

## HISTORY OF THE GOLF DIGEST SCHOOLS

It started with 19 students in 1971. Bob Toski and Dick Aultman staffed the only school conducted that year. It was held in the Bahamas.

In following years, the number of schools expanded to dozens yearly. They were held from Hilton Head Island to Carefree, Arizona, and from Cape Cod to Japan. Jim Flick joined the roster of instructors in 1973. Jack Lumpkin, a former Tour player, joined us in 1976. Paul Runyan, a short game expert if ever there was one, joined our growing staff in 1977.

The number of golfers attending annually reached over 1,000 by the end of 1977, and over 2,000 by 1987. By the end of 1994, over 32,000 golfers from all over the world had attended a Golf Digest School. Their packages included everything from half-day mini-schools, to 5-day VIP schools, to corporate schools, to customized events. Schools have been conducted at resorts and golf clubs in 25 states and 11 countries.

### WHY HAVE GOLF DIGEST SCHOOLS BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

With the success of the schools, and in celebration of this 25th year, it is important to ask, *why* have Golf Digest Schools been so successful? Why did these schools set and maintain the standard of excellence for golf instruction? And why do many of the schools' alumni return for additional schools?

The answers all come down to one distinguishing factor. The quality and the devotion of the instructors – the men and women who have worn the Golf Digest Schools logo on their shirts for these 25 years.

From Bob Toski and Dick Aultman, our two original instructors, to a list of instructors who have all become well known to their own students and millions of *Golf Digest* readers, they are collectively the most experienced and most talented teachers the game has ever known. While several have gone on to pursue their own ventures and other teaching arenas, they have all lent a dedication and a pride in their work that helped separate Golf Digest Schools from imitators. Together, they built a program established to broaden *Golf Digest's* involvement in the game, while providing to golfers of all skill levels a way to consistently get more fun and enjoyment from their golf games.

### WHAT IS IMPORTANT, BUT HOW IS CRITICAL

From day one, Golf Digest Schools instructors conveyed to their students the critical importance of basics: grip, stance, posture. It is repeated and repeated and then repeated again. And while such basics have always been the foundation of what is taught, how it is taught was never overlooked. Why?

Most golfers seek instruction, but not all golfers learn in the same manner, or at the same pace. Such insights allow the instructor to develop, in time, a method for teaching each individual in the group in a way that he or she best relates to, whether it be the visual learner, the listening learner or the touch learner.

How also relates to the numerous drills and practice procedures Golf Digest instructors have used successfully for years. But most importantly, how has to do with a teaching style that conveys a mastery of the game combined with a compassion for the frustrations that golf always produces within those striving to improve. Without such insights, gained only through teaching experience, the individual golfer and his/her individual skills and problems could not be fully addressed.

### LOOKING TO THE NEXT 25 YEARS

Like every business, we cannot continue to grow without looking at how we can improve the service we offer our customers. For Golf Digest Schools, this involves four major areas in which we will continue to invest for the future.

- The first involves the use of technology to further on-going communication with our students. Each student will have their swing videotaped during his/her school. This will be stored on a computer. When that student returns for a follow-up school, it is used for comparison and evaluation of progress.
- Second, students receive a take-home videotape with a voice-over analysis of their swing from their Golf Digest Schools instructor. This is a tool they can refer to at home.
- The third factor involves the expansion of a summer program, conducted at first-class resorts around the country. A primary benefit of this expanded program will be that a wider consumer market can attend a Golf Digest School because of more flexible scheduling. Such an expanded program takes into account the lack of time that many students are faced with in their daily schedules.
- Finally, Golf Digest Schools continues to expand its services to corporate America. Such corporate programs offer customized opportunities for business leaders to interact within a setting of first-class golf instruction. For many, it has proven to be a very rewarding way in which to host major clients, in settings any golfer will find attractive.

### **IF GOLF INSTRUCTION IS IN YOUR FUTURE**

While every teacher is obviously a golfer, it isn't necessarily true that every golfer is a teacher. Being a golf instructor requires an intimate knowledge of the game and how people learn. Being a *great* golf instructor involves skills that go beyond knowledge. It requires experience, yes. It requires social skills, yes. But over and above all these very necessary basics, a great golf instructor simply loves to teach. He or she enjoys helping each individual with their own particular set of problems or obstacles to improve their golf game.

This is what a Golf Digest School and a Golf Digest Schools instructor offer you. The experience, the knowledge, the personable style, the love of golf, and mostly, an endless enjoyment for teaching people how to play a better game of golf. If this is what you seek, you now know where to bring your game.

JOIN US!