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World Long-Drive Champion to Launch Golf School At Poppy Ridge Driving Range

Poppy Ridge announced today that it has expanded its golf instruction capabilities through its agreement with Eric Jones, Senior World Long Drive Champion. Jones will provide instruction, develop golf school curriculum, conduct clinics, stage exhibitions and host other instructional activities at the Poppy Ridge Golf Course Driving Range.

Jones, who won the 2003 RE/MAX Senior World Long Drive Championship and was the 2004 Long Drivers of America (LDA) Tour Rookie of the Year, played college golf at Stanford University and was an assistant coach there in the early 1990s. He has been providing golf instruction since 1992 and is completing a Master's degree in Sports Psychology at JFK University.

"We are thrilled to have someone of Eric's caliber providing a range of services at Poppy Ridge's driving range," said general manager and PGA member Bob Higgins. "This enables us to provide even more services to our NCGA members and guests and gives golfers of all levels another reason to visit our facility."

Jones will work from the range to provide:

- Daily instruction
- Specialized multi-day instruction (including specialized instruction from some of the nation's best instructors and sports psychologists) for all handicap ranges, juniors, women, tournament players and beginners.
- Corporate programs and executive outings
- Clinics and exhibitions
- Video and swing analysis services
- Club fitting and repair

"One of Eric's strengths is his ability to combine swing mechanics and course management with his training in sports psychology," said Brad Braden, head professional at Poppy Ridge Golf Course and PGA member. "This unique blend of skills enables Eric to pull from a variety of sources to help students improve their game. When you add his enthusiasm and passion for teaching you can understand why students really enjoy working with him."

“This is a fantastic facility and I’m honored to be affiliated with Poppy Ridge and the NCGA.” said Jones. “This is one of the very few facilities where students can practice on a grass range and then take what they learn right out onto a top-notch course. That’s a huge advantage for students, and I am looking forward to helping Poppy Ridge turn their vision of the creation of a superior learning environment into a reality.”

Jones will be developing instruction for The Seaver Golf Academy at Poppy Ridge Driving Range -- named for the Charlie Seaver, past president of the Northern California Golf Association (NCGA). Seaver was Jones’s grandfather and mentor and one of the finest amateur golfers in the country in the 1930s. He was a member of the 1932 Walker Cup team, medalist at the 1931 United States Amateur Championship and is one of only two players in to hold the Northern, Southern, and California State Championship titles simultaneously. This past October the NCGA dedicated the entry hall of its newly remodeled corporate headquarters in Pebble Beach to the memory of Mr. Seaver.

Poppy Ridge Golf Course (opened in 1996) is the second NCGA Member Course (the first is Poppy Hills in Pebble Beach, CA). Located in the wine country of Livermore, the 27-hole Scottish Heathland course consists of three nines aptly named Chardonnay, Zinfandel and Merlot. Rees Jones, 1995 Golf Digest Architect of the Year compares the design and playability to Scottish links courses. Visit www.poppyridge.com to learn more and to take a virtual tour of the course.

The Northern California Golf Association was formed 104 years ago and has grown to an association consisting of 400 regular clubs and more than 850 associate clubs with a total membership approaching 180,000 members. Today members spread from the Oregon border to central California and east into Nevada allowing the NCGA to become one of the largest regional golf associations in the world. The NCGA’s mission is to support and promote the game of golf in northern California and to enhance the knowledge, enjoyment and participation of NCGA members.

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