

KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

THE MOST TRUSTED NAME IN EXECUTIVE SEARCH AND CONSULTING

DIRECTOR OF GOLF PROFILE: SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB PONTE VEDRA BEACH, FL

THE DIRECTOR OF GOLF OPPORTUNITY AT SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB

Sawgrass Country Club (SCC) is one of the most notable golf venues in one of the most significant golf regions in the United States. The Director of Golf (DOG) position at SCC is a tremendous opportunity for an individual who is not only passionate about golf, but is passionate about leadership, team development, building strong relationships with members and staff, and enhancing the Sawgrass brand. He or she must never be complacent or satisfied with simply being "good." Over the past several years, SCC leaders have developed a vision of SCC's future including capital improvements and new programs and activities that focus on ensuring SCC is both relevant and engaging for all its current and future members.

The DOG is a partner with the GM/COO, his/her fellow senior staff and the member volunteers who help shape and evolve SCC. Taking full accountability for that role and being a sincere, engaging personality, the DOG must be highly competent in the critical success factor areas noted throughout this profile. They are essential to long-term success and crucial in achieving the high member and staff satisfaction levels demanded by SCC.

It is truly a great opportunity for candidates who value the unique North Florida lifestyle Ponte Vedra Beach offers. Set in a community with the attributes of a large city, the area possesses many of the values and quaintness of a lifestyle in a small town and coastal island. The quality of the schools, the wide assortment of outdoor activities and cultural events, and many other personal and family life programs can be found in the greater Ponte Vedra Beach and Jacksonville communities, making the DOG at Sawgrass Country Club one of the best positions of its kind in the country!

[Click here to view a brief video about this opportunity.](#)

ABOUT SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB AND COMMUNITY

Sawgrass Country Club is the premiere member-owned, private club in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. The Sawgrass experience is comprised of a recently renovated Beach Clubhouse, Golf Clubhouse, 27-holes of championship golf, a world-class racquet club with 13 courts, and a new fitness and wellness center. All of this is bordering the Atlantic Ocean and conveniently nestled approximately 30 minutes from Jacksonville or St. Augustine and a short distance further to the International Airport in Jacksonville.

Sawgrass Country Club was founded in 1974 by Jimmy Stockton and developed into one of our nation's premier residential country clubs. Jimmy Stockton hired Ed Seay, before he became partners with Arnold Palmer, "to design a championship golf course to resemble Troon, if Troon had palms and ponds."¹ Ed Seay succeeded and Sawgrass Country Club was born.

Sawgrass Country Club hosted one of the PGA TOUR's premier events, THE PLAYERS Championship, for five years from 1977 to 1981, after which the TOUR moved the championship to their newly developed and present home TPC Sawgrass.

¹ GolfWorld.com May 4, 2009

THE PLAYERS is a championship for the best TOUR players and carries one of the richest purses in professional golf to this day. Jack Nicklaus, Ray Floyd, and Lee Trevino were a few winners of THE PLAYERS Championships held at Sawgrass Country Club.

Golf continues to be integral to Sawgrass Country Club. The Club hosts the annual John Hayt Collegiate Tournament, and has hosted the AJGA Junior Players event and the Women's Western Golf Association's National Amateur Championship in recent history. Sawgrass Country Club has very active Men's and Women's golf groups and last year conducted more than twenty men's and mixed golf events for members and more than 30 Sawgrass Women's Golf Association events and team play dates.

Sawgrass Country Club features 27-holes maintained to championship standards. The three 9-hole courses underwent a renovation project that was completed in the Fall of 2015. All fairways, tees and bunkers were part of the renovation project and substantial improvement work was done on other areas including bridges, drainage, cart paths and irrigation. The club has embarked on building a significant new, 65,000 sq. ft., \$20.0M Members Clubhouse, adjacent to the existing one which is scheduled for opening next Fall/Winter.

In addition to golf, Sawgrass Country Club also offers a stunning Beach Club, Tennis Club, and fitness facilities. The members consider the Beach Club to be the "social and tropical recreation center of Sawgrass Country Club." Significant renovations were completed in 2016 allowing the members oceanfront casual and fine dining, covered outdoor dining in addition to the seaside Pavilion Sandbar Bistro for a family friendly dining option. There are two pools at the beach club, -- a large family pool and an adult-only pool and the beach is just steps away.

The Tennis Center has been ranked among the nation's "50 Best" by Tennis Magazine and as a "5-Star tennis destination" by World Tennis. The Fitness and Wellness Center, located within the beachside clubhouse, is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and a well-trained staff. In addition to senior programs and junior athletic options the fitness schedule contains a variety of workout choices in addition to personal training options.

The Mission of the Club is to provide an exceptional Sawgrass Experience by combining our oceanfront location with excellent facilities, programs and services for the enjoyment of our members.

The Vision of the Club is to securely establish Sawgrass Country Club as the first choice for those seeking the best private club experience in our area through commitment to enduring excellence.

SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS

- At present, there are approximately: 625 Full Members, 750 Social and 100 Tennis Members totaling 1,475-member families in all. The Club is at full capacity and maintains a wait list to join.
- Initiation Fee - Full Member: \$35,000
- Dues – Full Member: \$918/month
- 27 holes of Ed Seay original design and redesigned by Robert Walker supports nearly 50,000 rounds of golf annually.
- Overall operating budget is approximately \$16.1M.
- Golf Operational budget for 2019 is approximately \$2.26M from all revenue sources.
- Golf Course Maintenance budget for its 27 holes is approximately \$2.5M.
- Golf Shop is approximately 2,000 square feet and is owned by Sawgrass Country Club
- Shop Sales Volume: Hard Goods - \$270,000+, Soft Goods - \$405,000+
- Gross Golf Shop Operations Payroll - \$750,000
- Golf Operations maintains 18 FTE
- 13 Har-Tru tennis courts (7 lighted) and are individually fenced and tiered
- Junior Tennis Academy
- Fitness and Wellness center offers personal training and group classes
- Physical Therapy and Massage Therapy services are offered on-property
- The Club is organized as a 501(c)(7) and is a not for profit corporation
- There are 13 Board Members, each serving three-year terms and can be re-elected for a second term

- The average age of the membership is 63 years and declining in the past few years
- The Club has an annual capital charge of \$1,600, to pay down the debt associated with the new clubhouse and to fund the annual capital expense budget

SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB WEB SITE: www.sawgrasscountryclub.com

DIRECTOR OF GOLF POSITION OVERVIEW

The DOG must be an exceptional leader and manager who recognizes and respects the contributions of volunteer members and staff of all levels. The DOG must be capable of both guiding and holding members and staff accountable to achieving and maintaining high standards. He or she will directly manage the Golf Operations Department and work closely with the Director of Agronomy and other Department Heads, while reporting to the GM/COO. The position will promote an exceptional “club member golf experience” and provide creative services and programs for all members and guests. *The DOG is expected to be a strategic leader of the golf experience at Sawgrass and therefore a person of intellect, vision, and planning acumen.*

Sawgrass Country Club is an exceptionally busy, year-round operation, including active children’s and junior programs and strong member participation in ladies and men’s golf group play, which requires strong presence and leadership to ‘manage’ the tee sheet. Leading a team of golf professionals and service staff who emulate a positive “tone at the top” demeanor is of critical importance. The DOG at Sawgrass is truly the “golf ambassador” of the Club. He or she must embody the highest levels of integrity, professionalism, diplomacy and be a highly active, engaged, and visible presence with both members and staff. He or she will be a “go to” individual who takes ownership of the operation and should be a highly visible and engaged senior manager. The ideal candidate is a “true visionary” for SCC’s golf operation and beyond. While building relationships with every constituency within the greater SCC membership, the DOG is someone who needs to have his or her finger on the pulse of all operations and be of the mindset that SCC is “one club, one team” in all that he or she does.

The DOG’s direct reports at present include: Golf Professionals, Merchandiser/Buyer, Outside Operations Supervisor, Outside Operations Staff, and Locker Room Attendants, for a total of 18 team members.

Critical success factors for the new DOG include:

- Ability to secure high levels of membership satisfaction, primarily through being a positive, respectful and highly interactive presence
- Ability to create a strong identity for SCC professional staff and develop an effective plan to attract, retain and develop talent
- Ability to develop and maintain, and consistently enforce, high standards of conduct, performance, and standard operating procedures. To be successful at SCC, leading with respectful but unwavering commitment to equal application of rules and standards is critical. Additionally, continually looking for new and better means of ‘managing’ all aspects of the operation—from tee sheet management to range experience to on course play and more—is an expectation of the SCC GM/COO, Board and Golf Committee.
- Financially astute with fiscal operations and budget development and able to effectively guide a large-scale operation, likely to increase in overall revenues at the completion of construction
- Ability to effectively communicate with all staff, not just in the golf operation, recognizing the “one club, one team” philosophy
- Being consistently innovative and highly visible and ensuring the same level of engagement from the team in his or her absence; setting performance management standards and expectations and executing to them is especially important.
- Ensuring that all members within the Club look at him or her as “our” DOG; not viewed as being partial or showing favoritism to a group.

There are areas within the SCC golf operations that are performing at a very high level and may need to simply continue or need only slight “polishing.” Understanding when and where to prioritize is very important.

The construction of a new Members Clubhouse, located adjacent to the existing one, will be an important opportunity for the DOG to participate in the ultimate opening standards when expectations will be at a very high level. This will occur early in the opening of that building and will set the tone for other areas---F & B and activities, that will follow. Even before the construction is completed, the new DOG will be expected to inject a fresh focus and innovation into the golf program and create an enhanced culture of professionalism and service at SCC.

While we are looking for the “consummate golf professional” in all aspects of competencies and experiences, the successful next DOG needs to be a great “generalist;” meaning a good player, a good instructor, a good merchandiser, a good innovator, a good tournament host and marketer, but above all, a great communicator! Appropriately balancing the demands for one’s time--- teaching, leading, managing, merchandising, training, playing, etc.---primarily defaults on personal presence, relationship building and ensuring a consistent, high level delivery of the “Sawgrass Experience.”

We are looking for a “special person” who embraces the golf experience and culture at Sawgrass, and who, by personal persuasion and commitment, creates support for his or her efforts.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

While all typical competencies are important, our need is for a Director of Golf who will:

- Provide quality leadership and a positive, highly visible, and engaging style; be a real people person and communicate openly and freely with members
- Further define and perpetuate a “Sawgrass Member and Guest Golf Experience” that meets the expectations of its members
- Maintain a professional appearance
- Lead and manage the overall golf program including implementing new programs to attract young players and be inclusive of all demographics, recognizing his or her primary role is to “grow the game at SCC”
- Work closely with the Director of Agronomy and other key Departments in coordinating planned closures for events and scheduled maintenance, demonstrating a strong “team player” leadership role
- Be ambitious and motivated
- Be responsible for all golf operations including golf shop, merchandising, bag room, starter, and practice facilities, as well as locker room experience. Taking ownership of the entire golf to 19th hole experience is important, especially upon completion of the new clubhouse.
- Recruit, hire and train the Professional Golf staff and all golf operations employees
- Oversee the golf instruction and player development programs for all member segments
- Manage fiscal responsibilities for all golf areas including planning, budgeting, monitoring and corrective management
- Oversee all operational policies, procedures, controls, and fee structures to ensure the safekeeping of assets, inventory, and resources
- Represent the Golf areas at major club governance meetings and information sessions
- Maintain and promote a superlative professional image within the community
- Must be an organized, competent, respected manager and possess outstanding customer service skills
- Must be able to perform all physical requirements of a Director of Golf including the ability and confidence to play golf with members and in various club events

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

Preferably, a college degree, and hold a minimum of a "Class A" card and be a registered member of the PGA. Further, a verifiable commitment to continuing education within both the PGA and potentially CMAA, as there is a strong desire in place for candidates with leadership skills beyond golf operations.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Club, along with the typical senior staff benefits, offers an excellent bonus and benefit package.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY

Please upload your resume and cover letter, in that order, using the link below. You should have your documents fully prepared to be attached when prompted for them during the online application process.

Preparing a thoughtful letter of interest and alignment with the above noted expectations and requirements is necessary. Your letter should be **addressed to C.W. Cook, GM/COO**, and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why SCC and the Ponte Vedra Beach area will be beneficial to you, your family, your career, and the Club if selected.

Your interest in this role must be communicated in the above manner no later than Wednesday, September 11, 2019 and preferably sooner. Interviews are expected to occur at the end of September with the process successfully completed in October and the new DOG assuming his/her role as soon as reasonable to transition thereafter.

IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:

"Last Name, First Name - Resume" &

"Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter – Sawgrass CC"

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions, please email Patty Sprankle: patty@kkandw.com

Lead Search Executive:

Kurt D. Kuebler, CCM

Partner, KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

561-747-5213 – Jupiter, FL

kurt@kkandw.com

www.kkandw.com