



Man with a Plan

**Wisconsin
Golf Trips Founder
Jason Kauflin
is Elevating the
Badger State's
Golf Profile**

By Glen Turk

Anyone who has organized a buddies golf trip quickly realizes figuring out logistics can be likened to herding cats. While the reward is golf, the work is making sure every last detail is properly planned to ensure a memorable time.

It is the “every last detail” part of the buddies trip equation that was the genesis of **Wisconsin Golf Trips**, a rising company led by owner and founder Jason Kauflin. The story of how Wisconsin Golf Trips came to be is a tale of passion, perseverance, and love of the game.

But Jason’s initial foray into the golf trip gambit was purely pleasure. “In 2001, I talked three buddies into flying out to Mesquite, Nevada for a three day golf trip,” began Kauflin. “We had so much fun that we invited a few more guys the next year. The trip has grown into a large scale operation (The Kauflin Invitational) with 40 to 50 participants each year. What started with a love for golf and an equal interest in hanging out with my buddies, turned into a passion for planning the perfect golf trip. I have handled every detail involved with organizing the trip since day one and have gotten quite skilled at it over the years. One

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Wisconsin Golf Trips founder Jason Kauflin honed his planning skills while putting together his annual invitational.

of my favorite parts of the planning is getting to know the general managers, pros, and staff at each course that I work with. I make their jobs as easy as possible, and that effort is reflected in how my group is treated,” concluded the Wauwatosa, Wisconsin resident.

Fast forward to 2010, the USGA’s announcement that the 2017 U.S. Open would be contested at Erin Hills, marks the first time their signature championship would head to The Badger State. According to Kauflin a “light went off” as he pictured thousands of golfers being drawn to Wisconsin after seeing the omnipresent naturalness of Erin Hills in high-definition across the world thanks to the power of television and the internet.

“I believe Wisconsin’s footprint in the world of golf destinations will increase dramatically over the next few years. My goal has always been to get Wisconsin Golf Trips up and running by the U.S. Open in 2017 being held at Erin Hills. The world will get to see how incredible Erin Hills has turned out and will realize how close Whistling Straits and Blackwolf Run are on the map of Wisconsin. And then golfers will hear about the Sand Valley project (scheduled to open to the public in 2017) in the central part of Wisconsin, and groups looking for the next ‘new place’ to go will be looking at Wisconsin,” explained Kauflin.

But Kauflin is not alone in his rosy assessment of the Badger State’s place in the American golf landscape. Golf Channel’s Travel Editor and regular contributor to *Morning Drive*, Matt Ginella, believes Wisconsin is a prime spot for golf groups. “Depth of courses, value, prestige, and Lake Michigan all make Wisconsin great,” began Ginella. “Whistling Straits is the anchor, but you also have two amazing courses at Blackwolf Run, plus Erin Hills, Links at Lawsonia, The Bull at Pinehurst

Farms, and The Bog. Add in the development of Sand Valley, which, given Mike Keiser’s track record, the talents of Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw as well as David McLay Kidd, promises to be something special,” touted Ginella.

In my humble opinion, the golf package business is a relationship-driven endeavor. Golfers want to do business with people they know, like, and trust. To that end, I contacted Brad Herrell from the Evansville, Indiana area who participated in a Kauflin run trip last year. His glowing comments cement the fact that Jason not only loves what he is doing but knows how to get things done.

“Jason is very familiar with all the golf courses in the region, and he was instrumental in helping us find the best bang for our buck,” began Herrell. “I had been working to assemble an outing on my own, but was getting discouraged and frustrated because of a lack of time to do all the research. Besides finding exactly what our group wanted, I was so impressed how



The Brad Herrell Group had a phenomenal time in Wisconsin thanks to Wisconsin Golf Trips.

responsive and reliable Jason was. I didn't find myself waiting to see if he would not respond, nor did I get canned answers to questions. It was obvious he gave our requests lots of thought and gave us options that he himself would like to have had from a planner," concluded Herrell.

But what exactly can your group expect from a Wisconsin Golf Trips sponsored vacation? At the top of the list are preferred tee times that will guarantee your group plays when you want to play. Plus, Wisconsin Golf Trips can offer a variety of lodging options, transportation if needed, and even custom souvenirs which can be waiting for your group upon arrival. But Jason's expertise is not just golf-driven, as he will offer suggestions on what activities to conquer in between your rounds and the best places to grab a few rounds afterward. If networking was a medal sport, Jason Kauflin would be Phelpsian. In fact, a 30 minute conversation with a local Holiday Inn Express led to him being invited to their Christmas party three days later – now that's the kind of man you want on your team!

Besides his love of golf (he plays to a sub-5 handicap) Jason is a self-described family man with three passions, his wife – and his two children Kevin (11) and Rachel (14). Rachel is currently the 6th best girl's golfer for the class of 2020 according to Wisconsin. Golf after winning her team's MVP award as a freshman. So when Jason isn't putting together the ideal trip, he is following Rachel every step of the way.

The real question might be who's future is brighter, Rachel's or her father's surging business? Our prediction, Wisconsin Golf Trips will be the state's major golf trips provider well before Erin Hills hosts its *second* U.S. Open. "I view every call I get as a chance to execute the perfect golf trip, and I want to use my knowledge and expertise to tailor the ultimate Wisconsin package for every prospective client," explained Kauflin. "I have the course contacts, lodging



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research, and transportation options all lined up. All you have to do is tell me what kind of trip you are looking for, and I will make it happen," stated Kauflin.

If personalized service with a smile seems old-fashioned, then you haven't met Jason Kauflin of Wisconsin Golf Trips – a man with a plan and the knowledge to implement the buddies getaway of your dreams. For more information, visit www.wisconsinGolftrips.com or email Jason at jason@wisconsinGolftrips.com.