

# Stanley Golf Course

**A treasured jewel shines anew in the Hardware City**



*The 1st hole of the White nine is a 511-yard par-5.*

After more than a decade of changes, improvements, refinements, alterations and additions, Stanley Golf Course is now the complete package.

Just about every corner of this pristine municipal layout in northern New Britain adjacent to the Farmington and West Hartford town lines has been touched. The result is one of Connecticut's premier public golf facilities, one that caters to any need.

Looking for variety? Stanley offers three challenging nine-hole championship layouts. Need to warm up or groove the swing? Stanley now features an expansive driving range with both mat and grass tees along with lights and heated hitting bays.

"Stanley Golf Course is a gem in New Britain," said avid golfer Timothy Stewart, mayor of the Hardware City.

Indeed, Stanley has come a long way from its humble beginnings. In 1928, during difficult

economic times, local boosters decided to build a golf course with 360 acres of land donated to the city by Alix W. Stanley. They launched a fund drive to raise \$19,000 for the course and had to rely on the federal WPA program and volunteers to build the stately stone clubhouse that still stands today.

But the course quickly caught on and attracted some of the state's top golfers. Frequent players included Dick Siderowf, a British Amateur and state Amateur champion, and Dennis Coscina, an eight-time Connecticut Section PGA champion and former senior PGA Tour member. The list also includes New Britain native Kevin Giancola, a four-time Section Player of the Year who holds the Stanley course record.

The allure of Stanley, according to head professional Kyle Hedstrom, is the Red, White and Blue, which are the names of Stanley's three nines.

Hedstrom says the White and Blue nines are similar in terrain and architecture. Seven of the 18 holes on these two nines feature doglegs that demand driving accuracy. You won't find drastic changes in elevation, but many of the tee boxes are raised and fairways are lined with trees that can be troublesome.

On the other hand, the Red nine features downhill tee shots and uphill approaches on most holes, all of which run parallel to each other except in three instances, Hedstrom explained.

A favorite hole is the difficult par-4 7th of the Blue nine. From the highly elevated tee box, the fairway looks wider than an airport runway. But don't be fooled. The hole measures 434 yards from the back tees and you will need two long and accurate shots to reach this large, generous green. Anything left or right is asking for trouble.

On the left sits a gaping bunker 230 yards from the tee box. Land here and reaching the green in regulation becomes almost impossible. But the bunker might be your best friend, because woods line the entire left side. The right is only slightly better. Here, a buffer of trees separates the 7th from the 9th fairway.

The real fun begins on your second shot. A short but straight drive brings into play a creek that crosses the entire fairway 130 yards from the green. Then there's the large pond greenside right. This hazard has ruined many a good round at Stanley, consuming shots even slightly right of the green.

Hedstrom suggests a lay up to the roomy area in front of the green, then chipping up close for your par. And par is a great score on this hole.

If that's not tough enough for you, the White nine offers two of the most difficult holes at Stanley, and they come in succession.

The par-4, dogleg-left 4th hole requires a mid-to-long iron tee shot to a small landing area surrounded by bunkers with an

uphill approach. You could pay dearly trying to cut the corner, and any tee shot sprayed to the right may find the water hazard.

The 5th hole doglegs to the right as it parallels the 4th. This par-4 plays longer at 390 yards and the same water hazard this time is more intimidating. Shots pushed right will be sunk. Hedstrom says to play a fade off the tee with a fairway wood or long iron, leaving an approach of 160-180 yards. But your work is not done. The three-tiered green is guarded by a cavernous bunker on the right, so calculate the correct yardage or you could face a putt over 100 feet depending on pin placement.

While course improvements have been the main focus, three years ago Stanley opened a vast driving range that has proved highly popular. The practice center features covered hitting stations, propane-fueled heaters and energy efficient lights so golfers can practice in any weather and into the night.

The building of a new 9th green on the Blue nine resulted in a new practice green for chipping, putting and bunker play. Together, the range and green offer golfers practice opportunities usually found at a private course.

Stanley offers discounts, including a Mid-Day Special that includes 18 holes, cart, hot dog and soda for \$34. The New Britain Benefits Card gives residents, taxpayers and golfers who work in the city a savings of about 20 percent off regular golf prices.



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New Britain, CT | [www.stanleygolf.com](http://www.stanleygolf.com)

**2009 Club Champions:** Men: Keith Kwasnik  
Senior: Richard Maura  
Women: Carole Oat

**Course Record:** 66 - Kevin Giancola (2008)