

ECONOMIC CLIMATE FOCUSES IMPORTANCE OF PGA PROFESSIONAL

*An exclusive interview with
The PGA of America's Jim Remy*

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**2008 PGA Professional
National Championship**

(L-R) Champion *Scott Hebert* and *Jim Remy* with the Walter Hagen cup during the awards ceremony after the final round of the PGA Professional National Championship at Great Waters Golf Course in Eatonton, Georgia, USA, on Saturday, June 22, 2008.

*Photo by Montana Pritchard
The PGA of America*



WITH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE, THE ROLE OF THE PGA PROFESSIONAL HAS PERHAPS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE SUCCESS OF GOLF BUSINESSES THAN IT IS TODAY.

As the first-ever New England PGA section member to be elected PGA President, Jim Remy assumed the reigns of the elected leadership of The PGA of America in November, at a time that will shape the game for many years to come.

As PGA general manager at Okemo Valley (Vt.) Golf Club, Remy has steered the construction, development and management of the resort's golf division since 1997 and is considered one of the most respected businessmen in the game of golf. Prior to 1997 he was responsible for the Killington Golf Resorts and the Vermont Golf Division of SKI Ltd.

BoardRoom Magazine: The mantra of this new era that we are in is squarely focused on value. For the consumer, value is defined as to what constitutes a great deal. For the golf employer, value is synonymous with what their employees bring to the table, in order to carry their business through this unprecedented economic crisis and beyond. What part does the PGA professional play in their employer's investment in their future?

Jim Remy, PGA: PGA members represent the golf industry's face and voice each and everyday, when dealing

with your customers, members, sponsors and suppliers. It is these relationships that are vital for your business, as PGA members are widely respected for being able to leverage their extensive knowledge of the game, leadership positions, solid business relationships and respected credentials into highly significant revenues.

In fact, revenues per round at PGA member-staffed facilities are traditionally 30 percent higher than non-PGA staffed locations. In these times, it is vital for a golf employer to invest in their business — in order to grow or stabilize revenues in the face of adversity, as well as be in a position to prosper when the economy rekindles. That is why PGA members are an employer's most valuable asset, as the value of the PGA Professional is unique, substantial and measurable.

*In these times, it is vital
That is why PGA members are an*

BR: What are some examples of programs PGA Professionals are doing to drive more traffic to their facilities?

JR: PGA members are renowned for taking promotions and turning them into participation. This is best personified through Play Golf America, as PGA members



have pointed to this program as a vital component for driving traffic to their facilities. Through branded Play Golf America programs, like PGA Free Lesson Month and Play Golf America Days, PGA members have reached more than 1.28 million people nationwide since launching in 2004. We also see group instruction programs, a traditional grass-roots player development effort, being offered by PGA members at 84 percent of our facilities. This clearly shows that PGA members recognize the importance of leveraging off the national marketing strength of The PGA of America in order to promote programs at their facilities, as these initiatives have repeatedly produced the desired end result in driving new golfers to the game.

2008 National Golf Day (above left)

(L-R) *Brian Whitcomb*, President of The PGA of America, *Jim Remy*, Vice President of The PGA of America, *Allen Wronowski*, Secretary of The PGA of America, and *Joe Steranka*, CEO of the The PGA of America on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, USA, in conjunction with National Golf Day on Wednesday, April 16, 2008.

Photo by Montana Pritchard/The PGA of America

2008 Ryder Cup (above)

Back Row (L-R) *Brian Whitcomb*, *Jim Remy*, *Jim Furyk*, Assistant Captain *Ray Floyd*, *Kenny Perry*, *Phil Mickelson*, Captain *Paul Azinger*, *Stewart Cink*, *Chad Campbell*, *Steve Stricker*, *Allen Wronowski*, *Roger Warren*, and *Joe Steranka*. Front Row (L-R) *Boo Weekley*, *Ben Curtis*, *Anthony Kim*, *Hunter Mahan*, Assistant Captain *Olin Browne*, *J.B. Holmes*, *Justin Leonard*, and Assistant Captain *Dave Stockton* with the Ryder Cup trophy following the closing ceremony of the 37th Ryder Cup at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Kentucky, USA, on Sunday, September 21, 2008.

Photo by Mike Ehrmann/The PGA of America

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employer's most valuable asset, as the value of the PGA Professional
is unique, substantial and measurable.*

BR: What are some of the benefits the PGA Professional brings to their employers?

JR: PGA members have the power at their fingertips to leverage the resources of The PGA of America's significant partnerships. For example, American Express offers

the "Friends of a Cardmember Program," which encourages the holders of its vast array of more than 86 million cards in force today to discover PGA Professionals nationwide who can teach and instruct them in the game

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of golf, as well as direct them to facilities to play the game.

The PGA's corporate partnerships with the likes of RBS, Pepsi and a host of other top businesses aligned with the game of golf present further evidence of the respect that PGA Professionals command throughout the business community, thanks to their remarkable ability to shape and steer the spending patterns of golf customers both here and abroad.

PGA Professionals and their employers are also privileged to gain access to the impeccable and extensive data generated by PGA PerformanceTrak, which enables you to gauge the performance of your business based on certain benchmark criteria versus other facilities in your industry, area and nationwide.

The PGA has served as a bedrock for business since 1916, and we are proud that our 28,000 men and women working PGA Professionals carry on this tradition today as the recognized experts in the game and business of golf.

This gives you the ability to expertly steer the direction on your business based on the latest trends and information available about the industry, which can help you stabilize revenues today and grow them tomorrow – an invaluable tool, especially with today's urgent need for immediate ROI.

BR: When a consumer chooses a golf facility to play on, what makes them more likely to choose one with The PGA flag flying over it?

JR: The PGA has served as a bedrock for business since 1916, and we are proud that our 28,000 men and women working PGA Professionals carry on this tradition today as the recognized experts in the game and business of golf. From innovative growth-of-the-game consumer-oriented programs, such as Play Golf America, to extensive PGA member training and education programs that establish PGA Professionals as the gold standard for advice on instruction, merchandise and play, to their amazing wealth of knowledge and valuable contacts within the industry, golfers continue to trust PGA members as the go-to provider and source for all things golf.

This stamp of excellence can be found at more than 8,600 facilities nationwide, as consumers recognize that The PGA flag is one that signifies prestige, respect and the utmost of professionalism.

BR: What is the process to become a PGA Professional and how does The PGA of America prepare them for their new career?

JR: A rigorous, multi-year training and education process is required to become a PGA member, with 600 hours of coursework, three checkpoints and a playing ability test all part of the road to membership. Yet, there is a reason that it takes this kind of commitment to be able to add the three "PGA" letters after a golf professional's name, as it is a badge of excellence, integrity and success.

This unwavering dedication to excel is a hallmark of our members who bring to their employers impeccable acumen

and knowledge for the game, thanks to these extensive education requirements, onsite experience at facilities worldwide and an uncanny skill to teach, play and promote the game with tremendous passion each and every day.

BR: How can an owner or general manager find a PGA Professional that will be the perfect fit for their facility?

JR: I would encourage them strongly to visit PGA.com/employment. Here, you can access The PGA of America's network of nine professional employment counselors, who can work with you – at no cost to the employer at all – as you identify positions and needs you have, and then fill them with the most qualified PGA Professionals available for the job. It's the fastest way to gain access to the very talented pool of PGA members who are poised and ready to become the most valuable asset for your golf facility and business. **BR**

Jim Remy, a PGA member since 1984, is the vice president and general manager of the Okemo Golf Division at the Okemo Valley Golf Club in Ludlow, VT. He was elected President of The PGA of America on Nov. 8, 2008. For more information on The PGA of America, please visit www.pga.com