



meet the pro Ashen Anania

Interviewed by: Delaney Cha

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING GOLF?

About 20 years. I did not start playing golf in earnest until after high school. While I had been around the game for much of my life, it was not until college that it became a competitive pastime for me.

WHAT MADE YOU INTERESTED IN THE SPORT/WHO INFLUENCED YOU?

I love everything about the game of golf; its history, what it provides to this world and our country, the connections it creates, and the lives it can provide. But what interested me in the sport at first was the competition. I have always liked to compete and golf was no different. I raced motocross for much of my youth and I have always enjoyed racing. I found golf to be similar. Golf is simply a race timed by the amount of strokes needed to complete the hole. My stepfather was definitely my main influencer in the game. We connected over a love of golf and our relationship grew out of that. That is what golf is all about and why it is the greatest game in the world. I am reminded of that every time I watch a father and son walk down the first hole at Prospect Bay and I cannot wait to do it with my son.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COURSE THAT YOU'VE PLAYED (BESIDES YOURS)?

TPC Sawgrass. A group of members from Prospect Bay took me down to Sawgrass a few years ago and it was a tremendous experience. The golf course is so memorable and fun to play, but very difficult at the same time. #17 is in the back of your mind the entire time you are on the course, but the really scary hole is #18. I don't think #18 gets mentioned enough because the tour pros make it look so easy, but it might be the hardest par 4 I have ever played.

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR PGA CERTIFICATION?

After graduating from the University of Baltimore I began to think seriously about a career in golf and hospitality. I did my research on how to get into the golf business and found Billy Dillon, the then-PGM director at UMES. I was hesitant to go back to school, but I liked Billy so much and the PGM program was just getting off the ground there so I went for it. I enjoyed my time at UMES and established some of the most meaningful relationships of my life. What is helpful about the university PGM programs are the internships. They allow aspiring pros to get their foot in the door at great courses and to grow their network of experienced PGA professionals.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN THE SPORT?

I think we need to engage the entire family in the game. Golf is the perfect game to be enjoyed by the entire family. So much of our focus in the golf business is centered on enhancing the experience of a round of golf, but I think we need to focus more on bringing people and families together as well. One of the most rewarding parts of my job at Prospect Bay is getting to see a family enjoying a day on the golf course together.

WHAT'S YOUR VISION FOR YOUR CLUB OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS?

We have a few golf course improvements and capital projects in the works over the next couple of years and we are excited about those for sure. My vision for the club is to continue to grow and to continue to create a fun, inviting, and inclusive environment that my members are proud to be a part of. I love Prospect Bay because they love Prospect Bay. It is a special club that I feel lucky to be a part of and I can't wait to see what the future holds for us.



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WHAT'S THE MOST IMPACTFUL LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED IN THE INDUSTRY?

An old pro once told me that all we are as golf professionals are hospitality managers. He said that everything else we need to do, we can do when the sun goes down; golf is not a business, it's a game. When I think about my role as a Head Golf Professional with this perspective, it helps to simplify things and removes the stress from almost any situation. It has always stuck with me.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FUTURE PGM STUDENTS/APPRENTICES?

I would tell them to work hard, to get out of their comfort zone and try new things, not be afraid to establish meaningful relationships with their members and to take pride in the role they play in the community. I would also encourage them to find a mentor in the business that they enjoy working for and who they trust. Having someone in your corner willing to teach you and support your development is tremendously helpful in your career and life in general.



Ashen, his wife Shelby, and their children

