

Jim Kinnear: Passion, patriotism and partnership

Jim Kinnear's passion is infectious. After a few minutes of conversation, you're likely to view the world stage as a smaller place, where Canadians can play a major role, and where one person can make a real and meaningful difference.

BY BILL STEINBURG



His message is the same, whether the founder, president and CEO of Pengrowth Management Ltd. is talking about business, the arts, or golf.

"In Canada, we're really very good," he says. "Sometimes, we're just a little shy about telling people that."

Kinnear, on the other hand, is anything but shy when it comes to encouraging Canadians to pursue excellence, with both financial and voluntary support. And he's quick to celebrate when they succeed. His company is a strong supporter of leadership and excellence in the arts, education, community health care and sport.

Pengrowth is the building sponsor of Calgary's Saddledome and the Calgary Flames, as well as a founder of scholarships, a supporter of Olympic and national team athletes, and the corporate host of numerous golf tournaments (both competitive and charitable) and a major supporter of the RBC Canadian Open since 1997 – for the past three years as a Premier Partner.

It's that positive influence and Kinnear's constant presence on the national golf scene that earned him the RCGA Distinguished Service Award last year.

"Jim's just a very generous man. He's an unbelievable Canadian," said RCGA Executive Director Scott Simmons. "He's al-

ways talking about Canadian golf and waving the Canadian flag. He's truly devoted to the Canadian game."

Kinnear's love of golf has deep roots, reaching back to the days when he and his brother, Dave, spent Ontario summers doing laps around Eastbourne Golf Club near the shores of Lake Simcoe.

"I started young enough that I was very enthusiastic," Kinnear said. "Sometimes we just kept going around – I don't know how many nines you can get through in a day, but sometimes you'd just keep going ... I was pretty keen."

Since those days, Kinnear's career has taken him from Toronto to Montreal, to Calgary, and around the world. He has kept up his game along the way, with memberships at several Canadian and international clubs.

"The good news is that I have all these golf memberships; the bad news is that I don't have any time to play them," he jokes.

Kinnear's personal association with Canada's only PGA Tour event began in the 1970s and early '80s when he lived in Quebec and played out of Royal Montreal. The club hosted the Open twice during that period and Kinnear volunteered on an organizing committee.

Legend has it the Canadian Open was considered by some to be the "fifth" major



Kinneer with 2008 RBC Canadian Open winner Chez Reavie

in those days. Consistent with his passion and national pride, Kinneer would like it to be viewed that way again.

"It kind of lost some of its lustre," he said. "But we can restore it to its former glory. This is a national open – the third oldest national open in the world – the only event of its type in Canada. It's a national icon that we feel should be supported."

His support for Canadian golf reaches from the grassroots to the highest levels: tournament sponsor; development program sponsor; and a sponsor of promising young athletes, as well.

Though likely unknown to most Canadian golfers, Kinneer is widely considered by industry insiders as one of the catalysts for the dramatic restructuring of the RBC Canadian Open that has taken place in the past two years. Pengrowth's support was key to the tournament's survival during a recent gap between title sponsors, and Kinneer is a driving force behind the popular Pengrowth Concert Series at the Open. With the event now enjoying a renaissance under the sponsorship of RBC,

Kinneer continues to work closely with organizers and sponsors with the goal of elevating Canada's status on the global golf stage.

"The passion really is to encourage a higher standard of play in Canada," he said, listing off the international rankings of some of Canada's most promising amateur golfers. "Our goal – not mine, but a team of people and organizations – is to have more Canadian golfers prominent on the world stage."

That desire for a stronger global presence fits right in with how Kinneer conducts the rest of his affairs, including his Pengrowth business.

"We look for undervalued assets," he said. "We do that in our business and we do that in our community activities. Personally speaking, it's the pursuit of excellence that I endeavour to promote."

And when Jim Kinneer talks like this, Canadians can't help but listen. His passion is inspirational, his confidence contagious.



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO GOLF CANADA
READER
MICHAEL GARDNER!
MICHAEL WAS
THE BIG WINNER
IN OUR LONE STAR
LINKS CONTEST
AND WILL BE
TEEING IT UP
TEXAS-STYLE
COURTESY OF
ULTIMATE GOLF
VACATIONS AND
TEXAS TOURISM.**



ultimategolf.ca



www.TravelTex.com