



# Area Golf: Inaugural step toward Web.com event is set

By [Jeremy Millsop](#) Today at 12:30 p.m.

A date was set, and the vision is becoming more clear for what Ron Sanders is hoping to bring to the Brainerd lakes area.

Sanders, a retired businessman, has a vision for the lakes area to host a Web.com PGA Tour event and he believes that will be three or four years down the road. However, Aug. 22, 2018, will be the inaugural step toward that final goal with the Central Minnesota Showcase Classic at Cragun's Legacy Courses in East Gull Lake.

The event is currently a one-day pro-am, but Sanders is working on a Day Two event that would feature a competitive round at a different area course.

"We got very lucky this year because we picked Aug. 22 as the date of our tournament and the Web.com Tour, the regular tour, ends on Aug. 17, which makes those players available to be part of our event," he said. "We will be bringing 25 Web.com Tour players, PGA Tour players, to be part of our event. It's a one-day event and they'll be captains of our pro-am teams. Our Pro-Am players will get to play with an actual, current Web.com player."

The second day would be a competitive event between the 25 tour players. Sanders said the only issues would be securing a venue and a purse for the players to play for.

Sanders has procured a number of partners and a company called Dayta Marketing, which is a digital marketing partner, who will be putting together a social media campaign to raise awareness for the event. The hope is to bring patrons from all over Minnesota and surrounding states to come enjoy the competition.

Sanders said Cragun's Resort on Gull Lake has been the biggest supporter of what he's attempting to do, and they will be the host sponsor this year. Sanders is still looking for a title sponsor but is pleased with the other companies he's added to the sponsorship table.

One hurdle he is facing is the unfamiliarity with the Web.com Tour, which he described as the developmental tour for the PGA Tour. Think the minor leagues of Major League Baseball, where future professional golfers, and those that have lost their PGA Tour card, attempt to play their way back onto the tour.

Each year, the top 25 players from the Web.com tour advance to the PGA Tour.

Sanders said other people are confusing this event for a popular charity scrambles that are common in the lakes area. While the tournament will raise funds for local charities, he said that is not the purpose. The goal of this event is to start building toward hosting an official Web.com event.

"We're going to do two days this year and three days next year," Sanders said. "There will be some entertainment this year. Much more next year and it's just working toward hosting an official PGA Tour event. I've been working very closely with the tour and I think we can really call it an unofficial Web.com PGA Tour event."

Sanders has aligned the charity portion of the tournament with Essentia Health Foundation for this event. He is working with two or three other potential charity or 501(c)(3) organizations.

He said the biggest push is to find the title sponsor. Sanders said having a name attached to the event would make it easier to sell.

"If we had a title sponsor, they would obviously get to put their name on the tournament," Sanders said. "Then I could go out there and, let's say it's, the Cub Foods Web.com Showcase, I would get a lot more traction than just saying it's Ron's dream Web.com event."

Sanders admitted he's behind schedule from where he wanted to be because of a hip and leg injury he suffered in December. He also admits he should have aligned the event with the PGA Tour sooner than he did but was hoping to create the first-year event on his own.

But with the date and site set, things are progressing toward what Sanders had long dreamed about—the lakes area hosting a Web.com event.

**ADDITIONAL ARTICLES RECOMMENDED BY BRAINERD DISPATCH**