

CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT®

A Publication of Devot
Communication

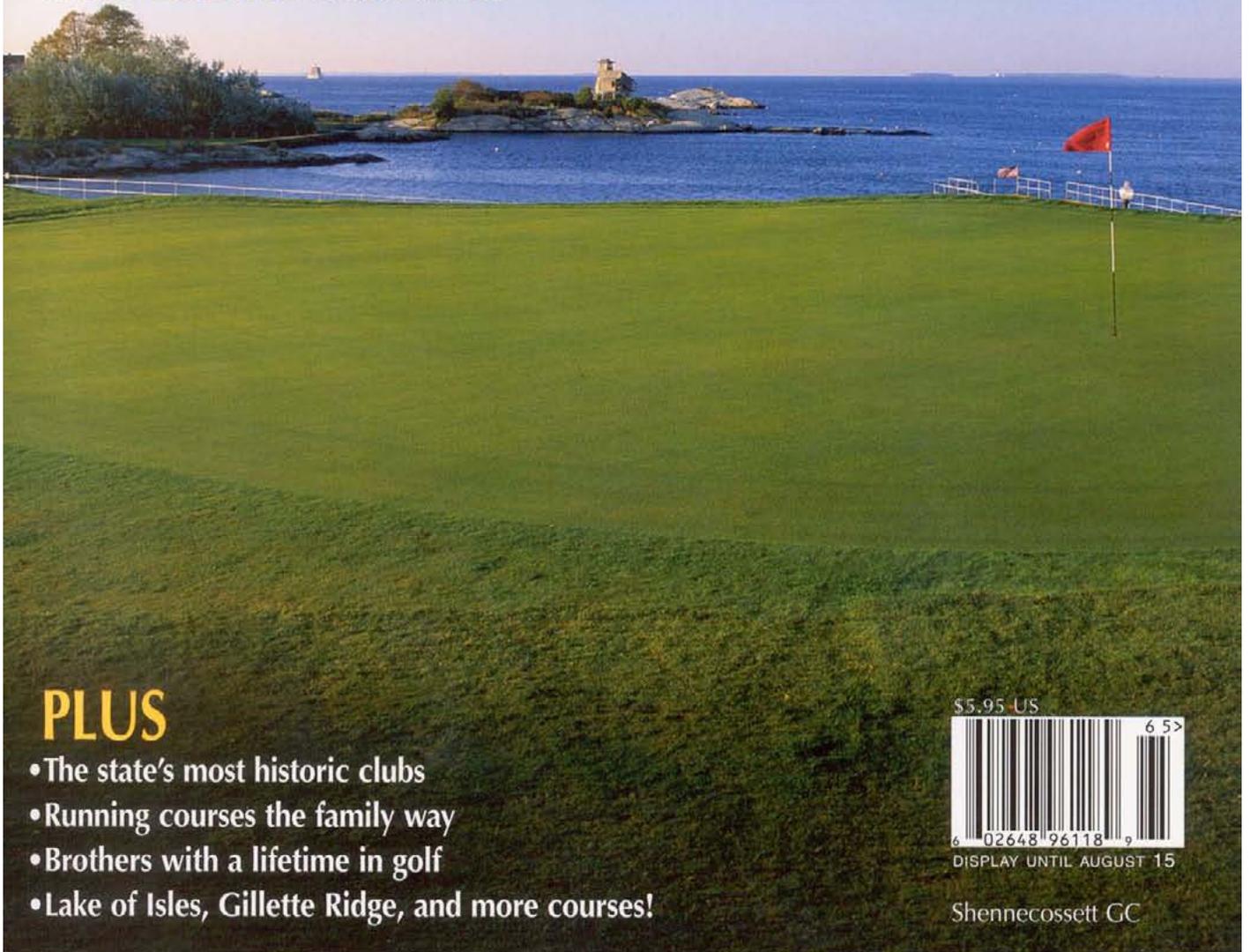
2006

Golf

Connecticut's #1 Golf Lifestyle Magazine

Municipal Gems

Some of Connecticut's finest courses



PLUS

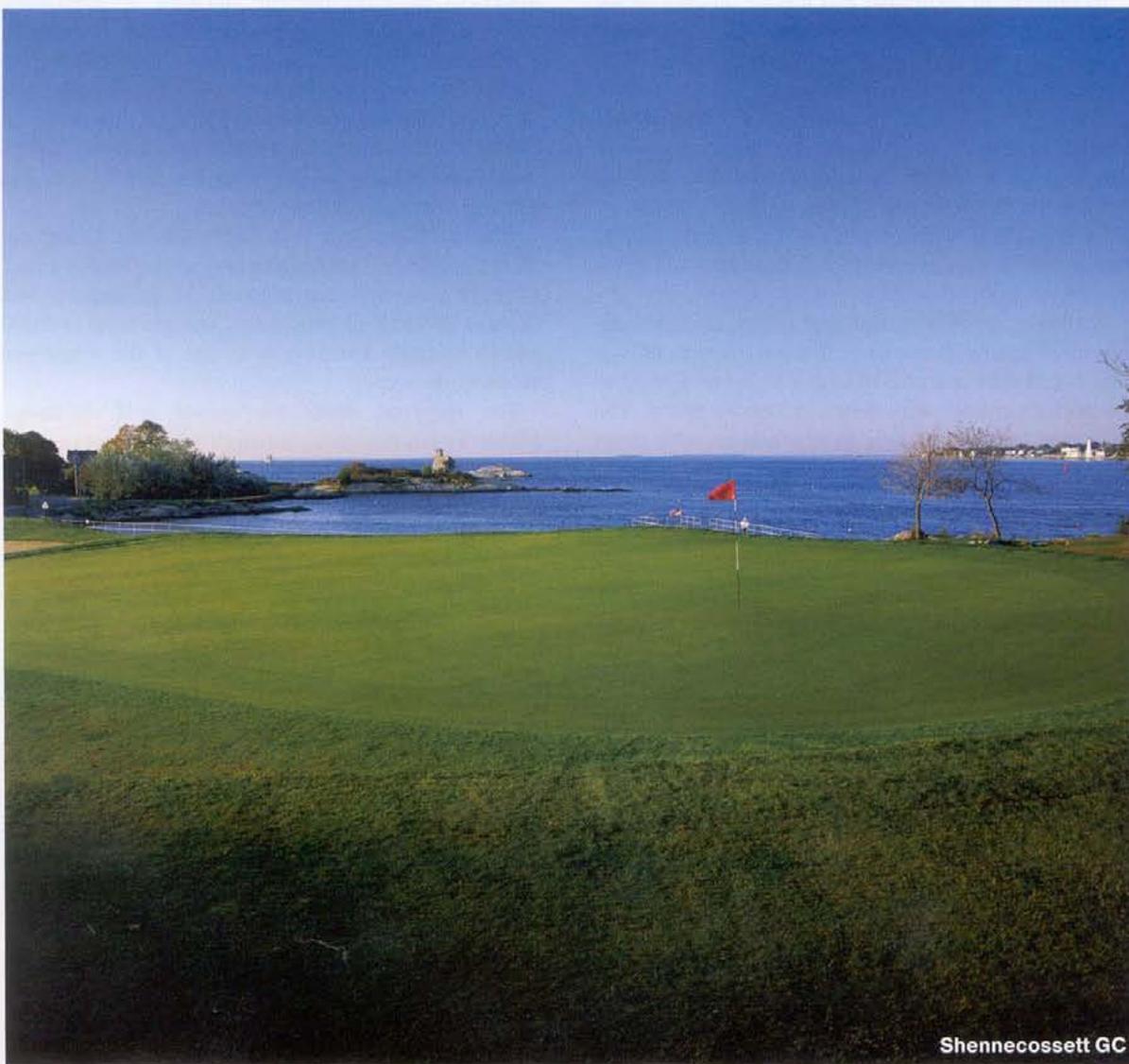
- The state's most historic clubs
- Running courses the family way
- Brothers with a lifetime in golf
- Lake of Isles, Gillette Ridge, and more courses!

\$5.95 US



DISPLAY UNTIL AUGUST 15

Shennecossett GC

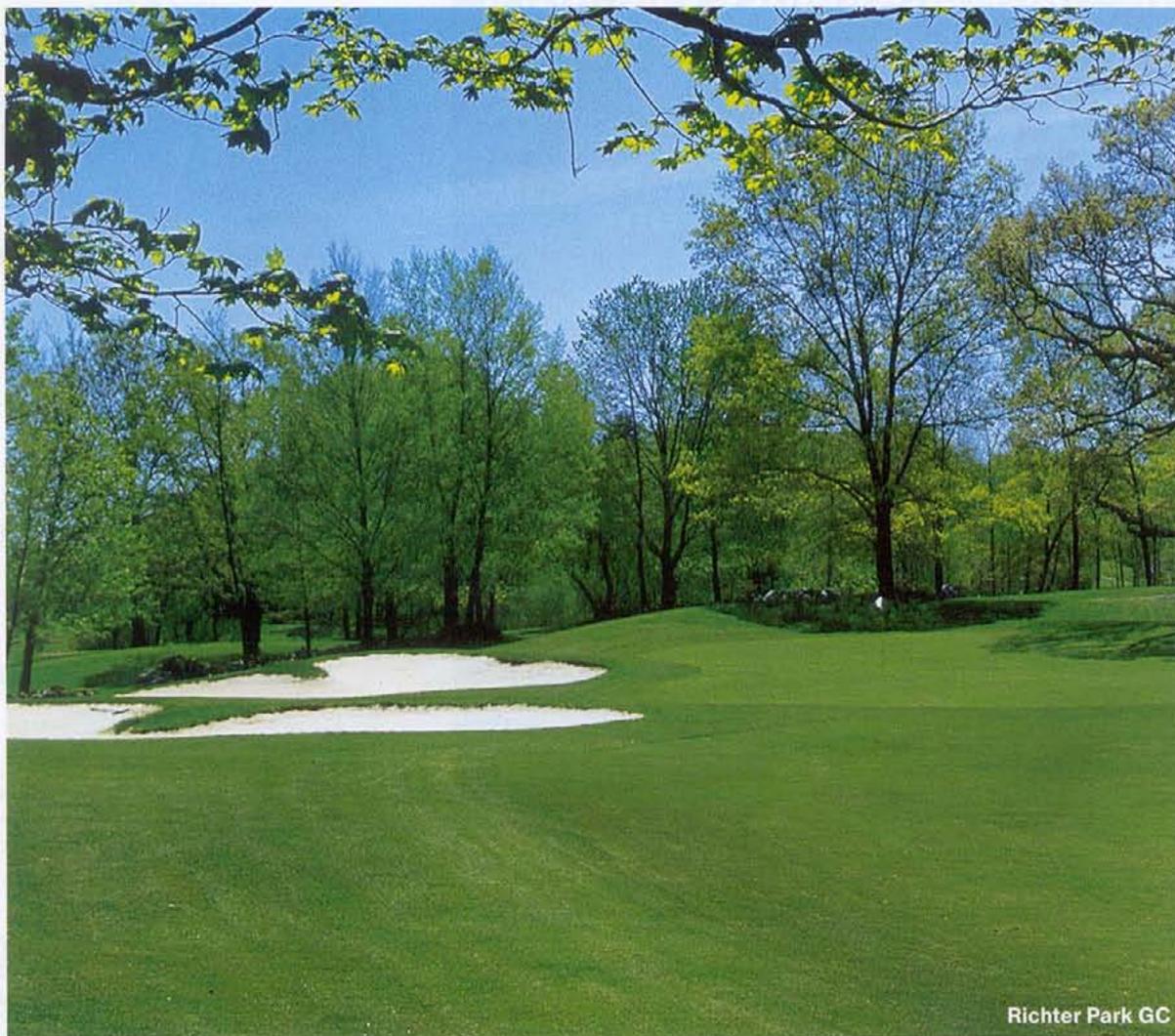


Marvelous Munis

BY JOHN TORSIELLO

ACROSS THE STATE,
HIGH-QUALITY
MUNICIPAL
COURSES
ABOUND

Connecticut golfers are indeed a lucky bunch. ■ For a small state, we have a lot of great golf courses to choose from. What's more, a lot of our towns have municipal facilities that provide very good golf for a very good price. ■ While out-of-towners in many cases have to pay a little more, these courses still merit a visit. In fact, one could construct a pleasant road trip with an itinerary that included only municipal courses. ■ A good starting point from the west would be Danbury's Richter Park Golf Course, which has earned much acclaim since opening



36 years ago. Golfers travel miles to play the well-manicured, wonderfully interesting layout.

The highlight in the center of the state would be Wintonbury Hills Golf Course in Bloomfield, a Pete Dye design that opened two years ago to rave reviews. Managed by Billy Casper Golf, the course is scenic and challenging, and also eminently fair.

Heading east, the Nutmeg State has its very own Donald Ross seaside layout located in Groton—Shennecossett Golf Course, whose origins go back to 1898. This is an historic course where some of the game's luminaries from the early 20th century, such as

Golfers travel miles to play the well-manicured, wonderfully interesting layout at Richter Park in Danbury.

Bobby Jones, Walter Hagen, Francis Ouimet and Glenna Collett, once roamed. The Ross course dates from 1916, with a redesign by Mark Mungeam completed in 1998.

Along the way, you could sprinkle in rounds at such courses as Crestbrook Park Golf Course in Watertown, Hunter Golf Club in Meriden, Laurel View Country Club in Hamden, Norwich Golf Course, Rockledge Golf Club in West Hartford, Simsbury Farms Golf Course in Simsbury, Stanley Golf Course in New Britain, Sterling Farms Golf Course in Stamford, or Tashua Knolls Golf Course in Trumbull. All are worth seeking out even if you don't live in town.

than is typical of Dye's work.

The course contains perhaps the best par four in the state, the 455-yard 14th that plays over and past wetlands and concludes at a small green guarded by woods and marsh on three sides. The overall conditions are impeccable.

Municipal golf courses can even help "sell" the town to individuals considering moving into a community. A drive through the enormous recreational facility in Simsbury, which besides a superb golf course includes an indoor hockey rink, volleyball and tennis courts, and walking trails, could easily convince a person to move to that Hartford suburb.

There are tales, perhaps not tall, of avid golfers moving to a particular city or town or buying property there to take advantage of the lower greens fees charged to residents at the town-owned course.

"I've heard all the stories," laughed Susan Keyser, a member of the management staff at Richter Park where such stories abound. Danbury residents can play the course for \$29, even on weekends. Richter is a real delight, with a number of holes passing by or over several reservoirs. The 12th hole is one of the most photographed in the state. It's a 527-yard par-five that concludes at a peninsula green that juts out into the water. The view in the autumn is delicious.

"We have a mission statement that says we will treat each customer as though they were our mother and she belongs to an exclusive private club," said Keyser. "We know how excited people are when they come here and we go out of our way to encourage all golfers, not just those who live in town, to play Richter Park." ■

John Torsiello lives in Torrington and is the editor of The Best of Northeast Golf.