



WELCOME TO THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN | FARGO COUNTRY CLUB

## NO PRACTICE ROUND, BUT RICKY HEARDEN WON THE 2014 BOBCAT ND OPEN

The tournament champion in the 2014 Bobcat North Dakota Open had never played the Fargo Country Club – not even a practice round. After playing in the Wisconsin State Open the day before, Ricky Hearnden III drove all night to reach Fargo in time for the opening round.

Golf is part of Hearnden's DNA. His father was founding president of the Green Bay Country Club and later founded Horseshoe Bay Golf Club in Door County, Wisconsin. "I got to grow up on world-class golf courses, so I feel very fortunate to be where I am today," says Hearnden, who turned pro in 2013 after graduating from Illinois State.

This year as last, Hearnden is playing in the Dakotas Tour – a 19-event Upper Midwest tour that includes the Fargo Country Club. "I had heard the Fargo Country Club is one of the more difficult courses on the tour. Normally the course is very firm and windy.

Last year we happened to catch the course on a week when it was softer and scores were a little lower."

Lower indeed. Only twice since 1971 has anyone turned in a better total score than Hearnden's tournament-winning 200.

On hand to witness the win were Hearnden's parents. "After the second round they drove overnight from Green Bay to Fargo to see me play the third round. I ended up shooting 65 and winning it," he says.

Despite not seeing the course before the opening round, Hearnden says "I played well, birdied my last four holes in the second round to get into contention, and then played great on my last day. I think I beat everybody in the field by three or four shots in the final round."

After the 2014 Dakotas Tour, Hearnden participated in the PGA Tour Qualifying School. Tuition for Q-School is part of the



prize package for winning the Bobcat ND Open. Last winter he played the Gateway Tour in Phoenix, where he now lives.

Hearnden is playing the Bobcat ND Open again in 2015. "I'm looking forward to getting back to Fargo. Maybe I'll have a chance to play a practice round this year," he quips. •

## THE 2015 BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Tammy Noteboom has been volunteering for the Bobcat North Dakota Open for 31 years. So it may come as no surprise that this year she was named Volunteer of the Year – at least not to anyone but her.

"I was surprised," she says. "I work at The Village, and I'm volunteering on the weekends, but it feels like that's just what I do."

The Village Family Service Center is a Fargo-based charity that helps local children and families improve the quality of their lives, and is the charity that the Bobcat North Dakota Open supports and benefits. It aids more than 80,000 people each year and provides a wide variety of services, from counseling and childcare to adoption and financial counseling.



Tammy first got involved with the Bobcat North Dakota Open in 1984 when she was an intern at The Village. She worked on the golf tournament that whole summer, helping with press releases and sponsors, and sending out letters.

Back then, nothing was electronic and everything was done on paper, so volunteers spent hours and hours typing up pairing sheets on typewriters and tabulating score sheets by hand.

Although Tammy says she is not a great golfer and doesn't golf very often herself, she has become fond of the sport over the years. She now follows professional golf on TV and gets excited when she sees the golfers she knows.

"I love seeing the same people come back year after year," she says. "There are people who have golfed in the tournament every year since I've been involved."

Tammy is currently the director of communications at the Village, "a great place with lots of really good people," she says. •



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## FARGO NATIVES-TURNED-PRO GOLFERS REMINISCE ABOUT THE BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN

Two Fargo natives, who now travel the nation as professional golfers, have fond memories of golfing at Fargo Country Club. They long for the day when they will have enough of a break in their grueling tour schedules to make it back to the Bobcat North Dakota Open for a trip down memory lane – which will hopefully be this year, they say.



**Tom Hoge**

Tom Hoge, 26, turned pro after graduating from Texas Christian University in 2011, the same year he won the Canadian Tour's 2011 Players Cup to gain entry into the PGA Tour's RBC Canadian Open.

Hoge has been golfing since he was just 3 years old and essentially grew up on the Fargo Country Club golf course. He first played in the Bobcat North Dakota Open when he was 12 years old, and he was one of the youngest players in the tournament – if not the youngest.

"I loved being around those older guys, and it was just something I fell in love with," Hoge says. "I have so many good memories out there."

Josh Persons, 31, also has fond memories of his hometown, of attending Fargo North High School, and of playing at the Bobcat North Dakota Open – once when he was very young and a few times as a pro.

"I miss Fargo. I miss going to the lake in the summer," he says.

Persons started playing golf when he was just 4 or 5 years old and went pro in 2007, after graduating from the University of Minnesota. He played in the U.S. Open this June and hopes to play there again and, someday, in the Masters. He loves the game of golf because it always provides a new challenge.

"Things are always changing – both yourself and the conditions," Persons says. "I'd love to play it forever."

What Hoge loves most about golf is that it holds you accountable to no one but yourself.

"There's no one else you can blame or put the excuses on," he says.

Hoge and Persons keep equally hectic schedules and essentially live on the road, although they have homes in Texas and Arizona, respectively.

"Right now, this is the ninth event I've played in a row," Hoge says.

His favorite courses are Pumpkin Ridge and Oakmont CC. Like Persons, Hoge would like to play Augusta National, and he recently qualified for the U.S. Open. He also placed 12th in the FedEx St. Jude Classic in Memphis in June, with a 6-under score of 274, claiming his highest finish during his rookie year on the professional golf tour and earning \$114,000. Then, in July, he made the top five of the Canadian Open with a 13-under score of 66. Hoge's total earnings of \$247,278 this season rank him 166th out of 249 players on the PGA Tour's money list.

"I'm just getting comfortable and have kind of settled into it now," he says. "I'm building confidence as I see that I can compete out there, and I'm really starting to believe in myself. It's really healthy." •



**Josh Persons**

## STEVE HALVERSON: BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN HONORARY CHAIRMAN

Steve Halverson has played an integral role in the Bobcat North Dakota Open since 1985. As a committee member and even chairman for the Bobcat North Dakota Open, he made decisions about all kinds of things that made the tournament what it is today.



For example, he helped decide what entrance fee to charge to make it affordable enough for young golfers but profitable enough for the charity, The Village Family Service Center. He helped determine what prizes to give winners and how to minimize unnecessary expenses while maximizing the overall quality of the event. He also worked on bringing

in concession stands and organizing banquets that would feature a Bobcat "dance," at which a few choreographed Bobcat® machines would weave in and out of formations to music.

"It's like running a business," he says. "You look at your income and expenses and how they changed this year to last year. And in the end, you hope it all works out – and, in golf, you also hope for good weather."

Although this may sound like a full-time job in and of itself, Steve actually did all of this while starting his own company, Heartland Trust Company. Since 1989, Heartland Trust Company has provided innovative and professional financial management and trust services to individuals and businesses. This year the company is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

So what led Steve to volunteer so much of his time to the tournament while acting as the president and owner of his own business?

He loves his hometown of Fargo, he was on the board of The Village Family Service Center and he also had a son who played golf professionally for a couple of years after college, before starting a family and following in his father's footsteps as an investment banker. •

