



US Kids Golf Venice Open retains GEO Certified® Tournament status – Organisers maintain ‘green momentum’ for 2020 edition of the event



Last year's US Kids Golf Venice Open has once again been recognised as one of the world's most environmentally and socially responsibly golf tournaments, having retained certification from the non-profit GEO Foundation.

The same core team of tournament organisers that have made sustainability a central priority for the event continued to deliver against the international criteria as well as responding well to the annual Continual Improvement Points that were set last year.

For the 2020 edition of the event, the action plan continues to deliver previous best practices plus push the boundaries on new projects and innovations. As ever, the plan is comprehensive in the range of environmental and social issues it addresses, and the scope of application across venue and accommodation; staging activities; player and family engagement; legacy projects and community outreach. This is particularly commendable given the tremendous disruption and uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 health crisis.

Dan Van Horn, Founder and Chief Executive of the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation said: "This is great news, and demonstrates that we have an ongoing commitment to doing things in the right way – for the local communities and environments that our tournaments touch. This year has been particularly challenging, but we now look forward to staging a safe, environmentally friendly event in 2020, and one that also gives the community and families something to look forward to after many months of concern."

Paolo Casati, President of Golf della Montecchia and of PlayGolf54 Group said: "If anything, environmental issues have gained even greater importance and visibility since last year, which explains why we are trying so hard to keep coming up with new ideas and solutions. All of the team work incredibly hard and passionately on this, and I'm delighted to see them get the recognition they deserve."

We will again be focused on this for the 2020 Venice Open edition, and with great attention to all health regulations, which we will apply with rigour to guarantee safety and health for all the families involved."

The initiative was led by the voluntary leadership of the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation and Golf della Montecchia, with strong support from the other two host venues – Golf Club Frassanelle and Galzignano Terme Spa & Golf Resort. The event is also backed by the PGAs of Europe.

Jonathan Smith, Founder and Executive Director, GEO Foundation added: "Our congratulations again to everyone involved at the Venice Open. It would be easy to become complacent, and there is every reason to turn attention to other pressing human health issues – but the organisers have continued to ask questions and explore how they can do things better – and given the underlying significance of some of the issues they are addressing, this is hugely commendable."

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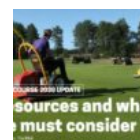


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Venues:

- Golf della Montecchia GEO Certified® for 7 years and winner of IAGTO Sustainability Award
- Golf Club Frassanelle and Galzignano Terme are in OnCourse® sustainability program and working towards GEO Certified®
- All courses are pioneering organic management of new, warm-season grasses; and studying sustainable turf, biodiversity and water conservation, and reduced carbon footprint in partnership with NGOs and universities.

Event:

- Players, caddies and families completed an environmental questionnaire and environmental information family orientation packs
- Sustainable bamboo golf tees from Ocean Tee were supplied to players
- Sustainability themed signage across all venues and hotels
- Hotels and restaurants committed to the tournament's sustainability policy
- Recovery of all recyclable materials and water refill stations
- Forty bicycles were provided to families by the JSH Group hotels
- Local sourcing with wine, meat, dairy and most of the vegetables from local farmlands (supplier Nautilus Fish and Wine has very comprehensive sustainability policy, more on their website)
- Local schools helped organise and stage the tournament, cooperation with local museums to promote the area's history and culture, and fundraising for local charity, 'Team for Children'.

About GEO Foundation

GEO Foundation is the international not-for-profit dedicated to advancing sustainability in and through golf. Its goal is to work collaboratively to help the sport embrace environmental and social issues and become widely acclaimed for its role in fostering nature, conserving resources and building healthy communities. GEO assures the OnCourse® programmes for grassroots golf facilities, new developments and tournaments, each of which can lead to the internationally accredited, endorsed and independently verified GEO Certified® label.

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