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What's Happening

by
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As you read this Judy and I will be on our return trip from Israel and Jerusalem. Hopefully I will be able to put together some cogent recounting of what we witnessed in that troubled area. Of course our reason for going was to satisfy a decades' long desire to walk along some of the same streets and byways as Jesus. Until that time allow me to continue to thrill you with my day to day exploits as a retired individual.

As you might have guessed from my previous articles golf is taking over more and more of my life and thought processes. My dreams are centered on how to get out of a trap or how to expertly follow through by rolling my shoulder properly. Judy and I have been going out together after 5 pm to shoot as many holes as we can before dark and the extra practice is paying off. My original goal when I began my quest to conquer this game of games in August was to break 100 which I accomplished in December with a 99, thanks to a 30 yard chip in birdie on the last hole of Hacienda Hills Lakes course. Since that time, I have been averaging 102 per game but have shot several sub-100 games.

Next on my list of accomplishments is to break 90 which I came close to several weeks ago with a 91 on Palmer's Riley Grove/Cherry Hill courses. To most of you out there I'm sure you could care less what I shoot in golf but to me it's a great challenge to not master the game, but to get to the point of being able to play with those of low handicaps without them thinking, "Oh well, here we go again... hit the ball and drag Tom." Like Rodney Dangerfield I just want to get a little respect. I am very competitive and, of course, I'm my own worst critic and enemy.

For those of you who happen to be paired with someone of my high handicap status please remember that even though we have a high handicap it doesn't mean we are mentally challenged in all areas and can't detect some fake sincerity in your comments. For instance, do you really think we believe you when you say, "Nice out, Tom," just because we miraculously get the ball out of a trap but are still lying 20 yards from the hole on the brink of rolling into the trap on the other side of the green?"

I do play with some nice guys who seem to be sincere when they comment on my shots and, because I've asked them to, they are quick to point out ways that I could improve on that same shot the next time. I really have learned from their experience and welcome their input. One of my friends, with whom I play often, sent me an e-mail concerning a book entitled "The Best Golf Book Available," suggesting that I should invest in buying it because it fit my game perfectly. I'll list a few of the chapters so you can see what he thinks of my game.

Chapter 1- How to Properly Line Up Your Fourth Putt

Chapter 3- How to Avoid the Water When You Lie 8 In The Trap

Chapter 6- How to Use Your Shadow on the Green to Maximize Earnings

Chapter 10- How to Find that Ball That Everyone Else Saw Go Into the Water

Chapter 11- Why Your Wife Doesn't Care You Birdied the 6th Hole

Chapter 12- How to Learn When to Allow a Foursome Play Through Your Twosome

Chapter 13- How to Relax When Hitting a Third Shot Off the Tee

And one of my favorite chapters,

Chapter 14- When to Re-Grip Your Ball Retriever

Obviously the person who sent me this book has seen some major challenges in my game and is only trying to help me improve but I'm getting the feeling that he believes I'm corrupted by too many years of bad posture and riotous living.

Judy and I were playing on Heron Golf Course the other day and I came across a great many traps that hadn't been raked and greens that appeared to have never had any divots repaired and the immediate thought that came to my mind was, "Why don't these people appreciate what they have here and start taking care of it better?" As I played on I noticed it was an exceptionally busy day and twosomes and foursomes behind us seemed impatient because of missed shots on our part and our inability to get up and down in par. Their presence tended to put me in a mode of wanting to rush and just hit the shot without first deciding which was the better club, etc.. Consequently, the thought of not repairing a divot, or not raking the trap grew ever larger in my mind and had I been a true beginning golfer I would have foregone those proper steps of etiquette in order to get off the green quicker.

Folks, let's remember the majority of golfers who play the Executive courses are beginners trying to learn a game that will serve them well into their 80s and 90s. As they improve their game so will the time they spend on the hole diminish. Remember your beginning days in the game and allow them a little more courtesy and patience so they will feel free to make the proper repairs to fairway, traps and greens. To rush them will only mean future inconveniences and missed shots for you on those same holes in the future.

Someone told me a long time ago that golf was a gentleman's and lady's game. Let's all try to act accordingly when we're out there.

See you next week.

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