

2025 All Abilities



September 9-11
McCall Lake Golf Course

Bob MacDermott

2024 Alberta All Abilities
Champion



Q: When you reflect on your victory at the Alberta All Abilities Championship at Broadmoor Golf Club, what memories are most vivid?

MacDermott: "It was a good competition. It was a couple of young flat-bellies that I was up against, and they were pretty good. It came down to one stroke to pull it off."

Q: You have competed — and won tournaments — all over the world ... What's the significance of having a championship like this in your own backyard in Alberta?

MacDermott: "I think it's key to not only offer the opportunity, because there are some good players out there, but also for recognition. For the general public, it makes them aware that, you know, sometimes stuff is going to happen to you in life, right? But it's not the determining factor to be able to compete at a high level of any sport. It doesn't have to determine your destiny with regard to your dreams and your desires of whatever it is you want to do. For me, golf is just one of my passions."

Q: What does it mean to you to be proof of what you just talked about, to be a role model for others to continue chasing their own dreams?

MacDermott: "I was trying to get back to as normal a life as possible after being injured. I really wasn't paying attention to how what I was doing might affect other people. I was doing my thing. It's not until after you realize, if you put the work in, you get results. I wanted to play golf again. And I realized through technology and perseverance that I could play pretty good. In fact, I'm better than I was when I had two arms and two legs, in a shorter period of time. I wasn't focusing on that at all, it just turned out that's what comes out of it."

Q: When you play events like this one, are you inspired by what you see around you?

MacDermott: "Absolutely. I've had a lot of experience, no doubt about it, but I was inspired from Day 1, when you come into these events and see some of the adversity that some of these men and ladies have overcome. And I always hope they're playing their best with regard to whatever they're trying to achieve. Win or lose, there are really no losers."

MacDermott, who lost his left leg, left arm and right thumb in a farming accident and ambulance accident in 1987, added to his incredible collection of trophies at the second-ever playing of the Alberta All Abilities Championship. This was a steady showing for the Belvedere Golf & Country Club member — two consecutive spins of 76 for a tournament tally of 8-over 152.

Alberta All Abilities Past Champions

2024 – Bob MacDermott

2023 – Kiefer Jones

The All Abilities Returns to **McCall Lake**

By Todd Saelhof

Augusta National has its unforgettable Amen Corner. But it's got nothing on Aviation Corner and the memories that will be made there in September at McCall Lake Golf Course.

Even if you're not a fan of airplanes, it'll be a high-flying time with Albertans winging their way to the City of Calgary course to compete in the 2025 Alberta All Abilities Championship.



"Oh, absolutely ... yeah," said Paul Hemstreet, the city's Volunteer Coordinator of Golf, praising the Alberta Golf tournament for players with disabilities. "It's just a positive vibe, and it's a positive experience for everyone involved. To see these golfers compete and overcome any challenges they have, it is very special."

"It's a celebration of golf and of competition, and then you're just impressed with all of the individuals themselves. We love just being out and celebrating golf and celebrating being active."

The event — the last one on Alberta Golf's 2025 tournament calendar — runs Sept. 9-11 at the 6,845-yard city track in northeast Calgary. "And this is a competitive golf tournament," continued Hemstreet. "The players are excelling at the sport. It's flighted, of course, but they're taking their golf seriously, and they've kind of taken it to the next level, which is cool to see and nice to be involved in."

"There's a few golfers that have single-digit handicaps, people excelling at this sport that they've chosen."

Then there's the airplane adventures. Of course, parts of McCall Lake are only an iron shot away from Calgary International Airport property — the southernmost runway, in particular — making for adventure that's more than just a round of golf.

"It is very cool that the planes will land right over your head," said Hemstreet, in describing the par-five, 523-yard 11th hole. "That green is on the other side of McKnight Boulevard where the runway is for planes taking off and landing."

"When I bring my boys out there, they think it's the coolest thing ever. When the planes are taking off, they're well above you. But when they're landing, it feels like you could hit them with a pitching wedge."

What follows on the next hole is a challenging par-4, measuring 374 yards. "It's a neat spot there on that

corner of the course," continued Hemstreet. "You've got a risk/reward par five there where the airplanes are landing, and then you have a tricky par four after that, where you're hitting the other direction. But that spot on the golf course is your most interaction with the airplanes."

It's not the only bit of fun at McCall Lake, which features water in play on many of its tests — largely on the par-4 seventh (395 yards), the par-3 13th (218) and the two par-4s to bring you into the clubhouse, the memorable ninth (320) and 18th (391).

"Certainly nine is a golfer's favourite," said Hemstreet, of McCall Lake's signature hole. "It's a short par four and depending on the tees you're playing, it can be drivable with water all along the left. You're hitting alongside the water, certainly a hole that can be birdied, but also if you hit it in the water, you're making a bogey."

McCall Lake was chosen by Alberta Golf after excelling as hosts for the inaugural All Abilities event back in 2023.

"These events have not been at our courses much in the past, we want to be more involved in the golf community moving forward" added

Hemstreet. "The All Abilities Championship is a great fit for us — not a huge tournament, so it gets our feet wet. But also, it just fits with what we are and what we can be with the city, which is accessible and open to all. We pride ourselves on that."

"Year 1 was a successful and good championship. And I'm sure this year will be, as well." ■

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