

**Golf Association of Ontario, by Jeffrey Reed
Special to Toronto Golf & Travel Show Program**

The Golf Association of Ontario is representative of over 425 member clubs/groups, and over 110,000 individual members across Ontario. While promoting the growth and development of amateur golf, the GAO provides core member services such as the Rules of Golf, handicapping, course rating and player development initiatives. The GAO also conducts Provincial Championships, camps, clinics and seminars across the province.

As part of a continuing effort to engage more golfers into the game off the course, the GAO is announcing return of the GAO Major Picks fantasy golf contest. Built around the four major golf championships taking place in 2010, this contest is free to enter for all participants, and includes the chance to win several exciting prizes.

After registering at the official GAO Major Picks website (www.majorpicks.ca) participants select nine players from each event, and accumulate fantasy dollars based on the performance of their chosen "team." Participants have four separate opportunities to make their picks, as a new roster of players is selected for each event. The site also allows users to set up their own private leagues and invite friends, family and co-workers to join. Several GAO member clubs throughout the province have also set up their own leagues with the opportunity to win other prizes.

In 2009, Peter vanWezel of Lasalle, Ontario won the contest overall top prize – a luxury vacation for two courtesy of Sandals Resorts. Other prizes in 2009 included Sirius Satellite radios, HP mini-laptops and a variety of golf equipment prizes such as Bushnell rangefinders, Callaway golf bags and Titleist ProV1 golf balls.

Launched in April 2009, the contest saw more than 5,500 entrants vying for fantasy dollars in the contest's inaugural year.

The contest is free to enter at www.majorpicks.ca and is open to all residents of Ontario 19 years of age and over. GAO Major Picks has been developed by the Golf Association of Ontario in partnership with Tee to Green Media.

The GOA's online auction is back for 2010. Launching in early April, the auction will contain items such as golf memorabilia, sports experience packages and tee times at public and private clubs throughout Ontario. The items will be available on eBay, and any user with an eBay account is able to bid on the items. New items will be listed every Tuesday and Thursday for the duration of the auction. All proceeds will go to funding grassroots and junior golf programs in Ontario. More than \$34,000 was raised in 2009.

More details will be available at www.gao.ca

The Callaway Golf for Kids program has been developed by the GAO as a true grassroots initiative. It has been designed with fun and safety in mind, and allows children an opportunity to experience and learn a game that helps build character and promotes life-long activity. The Callaway Golf for Kids program components supplement the National Golf in Schools program

facilitated by the Royal Canadian Golf Association (RCGA), as well as offer programming for municipalities to include in their recreation guides and summer programs.

The ultimate goal of the Callaway Golf for Kids program is to help foster strong communities through the inherent values and life skills which form the core of golf: the GAO wants kids to lead a life well lived.

The Callaway Golf for Kids program offers four unique elements which introduce kids to the game of golf: Mr. Knickers & Friends; Learn to Swing; Transition opportunities; and Community Recreation. Learn more about these elements at www.gao.ca.

The 2010 Toronto Golf & Travel Show and the Golf Association of Ontario: strong partners in golf fun, administration and education.