



WELCOME TO THE 56TH ANNUAL BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN | FARGO COUNTRY CLUB

THREE WINS & COUNTING: LONG-TIME COMPETITOR AND 2019 NORTH DAKOTA OPEN CHAMPION TIM AILES

Tim Ailes is one of the longest-standing players on the Dakotas Tour, and 2019 rounded out his trophy shelf with his third win at the Bobcat North Dakota Open.

Ailes secured wins at the Bobcat North Dakota Open in 2010, 2011 and 2019. His win in 2019 felt a little different, though, as he's now one of the veterans on the course.

"Well, I'm a lot older now," said Ailes, "I'm 47, so it's always nice to get a win in against the younger guys. The young guys now are just so good, so any time you get a win in later in your career, it feels a little sweeter."

Ailes has been playing in the Dakotas Tour on and off since 2005, so he's been able to see the tournament grow and change along with the competition.

"The talent pool seems a lot deeper now than when I first turned pro. Not that they weren't good by any means, it just seems like every kid now hits it 320 yards and straight-putts the ball," said Ailes. "It's good for the sport."

Since last year's tournament, Ailes shifted his focus with the season – prioritizing his role as chauffeur and coach to his two children, ages 9 and 11, along with owning and operating his own roofing company.

"I'm either coaching basketball, going to volleyball practice or baseball practice. It's kept me very busy," said Ailes. "I also own a roofing company, and it's really starting to take off."

However, now that golf season is back in full swing, Ailes is looking forward to returning to the Dakotas Tour and the Bobcat North Dakota Open. Coming off his 2019 win, he's now looking toward a new challenge.

"Now I'm looking toward the PGA senior tour, so I only have two and a half years to get there, and that's my next goal," concluded Ailes.



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BEGINNER'S LUCK LEADS TO LEGENDARY CAREER: DON JOHNSON NAMED 2020 BOBCAT NORTH DAKOTA OPEN HONORARY CHAIRMAN

Mark Johnson, head golf professional at the Fargo Country Club, along with the tournament committee, is honoring the memory of his late father by naming him the 2020 Bobcat North Dakota Open Honorary Chairman.

Donald Johnson made par on the first hole of golf he ever played. Most would say this was just beginner's luck, but if you had the pleasure of knowing Don, you'd say it was just foreshadowing an unforgettable golf career.

The game of golf holds a special place in the hearts of the Johnson family. Even though Don didn't pick up a club until he was 30 years old, you could say he didn't put the clubs back down until 48 years after that. In 1988, he became the boys golf coach at Fargo Shanley High School – his alma mater – and led that team to the state championship in 1998, 2011, 2014 and 2016, before he retired from his role in 2019.



"Don was a natural teacher and loved the game and sharing it with young people," said Mark Johnson. "He coached the girls and boys golf teams from 1996 on, taking over the girls' program after my mother, Carolyn, retired as the girls' coach at Shanley."

Mark also developed a lifelong love for the game, which led him to his role at the Fargo Country Club, where he recruited his father to participate in the Bobcat North Dakota Open during his first year at the club in 2006. Don was a regular face at the event every year until 2018. He didn't blink before jumping right in – recruiting his high school girls' golf team to be scorekeepers over the years. He would have the team walk the course with portable scoreboards on the final day of the tournament, keeping the players and spectators in the loop as the tournament concluded.

"Don also helped us by being a starter on the 10th hole any time John Bennett couldn't make it," said Mark. "Jokingly, he had the gift of being able to speak to anyone, and as a result, the 10th tee was always a little behind those years."

Don Johnson left a remarkable impact on his local golf community that he lived and worked in every day, and on the golfers and volunteers alike participating in the Bobcat North Dakota Open – making him more than deserving of the 2020 Bobcat North Dakota Open Honorary Chairman title. Spend a little extra time on the 10th tee this year chatting with fellow players and volunteers – Don certainly would!

LIFE GAVE HIM LEMONS ... HE PLAYED GOLF: DAN JACKSON NAMED 2020 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Dan Jackson's introduction to the game of golf was a bit different than most. He moved to Fargo in the fall of 1971 and lived with some friends while he attended tech school for a few years. His roommates were avid golfers, whereas Dan never had an interest in the sport. But, they made sure he wasn't completely left out and gave him a job to do.

"They golfed at a little course east of Fargo, and when I got home it was my job to make lemonade for them to drink when they got home," said Jackson.

Jackson quickly became tired of making post-game beverages and decided to take up golf.

"I bought my roommate's clubs, he gave me a few lessons and that's how I got into golfing," said Jackson.

Shortly after the game of golf won him over, he saw a sign posted on the bulletin board at his home course, Edgewood, calling for volunteers at the Bobcat North Dakota Open.

"I thought that would be kind of fun. So I called The Village Family Service Center

and volunteered," said Jackson. "Every year, it's a lot of fun and I look forward to participating and meeting everyone from Bobcat Company. The Fargo Country Club employees are great, and I've always gotten such a warm welcome from the golfers who participate in the tournament."

Fast forward roughly 15 years and Dan is still coming back, serving in whatever capacity they need him. A majority of the time, he's been a ball spotter – but he's also been a courtesy driver and assisted on the driving range.

"I've volunteered for the same thing every year since I've started – I've been a ball spotter. I do that because I enjoy it," said Jackson. "I've almost been hit a few times – it's been close, but I've never been hit by a golf ball. I've had to learn how to dodge them!"

This year you'll find him spotting (and dodging) golf balls – when you see him on the course, be sure to stop by to congratulate him on his 15 years of service!

