

PALM BEACH COUNTY HAS AN OUTBREAK OF ACES

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At Lakeview Golf Club in Delray Beach, three golfers hit holes- in-one between April 15 and April 19.

First was Lee Perillo, a member of the Lakeview Women's Golf Association, who used her 5-iron to ace the 147-yard second hole.

Next, on the 17th, Patricia Conley of Boynton Beach used her 9- iron to ace the 80-yard fifth hole.

Finally, on the 19th, Matthew Cahill of Boca Raton hit a perfect 8-iron 115 yards into the cup of the 12th hole. Cahill, a student at Advent Lutheran School, hit his ace while trying out for his school golf team.

"Incredible, isn't it?" marvels Peter Doolittle, General Manager at Lakeview.

And yes, there are more.

Tony Chiarello hit his drive and squinted.

The shot, on the 132-yard 11th hole of the Heritage Course at Ibis Golf and Country Club, felt good, he said, but since he hit it directly into the morning sun, Chiarello didn't see it land. When he got to the green, none of the balls there were his. He looked around the fringe, checked behind the hole, but found nothing.

"We looked all around for it," he said.

Just for the heck of it, his wife looked into the cup. Was he still playing the Titleist with the red circle on it, she asked him.

"Yes," he said. "Why?"

She pointed to the cup. The ball was nestled at the bottom.

The hole-in-one was Chiarello's second. He'd gotten his first at Palm Beach Gardens' municipal course in 1993.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime shot," he said, "and I had just gotten my second one."

That was the day before Thanksgiving. Since then, Chiarello has bagged two more.

On March 13, he aced the Legends Course's 13th hole, called the Island Hole.

Not long afterward, he played the Heritage course again. When he got to the 11th hole, he stepped back to the next set of tee markers and let it fly again, this time from 159 yards.

"The third one went in on the fly," he said. "You could hear the thunk when it hit the pole, and then when it went in the cup. That was five days after the second one, the day after St. Patrick's Day."

Three aces in 113 days, a golfing dream.

"But to get three of them?" Chiarello muses. "It got to where it was getting a little embarrassing going into the pro shop."

But Chiarello is hardly alone these days when it comes to punching in aces.

When Wellington physician Matthew Pinto left for his Monday- morning golf game at The Links of Boynton Beach on April 18, he had no inkling of what lay ahead.

Pinto, 30, is a primary care physician with practices in Delray Beach and Boca Raton. He's been golfing, he says "on and off since high school."

On the 15th hole, he pulled out his 8-iron and crushed it into a stiff crosswind. The ball rose nicely, fell gently on the green and "rolled about two feet into the hole," Pinto said. By the end of the day, he had a certificate attesting to his feat. He also had been interviewed on a sports radio talk show.

"This was my first hole-in-one," he said. "I hope it's not my last."