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Sheridan men's club champion Gugino gets better with age



Joe Gugino plays five rounds of golf a week, just one of the reasons his game has improved with

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By **Milt Northrop** / News Sports Reporter

on August 13, 2013 - 11:45 PM

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At an age where you might expect your golf game to diminish, Joe Gugino Sr. seems to be getting better.

Consider this:

A year ago, Gugino won the Class A championship of the Sheridan Park Men's Golf Club, shooting 234 for the 54-hole tournament at the par-71 layout.

This year, the 60-year-old Gugino shot 18 strokes better, playing back from the blue tees, and won his first Class AA club championship, shooting 75 in the final round last Saturday after rounds of 70 and 71 the previous two weekends.

Amazing what a few lessons and an almost year-round diet of five golf rounds a week will do.

How is he defying the calendar?

"I guess it's because I'm playing more, I'll be 61 on Oct. 1," said Gugino, who is partners with his son, Joe Jr., in a home improvement business.

"My son has kind of taken over the business so I get to play more and I just got better," he said.

Gugino is no Johnny-come-lately. He won two Class B club championships (1991 and 1992) but his game seemed to go into the mid-life stall after that.

"Then I took a few lessons from Gary Battistoni," Gugino said. "What was holding me back was my driver. He straightened me out."

Two years ago, Gugino's game improved to where he had reached the Class AA level with a 3-handicap, but he slumped last season and dropped back to the Class A.

More practice time and lots of rounds brought him back to a 3-handicap this year. Trying to stay with the younger golfers at the Class AA level "makes you try a little harder, too," he points out.

Gugino says he plays at least five rounds a week locally. In the late fall and winter, he makes golf trips to Florida until it begins to warm up here again.

"I play in all kinds of weather," Gugino said. "I'm one of those nuts who goes out in early spring when it's 40 degrees and the wind's blowing 30 miles an hour."

Gugino is very active at Sheridan, where he was president of the men's club in 2008 and served seven years on the board of directors. His son, Joe Jr., is treasurer of the men's golf club now.

Joe and Joe Jr. teamed up earlier this summer to win the Sheridan Member-Member Invitation. Joe Sr. was second to Ronnie Pellegrino in the club Senior Championship.

Winning the club Class AA title put Gugino in rare company. The only older champion in the

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history of the club was the legendary Charlie Card, who was 65 in 2003 when he won the third of his three championships and 61 in 1999 when he won his second.

Noteworthy feats that give Joe Gugino something to shoot for.

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