



Press release n.1

Hickory Golf Masters SA

New museum in Lugano displays internationally significant collection of hickory golf clubs

Lugano, December 10th, 2025

In the heart of Lugano in the south of Switzerland, a new space celebrates the tradition and authenticity of the game of golf: the Hickory Golf Masters Museum. A place where golf history comes alive. This private museum is part of Hickory Golf Masters SA, an organisation that promotes golf while honouring the craftsmanship and technical genius that characterised its heyday. Its CEO, Paolo Quirici, is not only a proven expert on the history of golf, but also one of the best hickory golfers of our time.

Between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, golf underwent a period of remarkable innovation in clubmaking that has shaped the design of clubs to this day. Spanning 380 square metres, the Hickory Golf Masters Museum in Lugano tells this story through an exceptional collection focusing on the work of Tom Stewart Jr. (Scotland), one of the era's most revered clubmakers, renowned for his innovation and outstanding craftsmanship. The museum also has a workshop where Paolo Quirici restores historic golf clubs. Another area of the museum is an indoor golf facility equipped with a putting green, a GCQUAD device and a simulator. Here, visitors can try out hickory golf clubs from before 1935, which brings golf history to life.

The equipment of the major winners

The Hickory Golf Masters Museum's collection features around 1500 golf clubs once played by some of the greatest figures of their time. Visitors can see custom-made clubs that were used by golfing legends to celebrate their successes, including:

Tom Morris Sr. (Scotland, 1821–1908), four-time British Open Champion. Old Tom Morris set new standards as a greenkeeper, golf course architect and club maker. The 18th hole of the Old Course at St Andrews is named after him.



Tom Morris Jr. (Scotland, 1851-1875), 4 times British Open champion. Following his hat-trick in 1870, Young Tom Morris was permitted to retain the original belt. As the winner of the 1872 Open Championship, he became the first person to have his name engraved on the Claret Jug, since no Open Championship had been held in 1871.

Bobby Jones (USA, 1902-1971), 13 times major champion; architect of Augusta National course and founder of US Masters.

Arnaud Massy (France, 1877-1950), British Open Champion 1907 – the first non-British player to win the tournament.

Francis Ouimet (USA, 1893-1967), 3 times major champion; first amateur to win the US Open 1913.

Gene Sarazen (USA, 1902-1999), 7 times major champion – one of only six players in history to achieve the career Grand Slam.

Harry Vardon (Jersey, 1870-1937), 7 times major champion and inventor of Vardon grip.

Ted Ray (England, 1877-1943), 2 times major champion.

Jack White (Scotland, 1873-1949), British Open champion 1904.

James Braid (Scotland, 1870-1950), 5 times British Open champion.

Their golf clubs, along with many other original examples, provide a rare glimpse into a time when technology and craftsmanship were inextricably linked. The museum displays a selection of 360 clubs. Golf balls from the period between 1900 and 2025 are also on display, showcasing the evolution of the sport. Last but not least, the museum provides insight into the careers and successes of the greatest hickory golfers of that era.

The Phil Gibbs Collection: 35 years of passion

This remarkable collection was made possible through the acquisition of the works assembled by Phil Gibbs (1945-2025), an American enthusiast who spent over 35 years searching for, restoring, and preserving genuine hickory clubs. His wish was that his collection would one day find a home, a place where it could be shared and appreciated.

The founders of Hickory Golf Masters SA promised Phil Gibbs that they would open a museum for his collection in Switzerland. This promise has now been fulfilled, just over a year since the Phil Gibbs collection was purchased. It is marking a story of continuity and respect. Just under seven months after Gibbs' death on 9 May 2025, the opening of the Lugano museum on 4 December 2025 signalled the handover of the baton between two generations united by their passion and vision of golf as both a cultural and sporting heritage. As Hickory Golf Masters SA CEO Paolo Quirici likes to say: «You hardly ever own a historic golf club, you just look after it till the next generation will enjoy it».



An authentic experience

«The location of the museum is simply perfect», says Quirici. «In the heart of the city, in a pedestrian area where visitors can admire this collection and even play with original hickory clubs, restored in the workshop that is part of the Museum.»

Alongside the exhibition, the laboratory will allow visitors to observe restoration techniques up close and to experience the game with original equipment. The project's reputation has already crossed Swiss borders, drawing the attention of collectors and hickory golfers from around the world, even before its official opening on 4th of December 2025.

Hickory Golf Masters Museum

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ABOUT HICKORY GOLF MASTERS SA

Hickory Golf Masters SA (HGM) 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. Through its four divisions (museum, tournaments, club, shop), HGM upholds hickory golf's rules of play, etiquette, materials, and cultural heritage, while building a global community that shares its devotion. We do not merely preserve history; we continue it.

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.

SAVE THE DATE: 13th-14th May 2026

Hickory Masters 2026, Circolo Golf Villa d'Este (Como, Italy)

The Hickory Golf Masters unfolds over two consecutive days of 18-hole stroke play. The tournament features a limited and curated field. Players compete in three main categories: Open (Professionals & Amateurs), Amateurs, and Senior Amateurs. Each round is played with original pre-1935 hickory clubs and supported by caddies. Period attire from the early 1930s is mandatory throughout the competition. Total Purse (professionals only) will be € 30'000.

This inaugural tournament at Circolo Golf Villa d'Este, near Lake Como, celebrates the club's upcoming 100th anniversary in 2026. It offers hickory golfers a rare opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the great champions who competed in past Italian Opens and Amateurs International Italian Championships.

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