

# **Metro St. Louis Seniors Golf Association**

## **2017 Course Survey – Weekly Tournament Courses**

### **Purpose**

Provide the Tournament Committee a sample of members' opinions on weekly tournament start types, start times, and courses to “Keep” or “Reasons to Drop”. Request members' opinions on possible courses to add to the 2018 weekly tournament schedule.

### **Executive Summary – Member Guidance for 2018 Weekly Tournaments**

- Eliminate or Minimize "reverse" shotgun starts
- Start Times
  - Shotgun Starts at 7:30 AM with some at 7:00 AM (mid-summer, June, July, August).
  - Tee Starts at 7:00 AM preference (6:30 AM start still OK especially for mid-summer)
- Target Tee positions Regular (5800 to 6200 yds) and Forward(5200 to 5800 yds).
- Start schedules with all 2017 courses as preference.
- Convenient distance and quality of course are valued higher than cost
- Consider adding “quality” courses

### **Method**

A Google Forms Survey was constructed. Links to the form were posted on the Metro Seniors website, and sent automatically to members who have subscribed to the blog post emails (about 190 members). In addition, a separate email with the internet link was sent to members by Division VPs through their division email list.

Most of the form was click-on radio button responses to speed form completion. Member names and ID number, email address, and approximate handicap were text completion. These were used to measure participation by Division and skill level, and to discourage multiple “votes”. A final “write-in” comments/courses to add was included to expand input and ideas from members.

Course Rating required an input to “Keep” or “Drop” for selected reasons – Too Far, High Cost, et al. Past surveys with no-opinion or N/A selections were heavily skewed to “no opinion or N/A” responses. This limited opinions to keep or drop to a very small, and potentially unrepresentative sample of members.

Past paper based surveys had very even small sample of reasons for the Drop opinion. These were free form, write-in. Not really representative and difficult to analyze.

We also “know” from past surveys and comments to VPs that most members have a favorable opinion of most courses. That was not represented in past surveys. This “forced” selection to Keep or Drop was felt to collect a representative sample of the “favorable” opinions AND the unfavorable.

We had a few respondents who did not complete the survey because they felt that they could not judge one or more courses. Forms that did not have all required selections were not accepted.

### **Sample Size and Representation**

We realize that members' responses were heavily focused on those who use email and internet and our website. However, we know that this includes most members. Virtually all official communications

are now by email, on the Metro Seniors website or the OurGolfStats website.

A small number (about 20) of members who don't use email or internet could not respond.

The survey was available for response for about 2 weeks in late September 2017.

224 completed responses (all required questions completed) were received. This represents about 30% of all members in Divisions 1 – 5. We did have a couple of members who responded twice. These “double” responses had no material effect on the outcome.

Responses were fairly equally distributed across Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 5 and skill levels (handicaps).

Division 4 was under represented, probably in part because they had a separate paper survey. Similar to past paper surveys, it had relatively few participants, and very few specific course responses.

Distribution across members' skill levels was good for Flights A, B, and C. D flight responses were about ½ that of the other skill levels.

Members that responded played more frequently – averaging 18 rounds for the 2017 season. The 224 responses represented about 40% of the rounds played (almost 4000 rounds for the year.)

## Survey Findings

### 2017 Courses to Keep or Drop

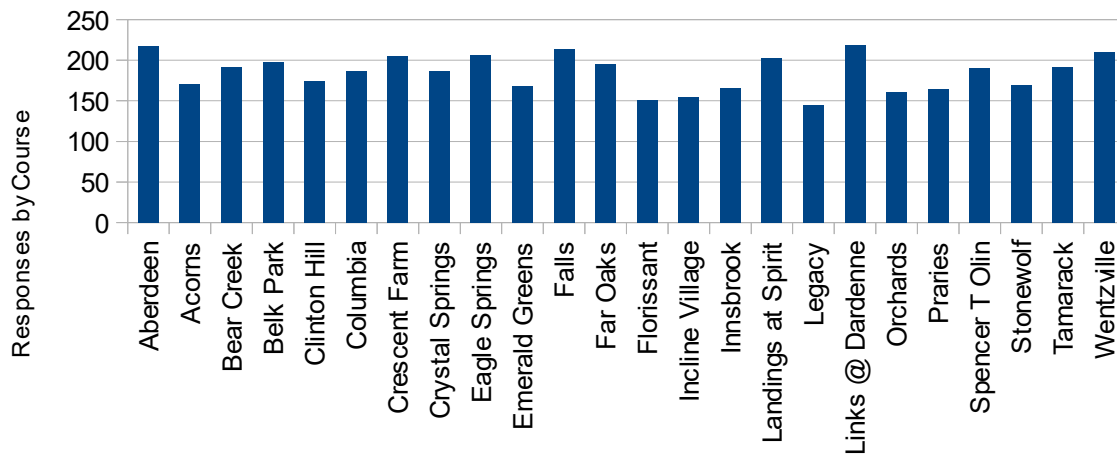
Most members want to keep all of our 2017 courses for 2018.

20 courses received 75% to 95%- Keep rating. Top 5 Keep courses were Aberdeen, Eagle Springs, The Falls, Links of Dardenne, and Wentzville.

The 4 lowest rated courses received between 66% to 73% Keep rating. 3 of these were “new” courses added for 2017. These rain/wet and rain-out date, and course renovation/aeration were known issues. Unfamiliar layout is also suspected as part of “Drop” responses.

### 2017 Course Survey

KEEP Responses by Course of 224 Responses



## Reasons to Drop 2017 Courses

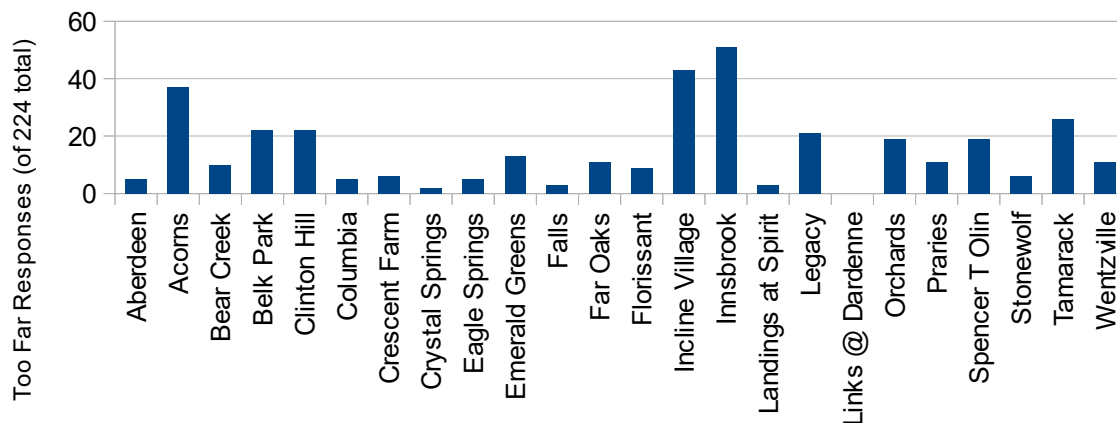
### Too Far

Biggest issue for Drops was Too Far (7% of total Keep/Drop, 44% of all Drop votes). All courses except Links of Dardenne got Too Far votes. Essentially every course is Too Far from someone.

Innsbrook, Incline Village, Acorns and Tamarack received the most Too Far votes. These more or less set the outer boundaries for courses.

## 2017 Course Survey

Courses Too Far Away of 224 Responses

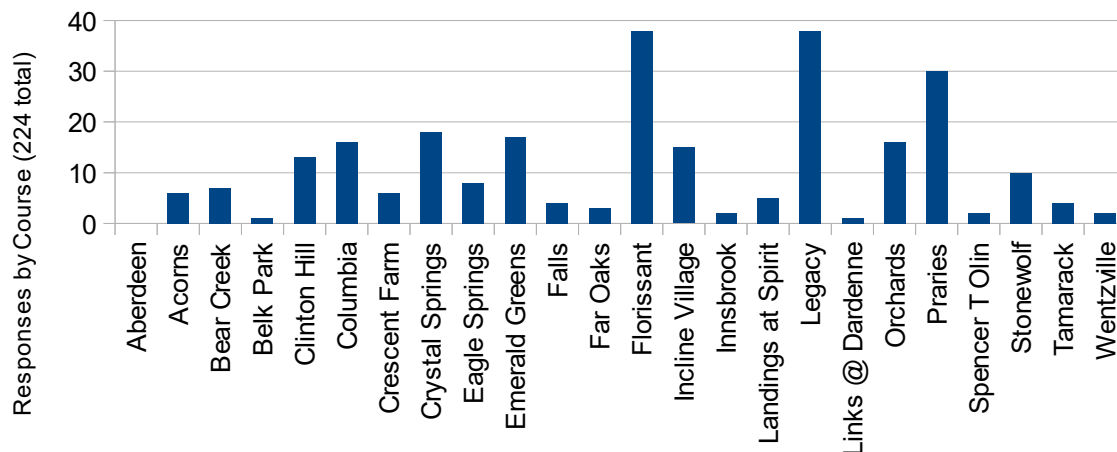


**Bad Design / Maintenance** (5% of total Keep/Drop votes, 28% of all Drop votes)– this was to reflect the overall design and layout of the course and facilities and their maintenance. Design – hilly course, blind shots, distances to holes, poor parking, poor clubhouse. Maintenance – bad cart paths and parking, toilets.

Florissant, Legacy and Prairies had the highest responses for Bad Design/Maintenance.

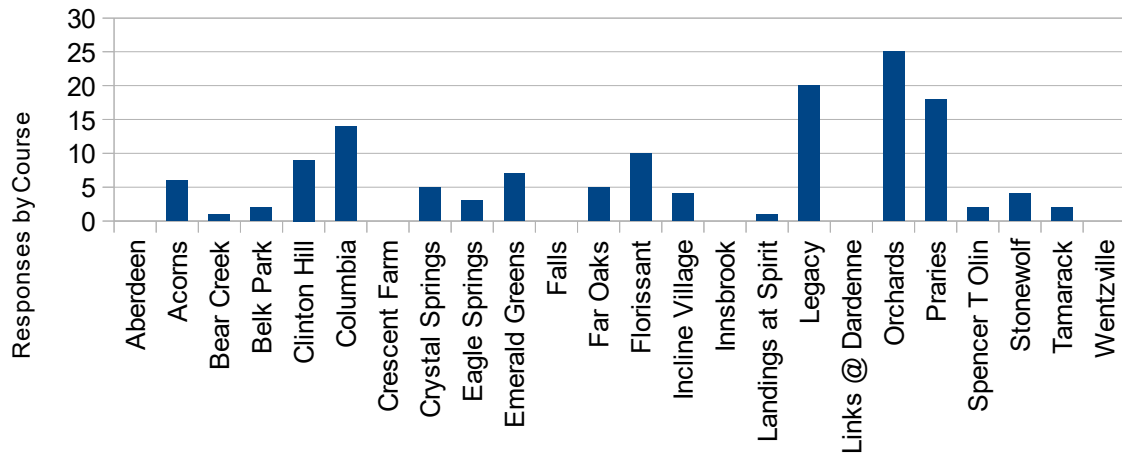
## 2017 Course Survey

Bad Design / Maintenance - of 224 Responses



## 2017 Course Survey

### Bad Fairways, Greens, Sand of 224 Responses



**High Cost** – (1% of total Keep/Drop votes, 4% of total Drop votes). Landing at \$34 and Crystal Springs at \$32 received the most votes, but only 10 and 9 total respectively.

**Distance, and Design/Maintenance** (one element of quality) appear to be significantly more important to members than cost (at least up to about \$35.).

## Courses to Add

Our members seem to like all 2017 courses better than any of the suggested addition possibilities.

Eight courses from recent years or from a variety of suggestions were picked as possible courses to add to our weekly schedule.

None of the suggested courses received as many favorable votes as the lowest rated Keep course from 2017 (62% Add, vs 66% Keep). The highest rated ADD course was Birch Creek (62% ADD). Birch Creek has declined Metro Seniors weekly tournaments

Most notable, **Union Hills (54% Add) and Wolf Hollow (51% Add) were the only other courses with at least 50% Add.**

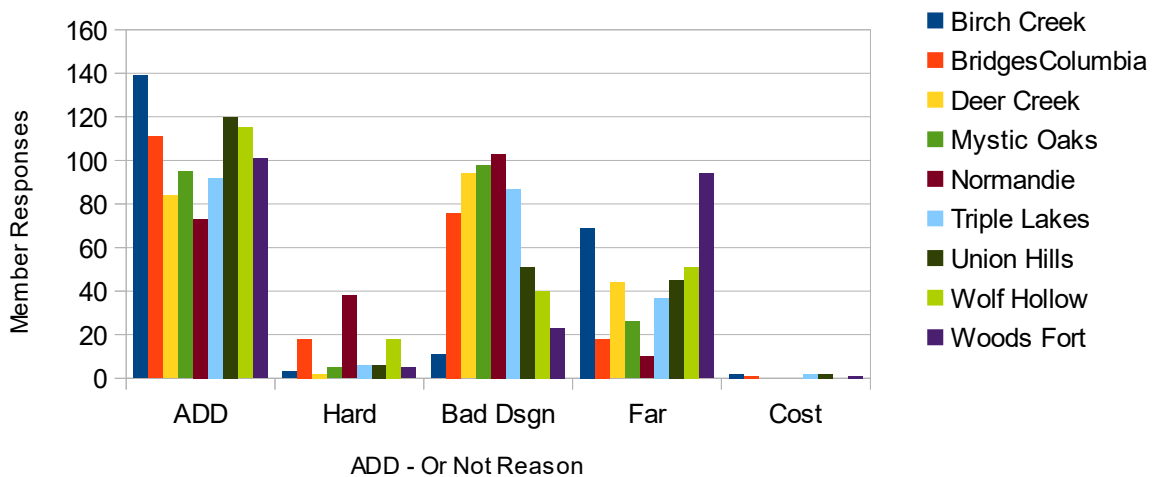
Bad Design/Maintenance (54%) was the main reason to avoid a course. Worst rated courses were Normandie, Mystic Oaks, Deer Creek, and Triple Lakes.

Too Far (36%) was the next highest Don't Add reason. Woods Fort, Birch Creek, Wolf Hollow, Union Hills and Deer Creek seem to set the parameters for distance especially for Missouri courses.

Notably, High Cost received less than 1% of possible votes.

## 2017 Member Survey

### Possible 218 Add Courses



## Write-In Courses to Add

94 respondents made suggestions or comments about courses. A common theme was that we should add some higher "quality" courses even if cost was higher. "Quality" courses frequently mentioned included:

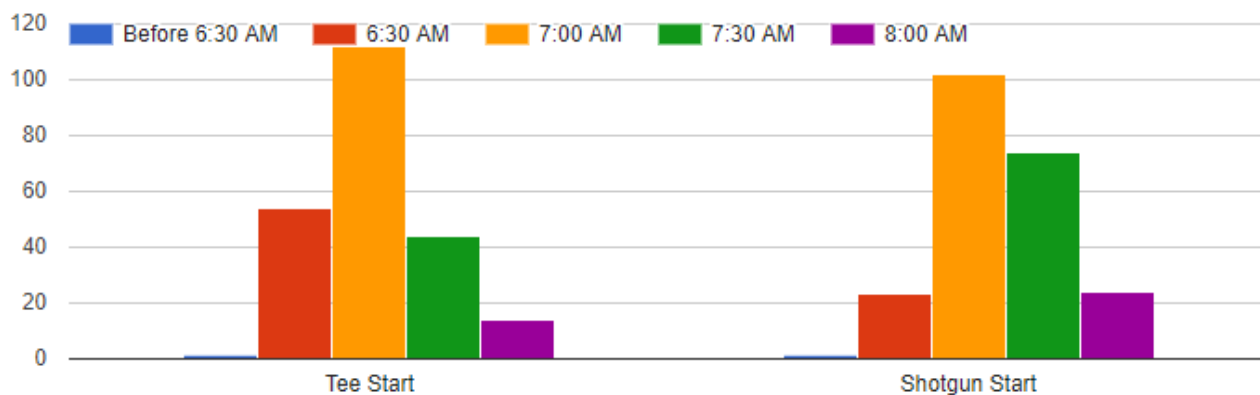
Annbriar  
 Gateway National  
 Lockhaven  
 Tapawingo National  
 Missouri Bluffs

Location also appears obvious as a selection key. Most courses listed were more centrally located in the metro area, between Mo Bluffs and Gateway National (with exception of Annbriar and Lockhaven).

### Tee Times

There is a slight preference for more Tee starts (180) over Regular Shotgun Starts (160). There is a strong preference to minimize Reverse Shotgun starts (150 less or none) as they are currently set up. Friday Divisions (1 & 2) in 2017 had Reverse SG for up to 6 courses. Thursday Divisions had only one Reverse Shotgun - Bear Creek.

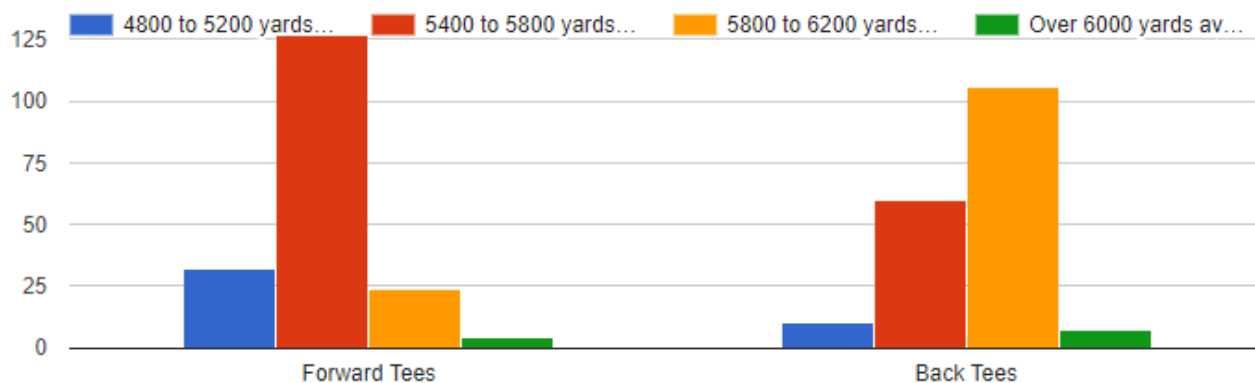
### What Start Time do you prefer?



### Tee Positions

Members seem to like tee positions for Forward and Back tees as they were set for 2017. Forward Tees at 5400 to 5800 yards was a strong preference. Back Tees at 5800 to 6200 yards was also a strong preference. About 20% of members had a preference for still shorter tee setup.

### What Men's Tee Positions do you prefer?



### Start Types

Tee Starts have a strong preference for 6:30 and 7:00 AM. Shotgun Starts have a similar preference for 7:00 and 7:30. 8:00 AM starts are clearly not a preference.

Which Start Type do you prefer?

