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EXECUTIVE CHEF PROFILE: HARDSCRABBLE COUNTRY CLUB FORT SMITH, AR

EXECUTIVE CHEF AT HARDSCRABBLE COUNTRY CLUB

Hardscrabble Country Club in Fort Smith, Arkansas, is seeking a dynamic and hands-on Executive Chef to lead its culinary program during an exciting phase of growth and refinement. The Club is looking for a chef with a high level of attention to detail and a proven ability to deliver excellent service in a strong a la carte experience as well as banquet operations. The ideal candidate will bring a strong sense of organization, creativity, and leadership, ensuring seamless service across dining venues while elevating the overall culinary experience.

This individual will be responsible for recruiting, mentoring, and motivating a high-performing culinary team and for fostering a culture rooted in collaboration, accountability, and pride. A hands-on presence, strong communication skills, and a passion for innovation, balanced with respect for member favorites, are essential to success in this role. This is a wonderful opportunity for a thoughtful and driven Executive Chef to help define the next chapter of Hardscrabble Country Club's culinary program and contribute meaningfully to the continued success of the Fort Smith community.

[Click here to view a brief video about this opportunity.](#)

HARDSCRABBLE COUNTRY CLUB

Hardscrabble Country Club, a premier destination for championship golf, racquet sports, aquatics, dining, and family fun in the River Valley. Established in 1926 on the former site of Hardscrabble Farm and designed by renowned architect Perry Maxwell, our course has hosted legends and major tournaments for nearly a century. A thoughtful 1998 renovation by Jay and Carter Morrish modernized bunkers and greens while preserving Maxwell's classic layout, ensuring its reputation as one of the finest courses in the region.

Hardscrabble's rich golf history includes the famed Hardscrabble Invitational, today's prestigious 4-Ball Invitational, and the Hardscrabble Women's Invitational, which served as an LPGA Tour stop from 1948–1950. Many credit this event as the birthplace of the LPGA itself, with champions like Babe Zaharias, Patty Berg, and Betty Jameson walking our fairways. Over the years, the club has hosted numerous national and regional championships as well as more than 13 PGA Nationwide Tour events, making it a true landmark in American golf.

Beyond golf, Hardscrabble offers one of the strongest racquet programs in the region, featuring two indoor hard courts, two outdoor hard courts, four clay courts, and eight pickleball courts. Expert instruction, team practices, summer camps, and active Men's and Women's Tennis Associations keep players of all ages engaged. Families also enjoy our Junior Olympic-size swimming pool, wading pool, and year-round activities designed to bring members together.

From wine socials, live music, and Kids Night Out programs to elegant dining and private events for up to 500 guests, Hardscrabble delivers a lifestyle centered on community, tradition, and exceptional service. Whether on the course, the courts, poolside, or in the clubhouse, members enjoy a warm and welcoming environment where friendships flourish and memories last a lifetime.

HARDSCRABBLE COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:

- Approximately 604 Members
- Average Age - 59
- Approximate Annual Gross Revenue - \$5.5M
- Initiation Fee Approximately - \$5,000
- Approximate Annual Dues - \$7,560
- Approximate F&B volume - \$1.1M

- Annual Covers – 20K
- Beverage Volume - \$450K
- Weddings Annually - 3
- 70% a la carte/30% banquet
- Kitchen Employees – 12 (Sous Chef)
- COS – 49% Budget – 40% Actual
- 1 Kitchen (serving the Main Clubhouse, Turn house, and Pool)
- Annual Closure – 2 weeks in January – R&M
- Traditionally Closed (Mondays - Christmas – New Year's)
- POS – Club Essentials
- 501-C7 – Status - Member Owned

HARDSCRABBLE COUNTRY CLUB WEBSITE: www.hardscrabblecc.com

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATIONS

The Lookout – seasonal operation, during the summer between Memorial Day and Labor Day, with an ideal view of the entire clubhouse and golf grounds. Casual fare, grab and go, and family-friendly dining space, with a walk-up counter, positioned above the family pool.

Valley View – 80 seats – is the patio outside of the main dining room.

The Lake View/Halfway House – situated in the middle of the award-winning golf course. This classic grab-and-go features club specials with limited-service capacity. The beautiful structure is positioned between the 7, 8, and 11th hole.

The Women's Porch – personalized private space for the female membership to enjoy ideally the outdoors, and seasonal weather. Light food and beverage offering, positioned in the fitness/racket center.

The Men's Porch – 40 seats – is aligned with the men's locker room, creating seamless service, an internal bar, and close access to the main kitchen. This private space enjoys views of the main patio and golf course.

Formal Bar – 30 seats – classic bar that transitions into the main a la carte dining space. This cozy bar setting is perfect for watching events and gathering prior to lunch or dinner.

Formal Dining Room – 64 seats – window views of the award-winning golf course. Ideal for a la carte dining and people watching for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Oak Ballroom – 160 seats – located in the main clubhouse, positioned perfectly: a la carte on one side of the clubhouse and catering/banquet opposite. Both have seamless access to the main kitchen, which serves as a hub for the culinary delivery of the members' events/dining.

Grand Hall – 100 seats – adjoined with the Oaks Ballroom, this desirable space has convertible walls and entrances to allow for larger events seamlessly. The entire clubhouse's food and service surrounds the main kitchen.

EXECUTIVE CHEF JOB DESCRIPTION

The Executive Chef at Hardscrabble Country Club is the "face and ambassador of all things culinary" at the Club. This experienced professional is responsible for leading the entire culinary operation, including hiring, training, retaining, and inspiring a team.

The Club features one central kitchen: (a la carte and banquet kitchen in the main clubhouse), as well as a satellite limited kitchen/pantry at the Lake View and Lookout/Pool deck. The main kitchens' key equipment updates were last in 2022.

As dining is a core amenity at the Club, the Executive Chef must be highly visible, approachable, and effective in communicating expectations to staff and members. Collaboration with clubhouse operations, F&B teams, and the General Manager is essential to deliver a cohesive and elevated dining program.

Reporting directly to the General Manager and sitting on the House Committee, the Executive Chef plays a vital leadership role.

Leadership

- Be a collaborative team player who is willing to work with and train the team each day, doing whatever it takes to deliver the best Member experience.

- Empower the culinary team and delegate appropriately, so they can focus on growth.
- Be an active recruiter of team members and someone who inherently enjoys developing and building his/her team and leading them to significant, positive membership satisfaction outcomes.
- Have a passion and aptitude for teaching and training all food service personnel. Be a focused and consistent evaluator of personnel, ensuring that standards of conduct and delivery are met; this includes oversight of high standards of appearance, hospitality, service, and cleanliness of the kitchen facilities.
- Maintain existing operating standards for personnel in areas of responsibility and consistently evaluate knowledge, understanding, and execution of these high standards.
- Work closely with the front-of-house food and beverage managers to ensure a cohesive experience that continually exceeds the expectations of Members and guests.
- Maintain physical presence during times of high business volume.
- Have a sense of “fun and approachability” and maintain a calm under pressure “cool demeanor” in all situations. The club and culinary team have a strong family culture.

Operations

- Maintain existing standard recipes and techniques for food preparation and presentation that help to ensure consistent high-quality food.
- Maintain a rotation of varied food offerings that feature global cuisines. Evaluate food products to ensure that quality standards are always attained.
- Maintain opening and closing cleaning checklists for each area/station within the kitchen and develop a weekly/monthly cleaning checklist.
- Safeguard all food-preparation employees by implementing training to increase their knowledge about safety, sanitation, and accident-prevention principles.
- Maintain safety training programs; manage OSHA-related aspects of kitchen safety and maintain MSDSs in easily accessible locations.

Membership

- Have a heart for hospitality, embrace, appreciate, promote, and elevate the friendly, sophisticated, and grace of the team at the Club.
- Be comfortable and happy engaging with Membership with menu planning and throughout the F&B outlets at the Club, visiting tables, engaging with Members, and welcoming all feedback.
- Be creative and responsive to Members’ requests for menu selections, event planning, etc.

Financial

- Consistently monitor payroll and labor resource allocations to ensure they are in line with financial forecasting and goals. The club has a strong finance department that provides monthly and bimonthly updates to the EC.
- Embrace the use of systems (including regular inventory processes) and technology to assist in the management of the kitchen and the financial performance of the operation.
- Prepare necessary data for applicable parts of the budget; project annual food, labor, and other costs and monitor actual financial results; take corrective action as necessary to help ensure that financial goals are met.
- Review and approve product purchase specifications.

INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE CHEF

- Build strong relationships with the Culinary and FOH teams by understanding their backgrounds and continuing the club’s care-driven culture.
- Engage with staff & members to learn names, preferences, and unique dining needs, ensuring personalized service.
- Focus on enhancing a la carte operations by balancing well-executed Club favorites with innovative menu options.
- Elevate events with creative and varied offerings that enhance Club traditions.
- Maintain industry connections for recruitment through networking with local and national organizations like the CIA and ACF.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- Has 5+ years of luxury culinary experience as an Executive Chef or an Executive Sous Chef in a large operation, multi-outlet experience a must. Preferably, has a culinary or related degree.

- Successful experience in both a la carte and banquet operations.

EDUCATIONAL & CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

- A culinary arts degree from an accredited school is preferred.
- Certified Executive Chef (ACF) or Pro Chef (CIA) certification is preferred.
- Certification in food safety is mandatory

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The club offers an excellent bonus and benefits package, including association membership.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY

Please upload your resume and cover letter in the order listed using the link below. When prompted for them during the online application process, you should have your documents fully prepared to attach. Please be sure your image is not on your resume or cover letter; it should be used on your LinkedIn Profile.

Prepare a thoughtful cover letter addressed to the **Hardscrabble Country Club General Manager, Cole Wasinger**. Clearly articulate your alignment with this role, why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career, and why HCC and the Fort Smith, AR area will benefit you, your family, your career, and the Club if selected.

You must apply for this role as soon as possible, but no later than 15th October 2025. Candidate selections will occur on 22nd October, with the first Interviews expected in 3rd November year, and the second interviews a short time later. The successful candidate should assume his/her role in mid-to-late November.

IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:

“Last Name, First Name Resume”

“Last Name, First Name Cover Letter - Hardscrabble”

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format.)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions, please email Bethany Talyor at bethany@kkandw.com

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