

## Virus Pandemic Changes Everything

### How quickly things change!

When The Latest Bull last arrived in your inbox, all the news revolved around all the exciting events coming up. And why not? Spring was in the offing, a new golf season was dawning and the calendar was busy with several big events on tap, the biggest of which was to be the 16th annual Hootie at Bulls Bay Collegiate Invitational.

But things change. And not just at Bulls Bay.

The coronavirus pandemic has changed our entire world. And while our club has had to alter a lot of the ways it functions and provides services for members, the virus scare and the restrictions that have come with it have not put a stop to golf at Bulls Bay.

That fact alone has provided a welcomed outlet for members who see the golf course as more than simply an alternative to “sheltering” at home. Over the last couple of months, golf has become one of few things that can provide a sense of normalcy... even though the ‘new normal’ isn’t quite what it used to be.

At Bulls Bay, though the golf course has remained open for members’ enjoyment, some concessions have been necessitated in the interest of public health and safety.

First off, the club is now closed on both Monday and Tuesday and no guest play – neither accompanied nor unaccompanied – is allowed. And while walking is encouraged, carts are still available, but are limited to a single rider, unless both players are from the same household.

When arriving at the club, members who plan to ride are asked to load their own bags and, likewise, unload their clubs at the end of the day. This prevents the cart attendants from handling multiple bags in quick succession, thus reducing the chance of cross contamination, making our golf operation safer for both our cart attendants and you, the player. But though our attendants may not be handling your bag these days, don’t forget all the other things they do



Cup Inverted so ball won't drop down

to enhance your club experience – cleaning and sanitizing carts, setting up the range, picking and cleaning range balls, etc. – and that a large part of their income is based on gratuities.

On the course, the most obvious concession made to the virus is on the greens. Cup liners are now inserted upside down to keep players from having to reach into the hole to retrieve their ball. And in light of the coronavirus, it is recommended everyone leave the pin in the hole – something that is completely legal with the rule changes that went into effect last year – to keep pins as free from contact as possible. (Yes, sometimes the ball will bounce off the stick because of its position in the inverted cup liners. But feel free to use your own judgment as to whether your shot would have been holed or not.)

Away from the greens, you’ll notice that bunker rakes have been removed from the course. But each cart

(Continued on page 2)



# Bulls Bay Members 'Lucky' in Face of Virus Restrictions

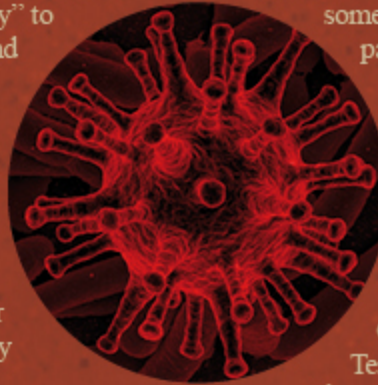
Given the fact that, for much of the last two months, more than half of the golf courses in this country have been closed to play, Bulls Bay members should feel "lucky" to be able to escape sheltering in place orders and enjoy a spectacular golf course.

That's the message Membership Director Lea Anne Brown is sharing with any golf enthusiast – Bulls Bay member or not – in the Lowcountry.

"So many of the courses have been closed," she explains. "We are so fortunate here in our area to be able to go to a golf course and enjoy being outside."

Brown's comments are not without supporting evidence. Since the coronavirus pandemic first gripped our nation, the National Golf Foundation, often working with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, has intensified its surveying and data analysis efforts to provide comprehensive industry information on a weekly basis.

For much of March and April, less than 50 percent of the nation's courses were open for play, according to NGF figures. The "open" number did not rise beyond the midpoint until the latter half of April. Even in late April, some regions still reported far more courses closed than open, as percentages in the New York-Pennsylvania-Delaware region and New England region hovered in the 20 percent range. Fewer than 30 percent of courses in the Pacific region, which includes including California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii and Alaska, were open for play.



In the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions, roughly three-quarters of the area's golf courses have remained open, with some operational restrictions in place, throughout the pandemic. Brown says that much of the credit should go to not only course owners and operators but to area professional organizations, which quickly reacted to the virus scare when news first broke.

"The South Carolina Golf Association in Columbia and the National Golf Course Owners Association, which is based here in Charleston, were fast to react," Brown said. "But our local Charleston chapter, especially (Executive Director) Terry Sedalik, was all over it, right from Day One.

They got ahead of the virus scare and made their case to keep golf courses open. We are very lucky to have such strong representation working for all of us who love golf here in the Charleston area."

To underscore Brown's point, NGF surveys as late as mid-April showed golf courses in 10 states – Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Vermont and Washington – closed by virus mandates imposed by state government. And three other states – California, Hawaii and Texas – were still recommending the closing of courses, but were allowing for pending local rulings to the contrary.

Nationwide, public (or daily-fee) and private courses led the way in opening to play, showing 62 percent and 60 percent opening rates, respectively, as of April 26. On the same date, only 44 percent of the nation's municipal courses were open for play.

## Virus Pandemic (continued)

is equipped with a rake, making it easy for riding players to keep our bunkers maintained properly for players behind them. Walkers are asked to do the best job they can smoothing the sand with their shoe, after playing from a bunker.

At the clubhouse, several changes have been made to allow the club to stay open for play while keeping members and employees safe from the virus. The major operational changes have come in the pro shop and grillroom. Both are essentially closed to normal services, but members can still get pre-made sandwiches and drinks via "drive-thru" service at the door closest to the tenth tee. Do not use the limited clubhouse availability as an excuse to bring in alcoholic beverages purchased outside the club. Doing so could cause the club to lose our ABC license.

Finally, just as it has throughout the sports world, the pandemic has forced the club to cancel or postpone several golf events over much of the past two months. Obviously,

no decisions have or can be made regarding rescheduling anything until virus restrictions are lifted. But currently, the plan is to reschedule only "major" events – basically club championships and member-guests – while lesser events, including Bull Fights and the like, will not be made up.

But while there is no tournament play for the foreseeable future, the amount of casual play remains strong. With that in mind, members are reminded that, with the course currently open only five days a week, it is even more important to call the pro shop early to make your tee times. With many people working reduced schedules, some are finding more time to play golf. So, though the course may be open fewer days a week, play on those days can be even heavier than before the virus.

While the staff continues to do all it can to provide the best service and facilities possible, the patience and co-operation of all the members is very much appreciated as we all deal with an ever-changing environment and a new "normal."





## Black, Maintenance Staff Continuing Improvements

If you're a regular reader of The Latest Bull, you no doubt recall several articles reporting on major improvements made to the golf course in the still-short time Alan Black has held the superintendent's reins. But good news is worth repeating so ...

Actually, we're not 'repeating,' but continuing to update members on all that Black and his maintenance staff is doing to improve the golf experience at Bulls Bay.

Three more major projects are now either complete or, in the case of No. 1, far enough along to report. And since we just mentioned it, we'll start at the first hole.

Over recent weeks, members have been playing an altered first hole, using one of the "short game area" practice greens, while the green normally part of the first hole was being completely rebuilt. The actual construction is now complete and over the next few months, the new green will "grow-in" and be groomed and readied for play.

For those who may not have visited Bulls Bay lately, including many of our national members, here's what's been done at the first hole:

After completely coring out the old green as well as some of the green surround, the area intended to host the new green was significantly raised and a new, larger green was built. In addition to having improved drainage in its subsurface, the new green will feature more contour, designed to provide more challenge and more interest than the original, much flatter putting surface.

Also, the new green has been moved closer to the large, front bunker and farther from the large oak that was near the back-left corner of the former green. The move is designed to bring the front bunker more into play while helping to alleviate some of the shade problem that hindered growing healthy turf grass on the rear portion of the original green.

With the movement away from the tree, a new, smaller bunker has been added at the back of the new green, to the right of the large oak as you view the green from the approach area.

The new green was sprigged in mid-April with the same Mini-Verde ultra-dwarf hybrid Bermuda strain that is on the other greens at Bulls Bay. Grow-in time, as with all things agronomic,

is dependent on weather, with warm nights that warm the sub-soil in the root zone a key to growth. But basically, members can look forward to playing the new green sometime later this summer.

*(Continued on page 5)*



**Temporary First Green**



## Joe Rice Recovering From Fall

Some cutting-edge technology, not to mention the strong fighting spirit of the patient, has Joe Rice well on the way to recovery following a serious horseback riding accident in February.

Immediately after helping his team to victory in the Season Opener, played Feb. 29, Rice decided he'd spend the rest of the afternoon horseback riding at nearby Seewee Farm. He was particularly anxious to "test drive" a newly acquired mount.

Everything was going fine until Rice and the horse went different directions and Rice suffered the consequences. Falling hard on his left side, Rice broke 10 ribs, front and back. But thanks to a new surgical procedure in which titanium strips were used to repair the broken bones, Rice is recuperating from his injuries to the point his doctors have given him the go-ahead to start chipping and putting again.

He's not ready to hit full shots just yet. But Rice wanted members to know he is looking forward to getting back on the golf course very soon. And no doubt looking forward to picking up a few more tournament victories.

Meanwhile, The Latest Bull joins all our members in wishing Joe continued success in his recovery. We all look forward to seeing him back at the club playing.



## In Memoriam



**Francis McGovern II**  
February 14, 2020



**Harry Huge**  
April 27, 2020

## Hole-In-One



Kevin McKinney aced the 7th Hole 4/9/20,  
165 yards with a 7 iron. Witness: Troy Mixon



## GOLF touts Strantz, Bulls Bay

His life ended far too soon, when on June 10th, 2005, just two weeks after his 50th birthday, he lost a long and hard-fought battle with oral cancer. But what his legacy lacks in quantity, it more than makes up for in quality, a fact that is still earning Mike Strantz words of praise in national publications more than a decade after his passing.

Strantz designed just nine golf courses, a drop in the proverbial bucket when compared to the hundreds designed by architectural legends with names like Ross, Jones, Nicklaus and Fazio. And even that small number includes one that some insist on calling a "redesign." But just ask anyone knowledgeable enough to make a before-and-after comparison and they'll tell you that what Mike created at Monterey Peninsula Country Club's Shore Course is an entirely challenge – new layout, new routing, new everything – that just happens to occupy the space that a former, and far inferior, course once filled.

Members at Bulls Bay don't have to be educated or even reminded of the artistic brilliance of Mike Strantz. We experience it every time we step to the first tee. But it's interesting – maybe even gratifying – to see the creator of our home course still being heralded by golf industry experts nearly 15 years after his passing.

That's just what happened recently, when a biographical feature article, expertly crafted by veteran golf writer Alan Shipnuck, appeared in the March issue of GOLF Magazine. The piece, which earned eight full pages in the print version of the publication, is still available online at:

<https://www.golf.com/features/2020/03/03/mike-strantz-artist-golf-course-architect/>

and if you haven't read it already, you'll surely want to go to the link.

But though most members will likely do just that and read the entire feature, The Latest Bull could not go out without relating what Shipnuck and GOLF said about the course both Bulls Bay members and Strantz, himself, called home.



"Bulls Bay, outside of Charleston, is Strantz's most ambitious achievement; a dead-flat tomato field giving rise to a course that climbs as high as 70 feet in spots, with 44 acres of man-made lakes, and on only one occasion do two consecutive holes play to the same point on the compass, making this windblown coastal site an everchanging riddle."

If you haven't already done so, take a minute and go to the Golf.com link above and read all that the magazine had to say about the man another publication, Golfweek, ranked among the "Top 10 Greatest Golf Architects of all Time" in a 2000. The article only reinforces how fortunate we, as Bulls Bay members, are to be able to call one of Strantz's few gems home.

## Maintenance Staff (continued)

Elsewhere on the course, a new tee has been added on the par-4 16th hole. Located between the Maverick and Skull tees, the new tee roughly cuts the former distance between those two tees in half, so it could be used to add some 30-40 yards to the Skull tee distance or reduce the yardage for Maverick tee players by a similar distance, depending on daily course set-up. The new tee is fully grown in and ready for play.

Finally, major improvements have been made to the practice range area, much of which will never see a divot. That's because much of the improvement came in the form of asphalt, not turfgrass.

From the parking lot to the top of the hill, the entire cart path has been repaved with new asphalt. At the same time, path borders have been re-landscaped and, in places, new railroad ties have been installed to better define those borders. Also, additional steps have been installed, providing better and easier access to the upper practice tee areas near the top of the hill.

While it's not on the golf course, per se, the improved practice area sets a different tone for the golf experience, something Black and his crew continue to do every day.





## F&B Staff Adapts to New 'Digs'

Yes, there will be a Mother's Day Brunch this year.

Despite pandemic scares, social distancing and all the rest that continues to reshape our current situation, Bulls Bay will honor the moms in our membership with its traditional brunch on Mother's Day, May 10.

With the clubhouse closed until coronavirus restrictions ease, Bulls Bay's new food truck, the Renegade Chef, will be hosting the year's Mother's Day Brunch, right from the parking lot of the former Liberty Tap Room at 1028 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.

"Since there's no dining room available at the club now, we're taking the food truck there, in the heart of Mount Pleasant, to make it more convenient for everyone," explained Manager Steve Saletan.

The brunch, scheduled from 10-2 o'clock, will feature à la carte ordering – as it is kind of hard to do a buffet out of a food truck – but no less effort is being put into planning menu items sure to delight moms, husbands and kids alike.

At the time of this writing, the menu had not yet been finalized, so watch your email for dining details as well as pricing and plan to visit the Renegade Chef on May 10.

With the virus restrictions changing all our lives over the past couple of months, Bulls Bay's food truck debuted at a near-perfect time. And according to Saletan, the reception the Renegade Chef has received has been "awesome."

Meals-To-Go program, as well as "Beer Can Chicken" days have enjoyed tremendous success, as members are shut out from their favorite restaurants and bars. Both provide delicious – and modestly priced – dining options while the Grill is closed and both programs have been so popular with members that Saletan says the club is considering continuing them on random nights, once the clubhouse is able to re-open.

Check your email for details as to both. But basically, Meals-To-Go is a gourmet dining experience with "drive-thru"

convenience. Meals-To-Go offers one fixed-menu dinner per night, including entrées and coordinating side dishes prepared by Chef Joseph and his talented staff. Each night, there's a different dish and the e-mails give members plenty of lead time so they don't miss their favorites or miss out on a chance to try something new and interesting.

"Beer Can Chickens?" Well, that's just what it says. On selected mornings, the large grill/smoker is loaded with whole chickens, resting atop open cans of beer, and when the birds are grilled to golden perfection, you pick 'em up, take 'em home and enjoy! Sort of like those rotisserie chickens at the local grocery store deli, only better.

If you haven't sampled the Renegade Chef yet – and the truck's only been running for a couple of months now – you can learn all about it on Instagram at @RenegadeChefCHS or on Facebook at RenegadeChefCharleston. On both, you'll find information about scheduled appearances, menu offerings and more.

You can find a link to pre-order your meal at either site. Or you can bypass Instagram and Facebook by going directly to the ordering link on the web at RenegadeChefCHS.square.site. In addition to pre-ordering, you can even pay online so all you have to do when you get to the truck is pick up your meal.

E-mails will always update members as to the Renegade Chef's upcoming schedule. Also, members can schedule the truck for their own private functions, based on availability, by calling Saletan at extension 211. "This coronavirus pandemic has forced us all to change a lot of the ways we live and do things lately," Saletan said. "With our Meals-To-Go, the Beer-Can Chickens and the food truck, we're trying to do things to make dining easier and more enjoyable for our members. Every one of these has been a huge success and I know the entire staff would like to thank our members for their support."





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# Bulls Bay

Circa  
2000

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Reconstruction phase of the First Green.

## Club Directory

Bulls Bay Golf Club . . . . .	881-2223
Golf Shop, Tee Times . . . . .	Ext. 1
Grill Room Reservations . . . . .	Ext. 2
Membership Director . . . . .	Lea Anne Brown . . . . . Ext. 3
General Manager . . . . .	Frank Antonelli . . . . . Ext. 211
Clubhouse Operations Manager. . . . .	Steve Saletan. . . . . Ext. 211
Controller . . . . .	Matt Beecher. . . . . Ext. 213
RARE Real Estate. . . . .	Lea Anne Brown . . . . . Ext. 214
Head Golf Professional . . . . .	Greg Boyette . . . . . Ext. 215
Clubhouse Manager . . . . .	Mac Fairley. . . . . Ext. 216
Director of Instruction . . . . .	Rickey Sullivan . . . . . Ext. 224
Executive Chef. . . . .	Joseph Strickland . . . . . Ext. 228

