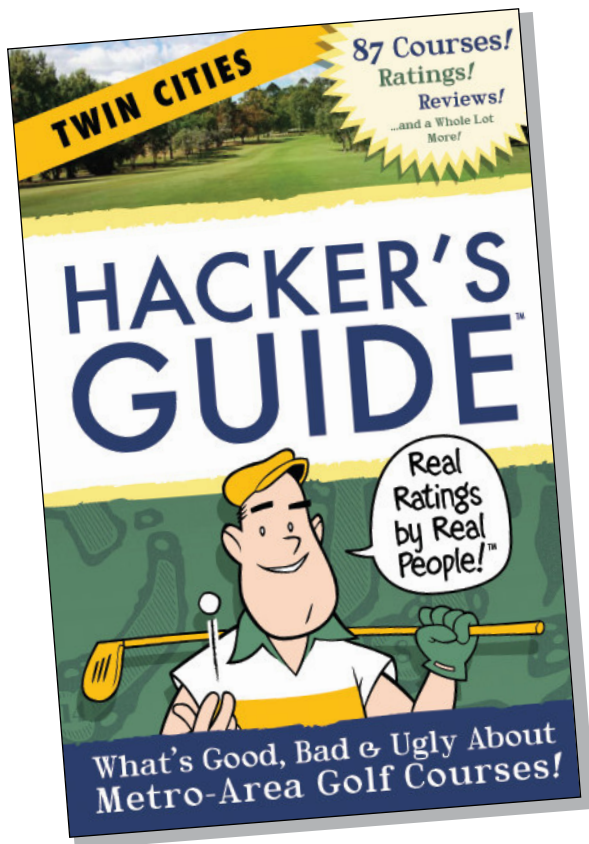


PRESS RELEASE - 1/14/09

Apex Golf Enterprises Introduces the *Hacker's Guide* to Twin Cities Golf Courses at the Minnesota Golf Show



January 14, 2009

Minneapolis, MN -- Golfers in Minnesota finally have a golf course rating guide that they can use to determine which course to play on a beautiful summer weekend. Apex Golf Enterprises, a Minneapolis-based golf company, is set to introduce the first in a planned series of golf course rating guides called the Hacker's Guide.

The first book is called ***Hacker's Guide to Twin Cities Golf Courses*** and is being introduced at the Minnesota Golf Show, the state's largest indoor golf event from February 20-23, 2009. The show, hosted at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, attracts more than 9,000 visitors annually.

The ***Hacker's Guide to Twin Cities Golf Courses*** is a completely new rating system and guidebook that assesses golf courses on forty factors in five unique categories—hospitality, playability, facility, usability and value. These categories look at a golf course from the standpoint of a positive golfing experience for an average golfer, not the difficulty or popularity of a course like other guides.

"I leafed through all of the major golf magazines, watched Golf Channel® and read any course rating guide I could find to learn about courses in my area. I soon realized that unless

it was a review of a top golf course, I couldn't find anything about courses that fit my game or my budget," said founder Bruce Stasch. *"What were available were flowery reviews in the major golf publications that seemed like advertorials, or rating directories that allowed anyone to rate a golf course. I felt I couldn't trust anything that was out there,"* said Stasch.

"What really struck a chord with me was that the largest guide on the market only listed 120 Minnesota golf courses in a state that has 508 courses and consistently ranks either 1st or 2nd in courses per capita. As a result of my frustration with the lack of helpful golf course ratings, I created my own rating system, assembled a team of reviewers we like to call Team Hacker and set out to produce a guide that typical golfers could use."

The *Team Hacker* members visited all of the 18-hole public golf courses in the Twin Cities (87 courses) during the summer/fall of 2008. Each course was reviewed utilizing the same criteria and the scores were computed using a proprietary scoring system, not known to the raters. Reviews are based on how a 20-handicapper (a "hacker") would rate a course, not how a teaching pro or low-handicapper would. These reviews go beyond a ...*"I liked the course..."* or ...*"the greens were nice..."* A form with 40 different scoring factors is given to each reviewer to fill out, but the overall score is determined by a Hacker's Guides proprietary formula. The reviewer is also required to provide a 300-400 word write-up of each course.



Hacker's Guide — Real Ratings by Real People™

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The **Hacker's Guide to Twin Cities Golf Courses** is being distributed by Adventure Publications from Cambridge, Minnesota, the region's leading distributor of local titles, and will be found at major retailers like *Barnes & Noble, Borders, Walgreens, Holiday Stationstores* and online at *Amazon.com* or *www.hackersguides.com*. The guide retails for \$14.95.

At the same time the **Hacker's Guide to Twin Cities Golf Courses** is being introduced, a new golf course recognition program has been instituted called the *2009 Hacker's Favorite Award* and recognizes those local golf courses that finished in the Top Ten in each **Hacker's Guide** category. This year thirty one (31) golf courses out of the eighty-seven (87) Twin Cities courses in the upcoming book were recipients, some more than once. Three of the winners were executive eighteens, demonstrating that a hacker-friendly golf course doesn't have to be a full-length course to be a winner.

Now in the planning process, the next guide will be the **Hacker's Guide to Minnesota & Western Wisconsin Golf Courses** which will include an additional 250 course reviews near cities like Duluth, St. Cloud, Mankato, Brainerd, Rochester, Red Wing, Eau Claire and La Crosse. In addition, there will be bonus content on the history of Minnesota golf and its many prominent golfers, architects and personalities.

Stasch commented, *"We are looking forward to hearing from both golfers and golf courses on what they think of the new guide. We expect it to be a bit hit at the Minnesota Golf Show."*

About the Hacker's Guide

The **Hacker's Guide**™ is the first complete state-by-state golf course rating system since the United States Golf Association established par and slope ratings. Starting with the Twin Cities Metro area as a test market, the **Hacker's Guide** will be rolled out to eventually include a review of the close to 16,000 golf courses nationwide.

About the Hacker's Guide Founder

Bruce Stasch, is the founder of Apex Golf Enterprises and originator of the **Hacker's Guide**™ a rating system which has been created to rate all eighteen-hole public golf courses in the country and eliminate the mystery of choosing a golf course appropriate for a golfer's game. In addition, he operates two e-commerce golf equipment websites; a blog and podcasts about golf and equipment called *Golf Gear News*; and he is a frequent contributor to *Tee Times Minnesota Golf & Living, Worldgolf.com* and *Minnesota Meetings & Events*. He lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with his wife Eve and two dogs.

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