



# *Michigan Hosts the Big Break Series on the Golf Channel*

By Bernice Phillips

**M**ichigan has a rich history of televised golf. Throughout the years, we have had national and international audiences viewing the likes of the PGA Championship, the US Open, The Buick Open, The Carling World Open, Ford Senior Players Championship, Shell's Wonderful World of Golf, The Par 3 Shootout, Bay Mills Open Players Tournament, TPC Championship and the U.S. Amateur. On a statewide level, we have had Golfing Michigan, Golfing the Great Lakes, Beat the Pro, Michigan Golf Live and our own Michigan Golfer Television Show, which, in a sense, is world-wide.

This year, we were treated to additional coverage by being the site of one of golf's reality shows, "The Big Break" which was produced at Treetops Resort, and proved to be "highly successful",

*Photos of Rick Smith (opposite page) and Anthony Sorentino (above) are courtesy of the Golf Channel.*

according to Matt Friedman, publicist at The Golf Channel.

Friedman indicated that while there was not a Nielsen rating for the show, the feedback they got was substantial enough to call it a hit, Paul Beachnau, Director of the CVB from Gaylord, said, he has all kinds of people talking to him about the show.

The series featured 10 reasonably good golfers who underwent a series of golf skill tests that resulted in eight of them being eliminated. Golfers had to hit a golf ball down a highway at a target, hit punch shots through panes of glass, hit balls into a moving vehicle with a big barrel for a target, hit blind wedges over walls hopefully onto greens, hit to par three holes, make long and short putts and finally compete in a match play round for the win.

The final show of The Big Break had the final two contestants, Anthony Sorentino of Rochester Hills and Justin Peters of Florida, fighting it out in match play. The winner was awarded four entries on the 2004 Canadian Tour.



Anthony Sorentino

Alas, the match was over far too soon for our local lad, Anthony Sorentino, as Justin Peters prevailed.

Rick Smith hosted the series, with major sponsorship coming from the Ford Motor Company.

Vanessa Bell and the Michigan Golfer TV cameras caught up with Rick at the PGA Merchandise Show and our reporter, Brian Manning, interviewed 2nd place winner, Anthony Sorentino, who was a guest speaker at an Eastern Michigan University class. This is what they had to say about the Big Break. <http://michigangolfer.tv/2004shows/show5/>