



STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

## INCOMING

Stouffville Clipper Ben Adolina releases a shot as Alex Bruscano of the Richmond Hill Stars defends during a AA minor atom hockey game at the Clippers Sports Complex in Stouffville Saturday. Richmond Hill won 6-1.

# Golfer took long route to professional card

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA  
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Steve Halse believes age is just a number.

Being a spry 43 years old, it hasn't deterred the Stouffville resident from setting out and accomplishing things in his life.

Teaching lessons at Timber Creek Golf and doing golf club repair work out of his home through his company, PT Golf, and serving as an assistant golf pro at Mill Run Golf Club in Uxbridge, Halse recently reached a milestone in his profession by earning his CPGA card.

But it certainly wasn't an easy proposition.

To get reach that objective, participants have to play two rounds of golf on a designated course and record a total score of under 154.

Halse tried to obtain his card on two occasions earlier this year only to come up just one stroke short each time out.

Electing to give it one last try when he took to the Fanshawe Quarry Golf Club fairways in London last month, Halse succeeded after carding a 74 on the first day and following that with a 78.

That enabled him to get his card by two strokes.

"At 43 years of age, a 36-hole event proved to be a struggle for me both physically and mentally," he said. "But it's been quite a ride and, in terms of becoming a member of the PGA of Canada, I guess you could say I'm a late bloomer."

While Halse earned his card at a rather late age, the game of golf has long been a big part of his life. When he was quite young, he played the game with his 70-year-old grandmother on a nine-hole course at the family cottage.

"In my teens, I worked at Sleepy Hollow in the back shop and I had aspirations of becoming a golf pro," he said. "But life took me in a different direction and I just settled for playing golf as a hobby."

The urge to take the game on a more serious note resurfaced in the mid-1990s while Halse was raising a family.

As household finances were tight at that time and he could not afford to purchase a new set of clubs, Halse developed an interest in building clubs and repairing existing ones while working out of his garage.

As word spread about his craftsmanship, Halse parlayed it into a nice part-time business.

Through his business in fitting clubs for customers, Halse thought a natural progression for him would be to offer golf lessons.

Attending a teaching certification course in 1999 in which he became a member of the Canadian Golf Teachers Federation, Halse began offering lessons that year at Timber Creek.

"The next thing I knew was that I wanted a full-time career in golf," he said.

Halse then took the next step in April 2001 by renting space on Ringwood Drive and opening PT Golf.

"The 'PT' stands for Personal Tour as I was focused on club fitting and teaching," he said.

For the next five years, Halse gave lessons at Timber Creek and ran junior golf camps at the Ninth Line facility while continuing to make custom clubs and repairing existing ones at his Ringwood Drive shop.

"Those years were a lot of fun," he said. "I made some great friends there and helped a lot of people with their golf games."

After numerous interactions with manufacturers in the business, Halse was presented with an opportunity to become a sales agent for a major golf company in Canada in early 2006.

However, it came with a catch, as the job would force him to move to Ottawa.

Weighing his options with his wife Karen, Halse decided that it was time go on an adventure.

*"But it's been quite a ride and, in terms of becoming a member of the PGA of Canada, I guess you could say I'm a late bloomer."*

Closing PT Golf, Halse and his family relocated to the nation's capital, where he served as a golf rep for the next five years before accepting a position with another major golf manufacturer as a rep in the GTA in 2011.

That, however, came to an end in March when the company downsized.

Fortunately for Halse, it did not take him too long to find work – as an assistant professional at Mill Run in April.

As the season moved along, Halse found he really enjoyed the position and the next natural progression was to get his card.

With his card now in hand, Halse was quick to thank the support he's received through the years from his family members, who also include son Brady and daughter Lauren.

"They've been the biggest cheerleaders and have always been supportive," he said.

Having his card, Halse said, will open the door for other ventures in his profession down the road.

He's already begun to map out his future on and off the links.

"I will take the next couple of seasons to attain my Class A designation and move towards a head pro position in the future," he said. "I'll also compete as a professional in a few CPGA events next season."

"The game of golf has been very good to me and I love all aspects of it. I've met a ton of great people and made many friends along the way."

"Becoming a member of the PGA of Canada is something I'm very proud of."

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@ 7:30 pm  
SoccerCity

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(Please note AGM on  
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