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Illinois Lottery Crowns Golden Tee Champion

Naperville resident takes home \$5,000, home edition of iconic game and bragging rights

CHICAGO – March 24, 2008 – Two months of the fiercest Golden Tee competition in memory ended last week, when Illinois Lottery crowned Marc Muklewicz as champion of the Golden Tee Closest-to-the-Pin Challenge. Muklewicz fended off 15 other Chicagoland finalists to take home the tournament title, \$5,000 and his own “Golden Tee Unplugged 2008” arcade game.

“My nickname is ‘The Mouth,’ so I’m always a little amped up at tournaments,” Muklewicz said, “but last night was really special. At least 10 of the players are acquaintances of mine, so it was great to be in the mix.”

Amid the atmosphere of camaraderie, two female competitors made it to the semi-finals of the tournament, despite men making up fourteen of the final sixteen spots – a rarity in Golden Tee competitions.

Muklewicz became a serious Golden Tee player in 2003, after leaving the Army. Currently, he makes a living off the game, routinely playing 40 rounds in a day in addition to several weekly tournaments. His Wednesday-night win gives Muklewicz momentum as he looks toward tournaments in Virginia, Indianapolis and Chicago, before traveling to Las Vegas in September, where the United States national team member will chase his dream of becoming the Golden Tee world champion.

In January, Illinois Lottery introduced its Golden Tee Instant Ticket, which gives players the chance to instantly win up to \$25,000 or their very own Golden Tee machine. To celebrate the new ticket, Illinois Lottery announced the Golden Tee Closest-to-the-Pin Challenge, to be decided by 16 local tournament winners facing off for the ultimate prize.

The 16 qualifying contestants met at the Cubby Bear North in Lincolnshire, Ill. to decide the best of the best. In the end, Muklewicz emerged victorious by distancing himself from his peers, all of whom

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had the opportunity to test their mettle against Steven Sobe, three-time Golden Tee National Champion, in a “Beat the Pro” contest.

“The final competition was the perfect ending to a phenomenal series of events,” said Jodie Winnett, acting superintendent of the Illinois Lottery. “Our sponsorship with Incredible Technologies has allowed us to reach out to Golden Tee players, one of the most devoted and passionate group of gaming enthusiasts.”

Founded in 1985 and specializing in the design and development of entertainment hardware and software, Incredible Technologies is the largest U.S. designer and manufacturer of coin-operated video games. The company employs more than 120 designers, programmers, artists, animators, sound engineers, service technicians and production personnel. This is the first time the company has partnered with a state Lottery.

“We were thrilled to work with Illinois Lottery – first to create the ticket, and then to participate in the Closest-to-the-Pin Challenge,” said Gary Colabuono, director of marketing for Arlington Heights-based Incredible Technologies. “It was a terrific way to do something special for Golden Tee fans.”

While Muklewicz took home top honors, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place cash prizes were awarded to the following Golden Tee maestros: Chicago’s Cortney Black took home \$3,000; South Elgin’s Richard Gregg won \$1,000; and Buffalo Grove resident Tina Lukasz walked away with \$500. Additionally, all 16 finalists took home a Golden Tee Golf Home Edition game.

To learn more about Golden Tee Instant Tickets, visit www.illinoislottery.com.

About the Illinois Lottery

Founded in 1974, the Illinois Lottery is a state agency with annual sales over \$2 billion. Since its inception, the Lottery has contributed more than \$14 billion to the state Common School Fund to assist K-12 public schools. Players must be at least 18 years old. For more information on the Illinois Lottery please visit our Web site at www.illinoislottery.com.