

European Organizations Unite to Promote Hickory Golf

3 January 2023 – Leading proponents of hickory golf from several European countries have formed the *Society of Hickory Golfers – Europe* for the purposes of providing support and guidance in promoting growth of the ‘royal and ancient’ game as it was played from its origins.

Meeting at Ducks Inn in Aberlady, Scotland, the group represented hickory golfers from Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. Additional input was received from organisations and individuals from other countries.

The **Society of Hickory Golfers – Europe** (SOHG-EU) will be incorporated as a non-profit organisation in a European country to be named in the near future. Membership in the Society will be open to *organisations* of hickory golfers in European countries and will initially be free of dues. As such, it will start as an ‘organisation of organisations’.

This newly created entity will reside within the umbrella of the Society of Hickory Golfers (SOHG), an organisation with a worldwide mission whose founding members shared strong North American and European ties. The SOHG Board of Directors voted unanimously at their December 2022 meeting to recognize and welcome SOHG-EU.

The governance structure will recognize the importance of hickory golf in Europe in fulfilling the SOHG’s international mission. Representatives of SOHG-Europe, to be determined by SOHG-EU, will serve as at-large members of the SOHG worldwide Board of Directors beginning in January 2023.

The mission of SOHG-Europe will include:

- Promoting and encouraging the playing of hickory golf.
- Providing guidance for organising hickory golf tournaments.
- Providing guidance on wood-shafted equipment standards for tournament play
- Providing a centralised scheduling system for hickory golf tournaments in Europe
- Providing guidance on handicaps for hickory golf tournaments.
- Establish guidelines for SOHG-European Hickory Golf Championships, to possibly include competitions on different formats such as strokeplay, stableford, match, foursome, etc for men and women, amateurs and professionals.

“Hickory golf continues to grow across Europe, from Finland to Spain and from the UK to Poland. We’ve felt that the time has come to gather ourselves together more formally to enhance and promote our collective efforts,” said Christian Juel of the Danish Golf Historical Society.

Jürgen Müller of the Swiss Hickory Golf Association added, “In that sense, forming a more localised governance structure in Europe seemed appropriate. Our purpose is to create structures of support for the benefit of all hickory golfers; it’s really about adding an extra layer of support and coordination to all the great work already being done around the region.”

The SOHG-Europe will be led initially by an interim board of directors. Subsequently, after the organisation is formally established, a Board of Directors will be elected from the member organisations.

The interim board of directors:

President – Christian Juel, Denmark (Danish Golf Historical Society)

Vice-President – Malcolm Duck, Scotland (1457 Society, SOHG Board Member)

Treasurer – Ferd Vrijmoed, The Netherlands (Dutch Hickory Society)

Communications – Jürgen Müller, Switzerland (Swiss Hickory Golf Association)

Secretary – Rick Adams, Switzerland (Swiss Hickory Golf Association, SOHG Secretary)

Liaison to PGA Europe – Heinz-Peter Thül, Germany (Hickory Golf Society Cologne and German Hickory Golf Society)

At-Large Member – Ingvar Ritzén, Sweden (Swedish-Scottish golf tour leader)

At-Large Member – John Anderson, Scotland (British Golf Collectors Society)

Committees comprised of interim board members and additional volunteers will address the drafting of a constitution and by-laws, elections, finances, competitions, equipment, handicaps, and other topics.

Hickory golf organisations interested in participating in SOHG-Europe can contact Juergen.mueller@shpg.ch, malcolm@ducks.co.uk, or rickadams.aero@outlook.com.