

Cricket Club Lands Historic Team Matches Title

Philadelphia Cricket Club defeated three rivals for its first GAP Team Matches title in the competition's 113-year history. During the Saturday playoff, the club earned 71 points to outscore Overbrook Golf Club (64.5), Little Mill Country Club (53) and Back Creek Golf Club (27.5).

"I didn't know if it would happen this year," said Rob Savarese Jr., Cricket's captain. "But I knew for a fact we would eventually win. I just didn't know what year.

"For me personally, this has been a huge focus. I've been here the longest of anybody on the team (24 years). And for guys like me, Scott Storck and Kevin Kelly, the older guys, this is a huge accomplishment. We are now 1-for-113. Think about that for a second."

Cricket was a founding GAP member in 1897 and has fielded a squad for the Team Matches every year since, with the exception of four years (1943-45 for World War II and 1994 for ice storms).

The GAP Team Matches playoff format features three players for each participating club at each venue. Each player competes in a three-way match against one foe from another team.

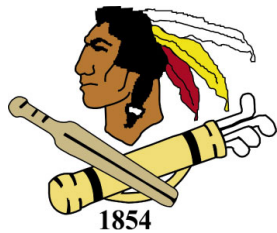
Results started to post mid-afternoon with Back Creek the first to finish. Cricket led Overbrook 19-14. The Cricket Club and Overbrook venues finished next and with three sites completed, Overbrook led 53-52.

The Little Mill matches were delayed by rain and didn't start posting until about 6 p.m. Cricket led by one point with one foursome remaining.

Cole Berman, 17, a junior at the Haverford School, was Cricket's final player. He had just a few holes remaining when teammates told him about earlier results. Berman's matches, however, were not in doubt. He bogeyed the first hole to fall behind

Historic Win For Historic Club

Cricket is the last of GAP's founding clubs to win the Team Matches, which have been contested since 1897.



| Club | Initial Win | Total Titles |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Merion Golf Club | 1897 | 4 |
| Philadelphia Country Club | 1905 | 6 |
| Aronimink Golf Club | 1921 | 7 |
| Philadelphia Cricket Club | 2013 | 1 |

each foe, but parred the next 10 to move comfortably ahead in all three matches. Berman posted 7.5 of a possible nine points to secure the win.

"Just being on the first team this year is such an honor and to win points makes it even that much sweeter," said Berman, GAP's 2012 Junior Player of the Year, who will attend Georgetown University. "The purpose of me going to Little Mill was my accuracy. Then I only hit three fairways. I couldn't hit my driver. And I only hit eight greens. A lot of today was scrambling. You really had to buckle down and just make pars."

Savarese said he was speechless when Berman's result found its way to an anxious group awaiting word at Cricket's Flourtown clubhouse.

"He's our youngest player and he's played in one first-team match ever. And that was last week," said Savarese, 47, of Lafayette Hill, Pa. "What an unbelievable story."

Cricket's victory comes at a time of great excitement for the club.

The Wissahickon Course will undergo a renovation in late June. Major work also is slated for the historic St. Martin's layout, site of the 1907 and 1910 U.S. Opens.

"It's tremendous to feel like we are part of a special something here at the club with everything going on," said Chris Kallmeyer, who served as Cricket's captain before Savarese. "To win this right before the restoration is perfect timing. I am just so happy for these guys."

Cricket came close to a victory last year, falling by 3.5 points to Little Mill, which entered this spring as the two-time reigning Team Matches champion. Tavistock Country Club was the last team to threepeat, doing so from 2004-06.

Overbrook, with a resolute veteran group, was in search of its first GTM title since 1988.

Back Creek, a GAP member club since 2010, was trying to become the first public golf facility to win the championship. If all goes according to plan the club could achieve that next year; Back Creek has advanced incrementally in each of its Team Matches seasons since starting in Division C.

Savarese said he put "a ton of thought" into what courses to send players to for the playoff.

"You place guys where you think they would play well," he said.

He noted the efforts of Storck at Back Creek; Mark Peterson at Overbrook and both Berman and Sean Semenetz at Little Mill.

Storck won all nine of his points. Peterson took six in three difficult matchups at Overbrook. Semenetz, whom Savarese said controls his ball well, was playing in his first Team 1 match of the year. He earned eight points.

"Those guys all came up huge," said Savarese, who works in the financial services industry. "Overbrook and Little Mill are great teams and even greater on their own home courses. Our guys really hung together."

John Brennan of Philadelphia Cricket Club is set to defend his Middle-Amateur Championship title May 22-23 at Fieldstone Golf Club in Greenville, Del.

Brennan carded a four-shot victory a year ago at Chester Valley Golf Club, where he caddied while in college. A Brennan repeat would be the first since **Chris Lange** of Overbrook won in 2005-06.

The 30th Mid-Am is for players 25 or older. It is the first major of the Golf Association of Philadelphia season.

Fieldstone hosted the 2008 renewal, in which **Michael McDermott** of Merion Golf Club won. ●