

# Dick Pomo:

## *Finding Joy and Community Through Golf*

By **Jim Gunderson**, USBGA Contributor

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### **A Late Start, A Deep Love for the Game**

Dick Pomo didn't grow up with golf. At two and a half pounds, he required oxygen treatment as an infant, which ultimately damaged his vision. "I grew up as a youngster who was legally blind, went to school for the blind in Connecticut, which meant I had some vision, but not much," he recalled. He didn't consider golf until he was 30, and when friends learned he was interested, they helped him get started. Despite the late start, he has built a lifelong love of golf and a deep connection to the community that surrounds it. Today, at 84, Pomo continues to enjoy every round, every laugh, and every challenge on the course.

### **It's Just a Game**

Golf for Pomo, and for many others who are blind or visually impaired, is about the game itself, not the blindness. "**It really has nothing to do with blindness. Although it is a factor, once you get out there, it's just a game,**" he said. Players are classified based on their visual abilities: B1 for no sight at all, B2 for up to about 5 percent vision, and B3 for legally blind with slightly higher visual acuity. **Pomo himself is a B1 golfer, meaning he has no sight at all, and relies on his coach to navigate the course.** Coaches act as the players' eyes, describing distances, hazards, and target lines before stepping back to let the player swing. Beyond these adjustments, the rules remain the same, emphasizing teamwork, trust, and connection.

### **Decades of Service**

With more than 10 years combined as vice president and president of the United States Blind Golf Association, Pomo has helped run tournaments, clinics, and events across the country. He reflects on the journey with gratitude, including the players, volunteers, and coaches who have shaped his experience. "**Sometimes it brings a tear to my eye when I think about some of this stuff,**" he said. He also acknowledges the crucial role of his coach Jeff Roeder, who has guided him for the last six years, as well as his wife Sharon and his guide dog Presley, who travel with him to tournaments. "**You really can't do this without the coaches and volunteers,**" Pomo said, highlighting how the sport depends on teamwork, trust, and the dedication of everyone involved. Roeder first met Pomo through his neighbor Curt Jones, a USBGA member, and has coached him at multiple national and regional tournaments, including the 79th annual USBGA National Championship in Oakdale, Minnesota.

### **Enjoying the Moment**

When asked what he considers his strongest part of the game, Pomo smiled, lifted his beer, and jokingly pointed to the 19th hole. "**I just try to do the best I can,**" he said, reflecting the lighthearted and humble approach he brings to each round. "**We love each other, we love the**

**game, and we love being here together,”** he added, showing the camaraderie that defines blind golf.

### **A Lasting Impact**

Pomo continues to make a lasting impact on blind golf. His leadership, mentorship, and dedication demonstrate that success in the sport is measured not by skill alone, but by camaraderie, perseverance, and the joy shared on the course. Golf has become for him more than a game. It is a connection to community, a source of joy, and a reminder of what is possible when passion and heart come together.

### **About the USBGA**

The United States Blind Golf Association is dedicated to growing the game of golf for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Their motto is You Don't Have to See It to Tee It. To learn more, get involved as a player, coach, or volunteer, or to connect someone you know with blind golf, visit the USBGA website at [usblindgolf.com](http://usblindgolf.com).