next stop of the tour in Toledo, Ohio.) The petition asked, "The intent to create a Chiropractic Wellness and Fitness Program that could be

implemented with consistency and congruency alongside any other providers on your health care team is being considered. This program would be modeled after the Chiropractic Wellness Clinic at Tartan Fields, providing chiropractic services, massage therapy, nutritional evaluation, reflexology and any other services you request. Would you want this included on your tour throughout the year, and if so, would you use this on a consistent basis?" We received 37 signatures and various other comments of appreciation, which we will submit shortly to the Tournament Sponsors Association on behalf of the players.

And of course, there's no better satisfaction than hearing praise straight from the athletes themselves. As one competitor enthused, "Your body is your temple; you have to take care of it. What better way to do it then to have both physical fitness and chiropractic therapy each week?"

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*(Author's note: Jeanne Ohm, executive director of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association, contributed to this article.)*

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