

Member Focused Learning

This is the second member focus article for the 2026 LPGA Amateurs Sacramento Education Committee. May we each take a nugget of information that helps our game, our joy and our relationships this year. See previous MFL articles on the chapter site education page.

From 156 to Champion: The Remarkable Golf Journey of Vicki Philpott

By Jerilyn Paik

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When Vicki Philpott teed it up in the 2026 NCGA Super Senior Championship, she wasn't thinking about trophies or titles. She was simply focused on the next shot. That mindset paid off. Vicki captured the championship and added another remarkable chapter to a golf journey that began decades ago with a set of clubs, a few coworkers, and what she calls "love at first play." I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Vicki over brunch to talk about golf, leadership, friendship, and the lessons she's learned along the way.

From a Score of 156 to Champion

Like many golfers, Vicki didn't discover the game as a child. An avid athlete who enjoyed everything from softball and soccer to skiing and tennis, she was introduced to golf in her twenties by coworkers who played after work.

"It was love at first play," she recalls.

Her early results, however, gave little hint of future championships.

"I played my first official tournament in 1987 and shot 156," she says with a laugh.

"Guess who got the booby prize?"

Rather than discouraging her, that experience fueled her determination. "That just made me more determined to get better at this game that I loved."

Finding a Home in LPGA Amateurs

Although she played regularly for years, Vicki says her game took a major leap forward after joining EWGA (Executive Women's Golf Association, now LPGA Amateurs) in 2013.

"I joined because I wanted to play more golf and meet more golfers who would become friends."

The chapter's instructional programs, organized play, and welcoming community helped sharpen her skills and deepen her passion for the game.

Leading Through Unprecedented Times

Vicki never imagined herself serving on the Board, let alone becoming Chapter President. Yet after serving in several volunteer roles, she was elected President in 2020 and again in 2021.

The timing could not have been more challenging.

With the COVID pandemic disrupting normal activities, Vicki and her Board had to rethink how members connected and participated.

"COVID made it challenging because we couldn't do the things we'd always done," she says. "But it also gave us the opportunity to reimagine what we did and how we did it."

The chapter introduced creative alternatives, including tailgate-style gatherings after golf, drive-by kickoffs, and Zoom events that kept members connected during a difficult period.

Looking back, Vicki smiles: "Some of it was actually fun."

The Mindset of a Champion

When asked what led to her NCGA Super Senior Championship, Vicki's answer may surprise some golfers.

"It wasn't a swing thought or a secret practice routine. It was perspective"

"The other day I heard someone say, 'Sometimes you're the windshield and sometimes you're the bug.' That day, I guess I was the windshield."

Vicki credits her success to staying calm, accepting imperfect shots and immediately turning her attention to the next opportunity.

"Once the shot was done, I moved on and focused on the shot that was coming next."

What New Golfers Really Need

As a mentor, Vicki spends considerable time helping newer players gain confidence and enjoy the game. The most common request she hears?

"I want to be more consistent."

"PLAY."

For Vicki, improvement comes from getting out on the course, learning through experience, and maintaining a positive outlook. "I remind myself that golf is just a game. We don't rely on it to make our living. We play to have fun."

Mentoring, she explains, is not about swing mechanics. Mentors help players learn etiquette, understand the Rules of Golf, establish handicaps, and develop confidence.

"Our goal is to help players feel comfortable and confidence" at any level.

Advice for Tournament Golfers

For members preparing for tournament competition, Vicki offers a few simple but powerful reminders:

- Never give up.
- Play your game, not your opponent's.
- Relax—it's only a game.
- Focus on the next shot.

And when it comes to team events?

"It's not just about handicaps and abilities. There has to be cohesiveness, and everyone needs to have the same objective."

A Champion On and Off the Course

Whether Vicki is mentoring new golfers, volunteering her time, leading our organization, or competing at the highest level, Vicki embodies the values that make our golf community special.

Her final piece of advice may be the most important of all: "Focus on fun and friendship. Golf is just a game."

Thank you, Vicki, for your leadership, mentorship, friendship, and dedication to growing the game. You are truly a champion in every sense of the word.

Editor's Note: The Executive Women's Golf Association (EWGA), founded by Nancy Oliver in 1991, became LPGA Amateurs in 2018.