

Ocean Reef Golf Club in Key Largo, FL
Two Courses, Great Tradition, and a Scent of Vanilla
By Tim Cotroneo



For the golf purist, playing a course whose pro hails from Scotland has a certain mystical quality to it. Enter the office of Scott Kirkwood, the Director of Golf office at the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, FL, and one's golf history radar reads "jackpot"

Kirkwood, a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, has a family tree that drips with golfing lineage. Kirkwood's pro shop office, located next to Ocean Reef's Dolphin Course, is a virtual shrine to the sport's long-time international popularity. In addition to photos revealing his Great Great Grandfather positioned in front of his home course in Gullane, Scotland, Kirkwood's office wall also reveals a samurai sword trophy from Scott's tenure as a pro in Saudi Arabia. Once Kirkwood learns that a visitor lives and breathes golf, he'll even share stories from his college playing days in Tennessee.

Kirkwood's international resume has served him well while working with Ocean Reef's far-flung membership. Whether he's giving a lesson using the club's state-of-the-art technology, coordinating a monthly tournament with attendees flying in from all over the globe, or leading a member outing back in his native Scotland, Kirkwood's smiling presence serves as the face of an operation with golf amenities second to none and a five-star member feedback rating.

Dolphin and Hammock

Choosing the right name for a golf course is an art. The namesakes of the two layouts found within Ocean Reef Club's 2,500 acres are as diverse as the challenges they present.

The grinning image of the mammal representing the Dolphin Course matches nicely with a golfer's expression once he or she realizes the course's generous fairways can be kind to one's scorecard. The already lush tee box, fairway, and green conditions of the Dolphin layout were

enhanced in 2012 with new Celebration Bermuda grass planted throughout.



Contrary to its title, the Hammock Golf Course is not the kind of track you'll approach lying down. The name recognizes the hardwood hammock trees lining many of the golf holes. Short and very tight, the Hammock is as secluded as the Dolphin is spacious. During the playing of 18 peaceful holes, one feels wrapped in the solitude of Hammock's tranquil environment.

Electricity in the Air



On most days, the practice area just outside the Ocean Reef Clubhouse is alive with electricity. Kirkwood's team is continuously orchestrating events that not only create excitement on the Ocean Reef property but beyond to the U.S. and Canadian members eagerly anticipating their next Florida holiday.

Over the years, Ocean Reef's pristine golf grounds have played host to revered names like Nicklaus, Snead, Sarazen, and Toski. The tournaments of today feature thought-provoking themes like The Bag Open, The Grand Masters, The Canadian Invitational, and The Triple Golf Classic.

Cart Paradise

The signature form of transportation throughout the Ocean Reef Club's sprawling acreage is the golf cart. Many of the members choose to customize this friendly form of getting to and from the 175-slip marina, the club's private landing strip, or dining at one of the nine restaurants found on the property. The Ocean Reef golf clubhouse is mission control for gaining access to one of the 5,000 golf carts cruising throughout this South Florida property surrounded on three sides by water.

Inside Ocean Reef's golf pro shop is the latest in Garia golf cart technology. With a base model starting at \$25,000, Garia's can be converted to resemble a Porsche, Rolls Royce, or Aston Martin automobile. The marketing-conscious Kirkwood's idea to house a luxurious Garia in the pro shop is just another example of why each new day brings something fresh for Ocean Reef members and guests.

Merchandising Fun at Ocean Reef Club



Kirkwood was recently named 2013 South Florida PGA Merchandiser of the Year. Whether he's placed a reclining mannequin on a hammock in the pro shop, positioned golf shirts so Ocean Reef's iconic logo is visible, or he's added a hint of anxiety-reducing vanilla scent to his clubhouse environment, Kirkwood has a rather simple answer for why his club sings as smoothly as a Scottish tenor.

"One of the reasons golfers love playing the Dolphin Course is because of its driver-friendly fairways. The therapeutic vanilla aroma we plug in the pro shop is to help our golfers relax. Our team is always striving to make members and guests feel cared for. Ultimately, what's really important is that our golfers have fun," Kirkwood said.

From Scotland to Key Largo

Whether you're playing golf in Edinburgh, Saudi Arabia, or the Florida Keys, what keeps you coming back is the joy for the game. Scott Kirkwood's Great Great Grandfather would be proud to see that the sport he helped create hundreds of years ago is alive and well at the Ocean Club Resort in Key Largo.

www.oceanreef.com

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