

# USGA Helps Celebrate Space, Golf

October 4, 2007

By Doug Stark, USGA

Far Hills, N.J. – On Oct. 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik I into space, a monumental achievement that captivated the world and ushered in the space age.



Retired NASA astronaut Brian Duffy displays the 'Shuttle Putter' that was used by his crew in space during the 1996 Endeavour voyage (NASA mission STS-72), at the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kan., on Sept. 28. (Ellie Kaiser/USGA)

This artificial satellite was nearly the size of a basketball and weighed only 183 pounds. The successful launch took 98 minutes to orbit the Earth. That single event propelled the United States and Soviet Union space race that dominated the Cold War era.

Fifty years later, the world continues to make great advances regarding space exploration.

In conjunction with this historic event, the USGA Museum partnered with the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kan., to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Space Exploration and the launch of Sputnik I.

"The launch of Sputnik is not only a real event in the history of spaceflight, but is also a key symbolic event in the history of the human race," said Chris Orwoll, Cosmosphere President and CEO.

"October 4th was the date Sputnik became the first man-made satellite to be launched into space, but it was also the date that many dreams were realized...and many new dreams were born. For the first time, mankind's aspirations took them beyond the sky and into the stars. That's something to celebrate and the Cosmosphere is thrilled to be part of this celebration."

To commemorate the relationship between golf and space, the museum loaned Alan Shepard's Moon Club and Brian Duffy's Shuttle Putter. This marked the first time that both the Moon Club and Shuttle Putter have been displayed together outside of Far Hills. Both will be on view at the Kansas Cosmosphere until Feb. 17, 2008.

"Though the clubs are visually insignificant at first glance, the stories and in-flight images of the Moon Club and Shuttle Putter transform them into prodigious spectacles," said Jim Remar, Cosmosphere Senior Vice President of Operations.

The past weekend was marked by a series of public events at the Kansas Cosmosphere and Prairie Dunes Country Club commemorating the 50 years of space exploration. Last Friday Duffy and Tim Terry, a flight simulation supervisor for United Space Alliance, entertained 100 schoolchildren with a presentation on the Shuttle Putter and Duffy's last shuttle mission in 2000. Later that evening, both took part in an event for USGA and Cosmosphere members.

On Saturday, Prairie Dunes hosted a number of public events to celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. More than 250 children attended demonstrations and talks by Duffy and Terry along with Major League Baseball Hall of Famer George Brett and former professional golfer Matt Gogel. Later that evening, Dr. Edgar Mitchell, a crewmate of Shepard on the Apollo 14 mission, addressed an audience at the Cosmosphere. He said all people have an obligation to our planet and solar system before taking questions.

"The 50th Anniversary of space travel reminds us how far we've progressed in so little time," said Terry. "We should use this opportunity to celebrate our successes and to acknowledge that there's still much work to do to understand more about space travel and our future in it. I'm honored to be a small part of the 50th anniversary celebration. We have accomplished so much in so little time, and yet, I feel there is so much potential ahead of us for success that we haven't yet imagined."

The USGA Museum contains a vast collection of memorabilia that document the game's development over time. Two of the more popular artifacts are the Moon Club and Shuttle Putter.

In 1971, Admiral Alan Shepard, assisted by crewmates Stuart Roosa and Mitchell, commanded the Apollo 14 mission to the surface of the moon. Tucked within his spacesuit he carried a specially crafted 6-iron club head and two golf balls. The club's aluminum Teflon shaft was adapted from a tool designed to scoop lunar rock samples. The entire collapsible implement weighed only 16 ½ ounces. Due to his spacesuit's movement restrictions, Shepard had to swing the club with one hand and could not move his hips. After retiring, Shepard donated the Moon Club to the USGA during the 1974 U.S. Open.

Twenty five years later, golf and space were reunited with the Shuttle Putter. Prior to the 1996 Endeavour voyage, known in the space program as NASA mission STS-72, Terry arranged for a putter and golf ball to be smuggled on board the shuttle Endeavour for his friend and fellow golf enthusiast Duffy. The crew surprised Duffy by presenting him the putter on the flight deck as the shuttle was orbiting Earth. Following the mission, Terry and Duffy decided to donate the putter to the USGA.

In joining with the Kansas Cosmosphere and Prairie Dunes, the USGA Museum is committed to developing programs that travel nationally to museums, championship sites and member clubs. With the opening of the new Arnold Palmer Center for Golf History in the summer of 2008, the museum seeks to broaden the public's understanding of the role golf has played in developing a national identity.



Dr. Edgar Mitchell, a former astronaut who flew on the Apollo 14 with Alan Shepard, holds the club that Shepard used on the mission. (Ellie Kaiser/USGA)

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<http://www.usga.org/news/2007/october/space.html>