

We are **THE** Women in Golf



Q&A with PGA Professional Naomi Nesenoff

By Ryan Adams, PGA



Naomi Nesenoff, PGA, was named the 2016 Central New York PGA Merchandiser of the Year for resort facilities, and developed the first Golf in Schools program for the Johnson City (New York) School District.

Growing up on Long Island, it didn't take long for Naomi Nesenoff to make an impact on the game of golf.

By age 13, Nesenoff already had begun her young teaching career, and, as an 8th grader, founded the Commack High School girls' golf team. After spending time teaching at the Nike Junior Golf Camps on Long Island throughout high school, Nesenoff headed west and entered Penn State University's PGA Golf Management University Program.

In February 2010, Nesenoff became a PGA Professional and started out in a unique position as you can find in the golf industry: PGA Head Professional of Elite Golf Cruises. She managed all golf-related operations for Princess, Carnival and Norwegian Cruise Lines, developing and installing programs for each company to provide to their guests. By May 2011, Nesenoff made her way back to the mainland and found a position as PGA Head Teaching Professional at Mystic Hills Golf Club in Culver, Indiana.

After stops at Bonnie Briar Country Club in Larchmont, New York – where she increased participation in women's golf programs by 22.5 percent in just a year – and Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona, New York, Nesenoff accepted the PGA Director of Golf position for Traditions at the Glen Resort in Johnson City, New York, where she now continues to push the envelope in growing the game.

PGA Magazine recently caught up with Nesenoff.

PGA Magazine: What was your biggest motivator in becoming a PGA Professional?

Naomi Nesenoff: When deciding on a career in high school, I thought of what I enjoyed doing the most. What I kept arriving at was being around the game of golf. I loved to play the

game, but I also enjoyed teaching, watching and talking about golf. I had other activities I was interested in, but golf was my focus and joy. At the time, I was not aware of the scope of opportunities the golf business had, but I knew that by being around golf, I would be happy.

PGA Magazine: Who have you been inspired by during your career in the golf industry?

Nesenoff: PGA Master Professional Tom Wilson inspired me. He mentored me during the seasons I worked for him (at Bonnie Briar), and is the most knowledgeable Professional I have ever met regarding the golf swing. With Tom's guidance, I learned to be ready for any situation while accomplishing all tasks with precision and timeliness. I became a different individual from working with Tom, as he helped me to become confident in my abilities and to be ready for any issue with a ready mind.

PGA Magazine: How we can get more young women on the path to becoming PGA Professionals?

Nesenoff: By having more of a presence within your community. Create a network within your golf community where you can be the PGA Professional contact. Building community networking groups, giving golf tips on local TV stations, providing free junior golf clinics and reaching out to schools to get junior golf programs established is a huge benefit for yourself, your facility and your community.

You'll then be accessible for all of those who have even a slight interest in a career in golf. You won't have the opportunity to get to know everyone within your community, but by being the point person for golf – as well as those who are interested in the profession – they will now have the ability to reach out to you.

PGA Magazine: What is your favorite aspect of golf?

Nesenoff: I enjoy seeing positive results! Golf provides many opportunities for me to experience this. When I get to see a new student hit a pure shot or a client who finally plays a round of golf without pain, those are the things that provide me with the most happiness and satisfaction. Holding successful charity events, providing new procedures, as well as running new promotions are just a few items that reflect positively on our facility. The golf profession has allowed me to have the opportunity to provide others with a positive experience. Having a job that benefits others provides me with a feeling of success and pride. ■