

How Many Courses Have You Played? More than 1552?



by Kathlene Bissell 7 months ago [Follow @KathyBissell1](#)

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Have you ever figured out how many golf courses you've played? How many have your friends played?

I'm not talking about how many times you've played the same course. Or how many rounds you've played. How many completely, totally different courses.

So far as we know today, the world leader in the clubhouse is David Schlaff with the aforementioned 1552 different tracks notched on his golf belt buckle. As the Beach Boys song goes, he gets around.

Last January, he added Del Monte Golf Course, Plantation Golf Course, Starr Pass Rattler and Coyote and Arizona National, to name just a few. Must have been a winter vacation. But he also played in 2019 in Florida, and he even managed to get on Sandy Lane in Barbados last fall. So Schlaff has it figured out. We can all envy him.

How do I know this? Easy. He's on a new app called golfplayed which is available for android or iphone. I heard about it from a golf pal of mine.

You can join the app along with several thousand others around the world, including **Ronan Rafferty**, former **European Tour** player, and leader of their Order of Merit in 1989. Today Rafferty lists David Frost, a PGA Tour Champions player, as one of his "buddies" on golfplayed.

Dennis Paulson, now on PGA Tour Radio and who formerly played on the **PGA Tour**, is 12th on the most played list with 680 courses, but he hasn't added any new ones in a while. Part of the reason may be that after 50 or 60, it's pretty hard to add new ones, much less after 680.

In golf, the touring professionals play a lot, but they mostly play the same courses every year. It's actually hard for them to add a ton while they are active players. And many, like Tiger Woods, don't just roll up to any old course and request a tee time. It would be pandemonium no matter where he decided to go. He needs someplace private, like The Medalist, where the recent Match II was played. Same with any high profile person, athlete or not.

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If you look at the golfplayed app, you can see where all the top avid golfers have played most of their golf using the pin portion of the app. The clubhouse leader, Schlaff, has played most of his in the US, with a smattering in Europe.

International players, like Rafferty, have the pins wrapping around the entire globe.

So now, in addition to wanting a better car and better house, people are going to be struck with pin envy. However, it may also give you a small goal for later in the season, in case your courses aren't open yet.

In addition to the pins, there's also a list of courses people have played so you can see if the guy (or gal, but it's mostly guys) ahead of you on the list has played something you haven't.

Now, there are someplace near 14,000 golf courses in the U.S., according to the National Golf Foundation. **Europe** has nearly 9,000. So while Schlaff, VanSickle and Rafferty have quite a few, there is still plenty of opportunity.

Number three on the list of who's played the most is my pal, the **one who told me** about the app, Gary VanSickle, who has 1404 courses. He was excited about it because he likes to keep track of the places he's played. He likes that there's a map that drops a pin for each course.

VanSickle is what you'd call a beyond avid golfer

He has the scorecards for new places, which I guess he keeps in his office, which must look a bit like the Library of Congress at this point. He said he passed the shutdown time setting up a simulator in his garage.

VanSickle is the kind of guy who, if he happens to play a second ball during a round, could probably tell you what he did with that one as well as the first ball. I'm fairly sure he likes being that high on a worldwide list populated by absolute golf nuts. Who wouldn't?

I happened to write about his course collection just as he was ready to cross the 1000-course barrier and asked him how he did it. The secret, he said, was to move every once in a while or travel a lot for work and take clubs. He happened to fall into the perfect situation for both. As a golf writer for the *Milwaukee Journal*, *Golf World*, *Sports Illustrated* and now ***Morning Read***, he racked up plenty of frequent flier miles and always packed his sticks. So far as I know, he still does. Having no professional golf season right now, is probably cramping his course-adding style.