

# Lincolnwood Review

## Irwin has fond memories of area

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GLENVIEW — The Chicago area has been good to Hale Irwin.

He owns five wins in the area between the PGA and Champions tours, including the 1990 U.S. Open at Medinah Country Club.

That's why the Hall of Famer was happy the Champions Tour made it back to the area for the first time since 2002 with the inaugural Encompass Championship at North Shore Country Club.

"It's been one of my favorite stops along the way, going back to the Western Open at Butler (National) and then several Ameritech (Senior Opens) and ... the Medinah U.S. Open victory," Irwin said.

The 68-year-old Irwin, who has 45 wins on the Champions Tour, shot a 3-under 69 Sunday to finish 2 under for the tournament, tying for 32nd.

Starting on the 10th hole, Irwin got himself going with a birdie and then an eagle at the par-5 11th. He narrowly missed out on a birdie at the closing hole, sliding his putt right by the hole.

Some of Irwin's most memorable moments on the golf course occurred in the Chicago area. He said the 45-foot putt he sank on the 72nd hole at the U.S. Open to get into the playoff is first on his list. Once the putt dropped, Irwin ran around the green high-fiving the fans, making for an iconic Sports Illustrated cover photo.

The following day, Irwin, who received a special exemption into the field that week, outlasted Mike Donald over 19 holes to become the oldest player to ever win the U.S. Open, his third such national championship.

"I've always loved Chicago," Irwin said. "It's a great sports town. We've had great success here in this town with golf tournaments. Coming to North Shore is, I think, all the players are very impressed with the golf course, and Encompass is a fantastic sponsor."

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