

Nine courses we'd love to see host a PGA Championship

by Joe Passov
Contributing Writer, GOLF MAGAZINE

However this month's experiment at Whistling Straits plays out, the PGA of America deserves credit for taking its main event off the beaten track. But the PGA Championship's upcoming schedule is a list of the usual suspects.

Why not open things up? Here are nine other courses that could add some major jolt. (We'll leave it to the PGA to sort out logistics, parking and the other hard stuff.)

Crystal Downs
Frankfort, Michigan

What would the pros blame for over-par scores on this brilliant little 6,518-yard par 70? With its fiendishly contoured greens on a superbly varied layout by Alister Mackenzie, the place plays like a northern Augusta -- plus thick native rough.

Cypress Point
Pebble Beach, California

The "Sistine Chapel of golf" hosted a PGA Tour event for 44 years, but a PGA is probably out of the question. As Bob Hope said of the club's insularity, "Cypress had a successful membership drive last month -- they drove out 40 members."

Grand National (Links)
Opelika, Alabama

Alabama and the PGA last met at Shoal Creek. Let's bury that painful memory with the best course on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Its sister, the Lake, has hosted LPGA, Nationwide and NCAA events, but the 7,311-yard Links is even better.

Merion
Ardmore, Pennsylvania

This is where Jones clinched his Slam, Hogan hit his 1-iron and Trevino tossed a rubber snake at Nicklaus. Everyone wants to go back to Merion. So do it. It's too short? Bring up the rough, firm up the greens and let's see what happens. If 25-under wins, so be it.

Montauk Downs State Park
Montauk, New York

Bethpage Black had the "People's Open"; let's bring a People's PGA to this Long Island public course known as "the poor man's Shinnecock Hills." The 1968 Robert Trent Jones redesign features many meaty par 4s -- like Bethpage, but here you can taste the sea spray.

Pacific Dunes
Bandon, Oregon

No other U.S. course matches Tom Doak's one-two punch of mind-blowing aesthetics and imaginative design. The back alone has three par 5s and four par 3s. No airport access, no

Holiday Inns, no worries -- as with Sand Hills (below), we'll be glued to the TV.

Sand Hills
Mullen, Nebraska

Many call Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore's prairie masterpiece the best new course of the past 50 years. It's PGA of America CEO Jim Awtrey's fantasy pick. "Sand Hills would be fun," says Awtrey. "It's more than 200 miles from any major airport, but Crenshaw and Coore did a wonderful job."

Shadow Creek
North Las Vegas

Nevada in August? Heat didn't stop previous PGA scorchers at Congressional, Shoal Creek and Southern Hills. Tom Fazio's mirage of Carolina in the desert deserves a major. And we hear there's lots to do in the host city.

Trump National Golf Club
Rancho Palos Verdes, California

Known as Ocean Trails back when its 18th hole fell into the Pacific, resurrected by Donald Trump, this glorious, daily-fee Pete Dye design boasts brilliant ocean views and

exacting shot values. Stick The Donald in the TV booth and broadcast in prime time for huge ratings.

The Real Deal

Our fantasies aside, here's where the PGA Championship is headed in the next few years:



Year	Course	Location
2005	Baltusrol Golf Club (Lower)	Trump National Los Angeles, Springfield, NJ
2006	Medinah Country Club (No. 3)	Medinah, IL
2007	Southern Hills Country Club	Tulsa, OK
2008	Oakland Hills Country Club (South)	Bloomfield Hills, MI
2009	Hazeltine National Golf Club	Chaska, MN
2010	Sahalee Country Club	Redmond, WA

Trump National Los Angeles, 5th hole Ken May/Rolling Greens Photography