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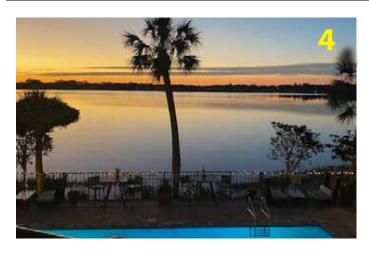


SCOTT KRAMER: LOVE OF GOLF RETURNS TO LIFT BLIND GOLFER TONY DEAR: DONALD ROSS ENTHUSIASTS STARTED TREND GARY VAN SICKLE: CADDYSHACK APPEARANCE WAS A SMALL PART OF A BIG LIFE FOR THIS LADY



Volume 3, Number 11 - September 2023

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## **ING Fall Forum**



Kate Strickland is a Florida native who has spent over 20 years assisting companies, destinations, organizations and individuals with their branding, messaging, content development and communications.

Kate will share some of her vast knowledge on all these marketing subjects during the ING Fall Forum Nov. 10-12 at the Inn On The Lakes in Sebring, FL. She will conduct a marketing seminar on the first afternoon of this gathering of golf media and business executives.

The International Network of Golf will conduct the ING Fall Forum, which includes educational sessions, networking, product introduction, information sharing, golf and general memory making. Anyone in the media and golf industry is invited to attend.

Kate is the Founder and CEO of Wander Media Company, an eight-year-old destination marketing media provider in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia. Wander Media creates a television channel for destinations that informs area visitors about places to eat, drink, shop, and play during their stay.

A team of engineers developed the technology necessary to deliver exclusive, original video content directly to the in-room televisions of area hotels and resorts. A talented crew of producers, videographers, writers, and hosts craft video content that informs, entertains and inspires viewers to explore the very best in local dining, recreation, culture, and the arts.

Today, Wander airs in nearly 70 hotels, resorts, visitor centers, and airports throughout the region and reaching more than ten million viewers every year. Furthermore, Wander's technology and marketing model are now being applied to countless other industries, including hospitals, universities, multi-location businesses, and cities and counties throughout North America.

A Jacksonville native and a graduate of the University of Florida (BS '00, MAMC '01), Kate is a passionate Floridian and an experienced brand-builder with more than 20 years of experience in marketing, content development, and communications strategy.

In addition to overseeing the daily operations of

Continued on Page 6





# ING Fall Forum

Nov. 10-12, 2023 Inn On The Lakes Sebring, FL

## **SCHEDULE**

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION				
FRIDAY, Nov. 10						
1 pm-3:30 pm	Forum Check-In	Inn On The Lakes Lobby				
3:30 pm-4:15 pm	Two Press Conferences: 1. Wander Media 2. Citrus Golf Trail	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
4:30 pm	Marketing Seminar Presenter: Kate Strickland Founder & CEO, Wander Media	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
6:30 pm	Welcome Dinner Co-Sponsored by Visit Sebring	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
8:30 pm	ClubING	Inn On The Lakes Bar				
SATURDAY, Nov. 11						
7 am-7:45 am	Breakfast	Delivered To Your Room				
8 am	Forum Check-In	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
8:30 am	General Golf Industry Discussion	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
9:30 am	Two Press Conferences: 1. BroomZoom 2. TBD	Inn On The Lakes Meeting Room				
	LUNCH ON YOUR OWN					
1:30 pm	Stableford Golf Tournament  Sponsored by New England Golf	Sebring Country Club				
5:45 pm	Awards Dinner	Sebring Country Club				
8:30 pm	ClubING	Inn On The Lakes Bar				
SUNDAY, Nov. 12-Checkout						
7 am-7:30 am	Breakfast	Delivered To Your Room				
8 am	CGT Open Pro-Am	Sun 'N Lake CC				
1 pm	Awards Lunch	Sun 'N Lakes CC				

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF ING 5

## **ING Fall Forum Golf**

#### Continued from Page 4

Wander Media Company, Kate serves as the Chairman of the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl's Branding Committee, a Board Member for the Northeast Florida Chapter of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association, and on UF Health Jacksonville's RISE Council. She is also a former communications professor and media spokesperson.

Kate and her husband, Landon, are parents to two children, ages 14 and 11.

A unique element to the ING Fall Forum will be attendees' participation in the Pro-Am for the annual Citrus Golf Trail Open, a Minor League Golf Tour event at Sun 'N Lake Golf Club with a \$15,000 first prize to the winning professional. The Sunday morning Pro-Am field will be limited to the first 30 ING attendees to register.

The remainder of the schedule will consist of more golf, product presentations and networking, plus some excellent dining.

Entry fee is \$125 for working media, and \$250 for business executives and golf company representatives.

Companies can also reserve a press conference slot, during which they will present information about their company and products to the attendees. Those are \$600, or \$850 as a complete conference package.

Inn On The Lakes, a beautiful hotel in which all



rooms are unique, is offering a special rate of \$119 per room per night, which includes breakfast each morning. Reservation information can be found on the entry form links below.

#### LINKS TO ENTRY FORMS:

**MEDIA MEMBERS** click here for your entry form

**NON-MEDIA MEMBERS** click here for your entry form.

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## **World Amateur**

# **40TH ANNIVERSARY WORLD AMATEUR HAD ITS** SHARE OF HIGHLIGHTS, CONTROVERSIES AND RAIN

BY TOM GORMAN

The 40th edition of the Myrtle Beach Amateur Handicap Championship is in the books, and as has been the case in many previous contests, the 2023 tournament had its share of controversy with familiar complaint of "sandbagger."

In its glorious history, the event has created priceless

moments, wild stories and indelible memories for the tens of thousands of amateurs who've participated in the largest golf tournament on the planet, and it was no different for this year's 3,260 contenders.

For the first time ever the winner - Christopher Rainey, of Drums, Pennsylvania - shot the highest gross score (99) but because he had the highest handicap (31) he won the Flight Winners Playoff held Sept. 1 at Grande

Dunes Resort Course over 64 other Flight Winners. Rainey walked away with the prestigious trophy, notoriety and \$600 gift certificate to PGA Tour Superstore.

Chris Rainey, a 57-year old businessman and avid golfer, was crowned champion on a picture-postcardperfect day in the heart of the "Grand Strand," after posting a 4-under par net score of 68. Just a few minutes before Rainey posted his 4-under score, World Amateur Tournament Director Scott Tomasello huddled with his staff and made the decision to disqualify Harry Radley, who was leader in the clubhouse after posting a 6-under par score of 66. Radley, 69, from Indianapolis, won the event in 2020.

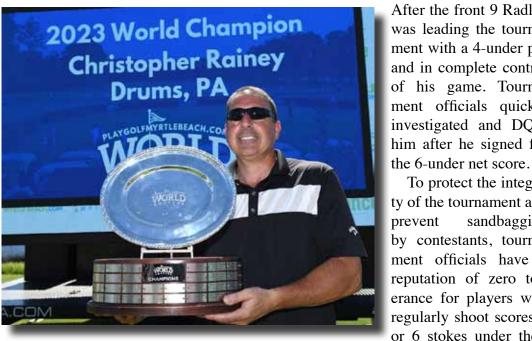
Radley claimed to maintain a 10 handicap and won Flight 30, the Mid-Senior division for men aged 60-69. Tournament officials were red-flagged by Radley's playing partners who were "stunned" with his overall playing ability as an alleged 10 handicap. One player in the group said he thought Radley should

> own a 1 or 2 handicap. After the front 9 Radley was leading the tournament with a 4-under par and in complete control of his game. Tournament officials quickly investigated and DQ'd him after he signed for

> To protect the integrity of the tournament and sandbagging prevent by contestants, tournament officials have a reputation of zero tolerance for players who regularly shoot scores 5 or 6 stokes under their USGA GHIN handicap.

Every year players are DQ'd for "sandbagging" after the committee conducts an investigation. They are usually tipped off from other amateur players in the field.

So, now comes the million dollar question for Scott Tomasello and tournament officials. How does a contestant like Christopher Rainey, who has played golf regularly for over 30 years, and, by his own admission, played almost every course in Myrtle Beach over the past 25 years, maintain a 31 handicap? Here is Rainey's front 9 gross score of 51: 6-6-6-8-4-4-6-5-6. Deduct 15 strokes and he is even par 36. On the





back 9 his gross score of 48 reads: 5-3-7-6-5-6-5. Is this the scorecard of a true champion or true sand-bagger?

Christopher Schultz (La Porte, Ind.) fired a three-round total of 209 to win the Men's Gross Division title.

"I'm thrilled to win," said Rainey. "I never thought I had a chance to win after starting with threes 6s and an 8. For 25 years I've been running buddy-trips to Myrtle Beach and this year I decided to give this a shot. And what do you know? I actually won."

This year's tournament created an embarrassing

dilemma for the Myrtle Beach World Amateur executive team. When the event started as the Dupont World Amateur Handicap Championship back in 1983, the major complaint among players and observers was "sandbagging." Now, 40 years later the chant of "sandbaggers" is as painstakingly accurate as it ever was.

Mark Gardiner (North Salt Lake, Utah) captured the Men's Mid-Senior Gross Division championship.

There was a five-way tie for first place at 3-under before Rainey made net birdie on the par 4 18th hole to earn the win, finishing one shot ahead of Joe Day (Conway, S.C.), Samuel Bland (Surfside, S.C.), Tom Fahringer (Valrico, Fla.), and Mike Zeeb (New Carlisle, Ind.).

Christopher Schultz (La Porte, Ind.) fired a three-round total of 209 to best David Hunt (Orlando, Fla.) by nine strokes to win the Men's Gross Division title.

Russell Burnham (Dallas, Texas) edged Daniel Constantino (Greer, S.C.) by two shots en route to victory in the Men's Senior Gross Division crown.

Heidi Rittenhouse cruised to a 14-shot victory victory in the Women's Gross Division.

Mark Gardiner (North Salt Lake, Utah) finished seven strokes ahead of second place Michael Barclay (Cartersville, Ga.) to capture the Men's Mid-Senior Gross Division championship.

Heidi Rittenhouse (Smithfield, N.C.) cruised to victory in the Women's Gross Division, finishing 14 strokes ahead of second place finisher Beth Gutteridge (Rindge, N.H.).

Mike Zeeb (New Carlisle, Ind.) and Brock Zeeb (New Carlisle, Ind.), a father-son duo, combined to win the Casa de Campo Pairs Competition.

Mike Zeeb (New Carlisle, Ind.) and Brock Zeeb (New Carlisle, Ind.), a father-son duo, combined to win the Casa de Campo Pairs Competition. By virtue of winning, the pair received a 4-day, 3-night stay at



## **World Amateur**

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Entry into the Myrtle Beach World Amateur. which includes at least four rounds of golf, nightly admission to "The World's Largest 19th Hole" and a gift bag, was \$699 while 3,260 players from all 50 states and 17 countries descended on Myrtle Beach. Heat indexes in the 90s marred the first two rounds and the third round was deluged with rain from the remnants of Hurricane Idalia. The final round was cancelled due to Hurricane Idalia downsizing to a tropical storm that dumped 4-5 inches of rain in Myrtle Beach.

The World Am places players into 11 divisions - men 49 and under, senior men (50-59), midsenior men (60-69), super senior men (70-79), seasoned seniors (80+), women (59 and under), senior women (60+), the gross division, senior (50+)gross division, mid-senior (60+) gross division, and women's gross division. There is also a "Just For Fun" flight, created for players who want to enjoy the World Am experience without the pressure of competition.



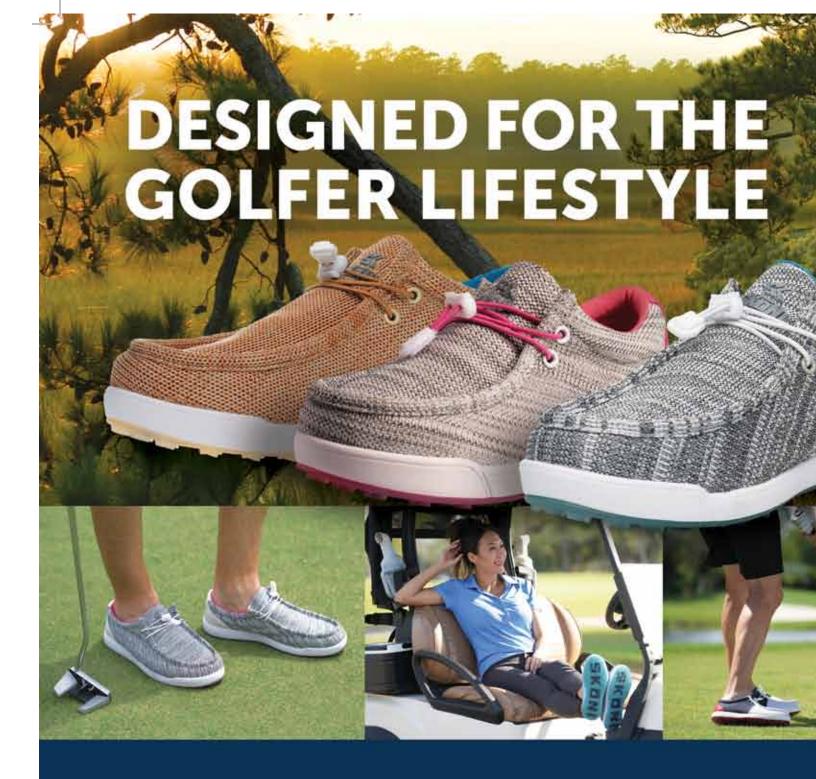




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# They might not have the high-tech sex appeal of clubheads and shafts, but **grips can have a big effect** on a club's feel and performance. BY KEN VAN VECHTEN

he inputs list for modern equipment reads like a NASA procurement manifest, be it the *gofarbomite* in your shafts or the *blastanium* in the clubhead. The thing is, when you put the pedal to the metal, so to say, you don't want to spin your tires like an 800-horsepower pony car on a sheet of ice.

Grips aren't sexy. They don't appear all that Rensselaer techy. But for all the firepower at the one end, you can't rip it if you can't grip it at the other.

While there are dozens of manufacturers and hundreds of models out there – a typical PGA Tour Superstore could have 120 types in stock – grip selection might appear daunting, yet it really comes down to two categories – build and performance, i.e., material and shape/size/texture. It's probably safe to say there's a third parameter now – color.

"When we fit and custom order clubs for customers,

they become very aware of grips," says John Conner, club merchant for the PGA Tour Superstore chain. "More than half the time custom orders get a non-OEM aftermarket grip as grips are a fundamental part of the fitting process. When customers buy clubs off the shelf, when they come in looking to re-grip, they might not have put much thought into the grip beforehand."

Rubber still is the leading material in grip manufacturing. It is durable and can be fashioned for myriad swing styles — especially for those who swing more aggressively with higher speed. Natural rubber — the stuff from tree sap — is firm, while synthetic rubber can be processed to be softer and provide more feel. Natural rubber products tend to be more all-weather capable, and it is the alpha dog in terms of market share, but for ease of consideration, if you play Golf Pride, which

Reprinted with permission from Met Golfer



invented the first rubber slip-on grip in 1953, you play rubber of either ilk, or, perhaps, a combination of the two, such as the popular Tour Velvet.

The new kid on the block is polyurethane (a type of polymer), which also is a product of the lab. It's not quite new, with Winn Grips having perfected the material nearly 30 years ago. Polyurethane is softer and compliant for those who want a "squishier" feel. It's also favored, often in a larger diameter, by those with arthritis or other hand maladies.

Size and shape are as important. Grips come stock in "standard" configuration, though there is no uniform standard as to what constitutes standard. Consumers can get under, mid and oversized offerings, too.

"Grip size isn't talked about nearly enough, given the performance benefits they can provide," Conner says. "There is no stereotypical answer on grip size. Physically, it comes down to the size of your palm and the length of your longest finger. But that only goes so far. We can tell a customer, 'You're best served by a standard grip with a couple of wraps (of tape beneath the grip).' We can give that direction, but a lot of times customers will then tell us, 'My buddy had these soft oversized grips and they felt great."

The problem with oversized grips is that they slow down hand rotation, which isn't bad for a hook-spin artist, but since most people slice ...

Taper, or, rather, the lack thereof, is the latest industry trend. Taper is simply the reducing diameter of a grip from the top to the bottom. It, too, has been a standard, but many now see it as a shibboleth.

Lamkin and Winn offer non-tapering grips, and Golf Pride is all in on its Plus4 technology. As the name indicates, the grips—in three models—simulate having

four wraps of tape under the lower hand.

"The big upside (for stronger players) is the larger lower end slows down the rotation of the club face," says Eric Gibson, Golf Pride's global commercial director. "We also found that players could add a bit more juice to their swings," owing to the greater stability provided by the grip.

Non-tapering is also built into the company's CP line, though it is not "Plus4" designated in branding. Golf Pride's non-taper products have drawn even with taper models in consumer preference.

"I am a huge fan and a believer," Conner says of nontaper technology. "I am an evangelist."

A final parameter – aside from color – is texture. Texture is a tactile function and our response to it is similar to how we perceive and accept, or not, firmness and size. Texture is just that, be it smooth or cobbled, etched or even. I personally like a grip with a good amount "going on." My default is to a corded product. The industry is also seeing a return to grips with a textural feature of a specific intent, the "reminder rib." The rib is a narrow, raised vein along the underside spine of a grip, meant as a means to help us grip consistently.

For a lot of folks, grips are a "grandpappy always did it that way, I always do it that way" thing. That's not necessarily a bad course of action, at least if some effort went into vetting the old man's decisions. Go ahead, experiment; figure out what works and what doesn't. You might find you've changed over the years. Or not.

"It's OK to tinker, people should tinker," says A.J. Berglund, head professional at Lincolndale's Anglebrook Golf Club. "Try a grip on your favorite club, try another. You don't have to do the entire set; you're tinkering."



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### **Feature Story**

## A SPECIAL CAMEO BY A SPECIAL PERSON

### Caddyshack Appearance Was A Small Part Of A Big Life For This Lady

#### BY GARY VAN SICKLE

You probably missed seeing Madeleine (Flannery) Samarco in the 1980 movie "Caddyshack."

She was an extra in the film and appeared only

on screen for a moment. Look for a short woman standing next to the tall man in a camera shot of bystanders just before greenskeeper Carl Spackler (Bill Murray) blows up the green.

Madeleine, my sister-in-law's mother, missed seeing herself, too. When she and husband Jim went to the theater to watch the film, she was offended by the foul language and raunchy behavior. They walked out after the first 15 minutes.

It is a shame you missed Madeleine. She was a golf fan unlike any other. She recently passed away in her 102nd summer near Pittsburgh, surrounded by her family. Hers was a life welllived.

The reason she got her "Caddyshack" cameo was because she played golf at Rolling

Hills Golf Club, a public track near her home in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. That's where most of the movie was filmed. She and Jim thought it would be fun to answer the casting call for extras, which simply required them to hang around the course for a few days until needed.

Jim also appeared in the movie. A decent golfer, he filled in as a stunt double to hit one tee shot for an actor who wasn't adept at golf. Neither Madeleine's daughter, Madeleine; her other daughter, Barbara (my sister-in-law); or her son, Kirwan, remember which actor he replaced. But they remember Madeleine say-

ing she got paid \$75 for her part. Madeleine and Jim also danced in the background during a party scene at the club but didn't appear in the final cut.

Why are you reading about Madeleine? Because she was one in a million, not only as a golf nut (the good

kind), but as a person. She was soft yet strong; innocent yet resilient and resourceful; optimistic yet pragmatic; and radiant in her goodness.

Her children claim she had a drug problem. "Every week, she drug us to church and drug us to Sunday school," recalls Barbara, who still has her perfect attendance pins to prove it.

Madeleine's first husband, Kirwan Flannery, was a successful funeral director. They enjoyed 28 years together before he passed away. She was 52 and a stay-

was 52 and a stayat-home mom. She was forced to sell her house and move. She landed a job as a travel agent.

One of her new neighbors, Betty Samarco, was in a difficult battle with cancer. Madeleine visited her to provide comfort almost daily. It was an act of unconditional kindness and love. So much so that Betty told her husband, "Jimmy, when I die, you should marry that woman. She'll take good care of you."

Betty lost her fight with cancer. Jim Samarco listened to his wife. He later married Madeleine. They were together for 32 years before he, too, passed away.





Jim gave Madeleine a gift that lasted the rest of her life (which proved to be a very long time):

Golf.

Caddyshack is a 1980 American sports comedy film and has a cult following and was described by ESPN as "perhaps the funniest sports movie ever made."

He taught her the game. She got hooked on it and played at least twice a week at several Fort Lauderdale-area courses, including the infamous Rolling Hills. She didn't put her clubs down until she was 89.

Early on, she excitedly called her daughter Madeleine to tell her she'd broken 100. Her daughter told

her that was really good for an older lady. "No," Madeleine replied, "I broke 100 for only nine holes."

Her enthusiasm for golf was unwavering even though her handicap never dipped below 36. She was very proud that she won her flight in the club championship three years in a row at the two courses where she played in leagues.

She was an avid golfer despite a few mishaps. In her early 80s, she fractured her hip and had to spend six weeks recovery time in her apartment, which had 16 steps leading to the front door. The first thing she did after six weeks, her daughters say, was go to hit a bucket of balls at a golf course range. As a fellow avid golfer

and as someone who got to know Madeleine in her last two decades, I can just about guarantee Madeleine didn't wait the full six weeks before she went to the range. She just didn't tell her daughters.

When she was 87, she got run over by a golf cart... her own cart. It was a freak accident. The cart brake either didn't stay locked or Madeleine didn't lock it. She went behind the cart and got her club out of the bag. Then the cart began moving downhill. It picked up enough speed to knock her down and roll over her. She didn't suffer any broken bones but was bruised and had an ugly gouge on her shin with a lot of blood.

Her playing partners insisted on driving her to the hospital but Madeleine declined. "I'm going to finish this round," she told her pals. Then she played the remaining 14 holes and drove herself to the emergency room.

She ended up spending two months at her daughter Madeleine's home in Connecticut to recover.

After that, her weekly golf rounds resumed in Florida. At 89, she took a fall in her kitchen while entertaining guests for dinner. They wanted to take her to the hospital but you can probably guess her response. "I went to all the trouble of cooking this chicken divan," she told her friends. "You're going to eat it and

enjoy it. Then you can take me to the hospital."

At 90, her hip gave out and she fell in a Florida drugstore's parking lot. An ambulance came this time. She required back surgery, too, and that was the end of her golf-playing career

It did not end her interest in golf. She relocated to the Pittsburgh area, near Barbara, in a senior-living facility. She regularly corresponded with her golfing buddies in Florida.

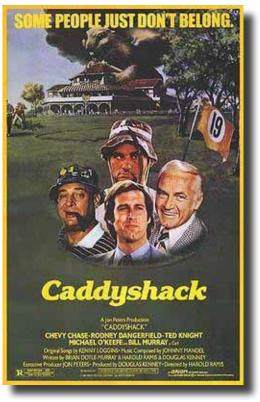
She loved watching professional golf on TV maybe even as much as she loved playing the game. She didn't miss many golf telecasts. Anytime we had a family get-together, she'd pepper me with questions about who was winning, what did I think of so-and-so golfer, and what tournaments I was going to go to next. Her favorite golfer was Jordan

Spieth. "He just seems like a nice guy," Madeleine said. "I like it when they show him on TV." I assured her that he was, indeed, perhaps the nicest man on the PGA Tour. That made her smile.

When she visited, I made sure the TV was turned on to any golf tournament in progress. Her hearing deteriorated in her later years so closed-captioning was a great option for her.

Near the end, her body simply wore out. Her heart struggled to pump hard enough to keep her lungs working—congestive heart failure.

The last thing she did, appropriately enough, was



## **Feature Story**



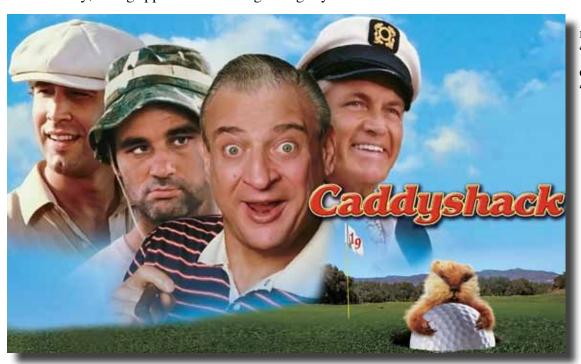
watch golf. The British Open telecast from Royal Liverpool, which Brian Harman won by six strokes, was on the TV in her hospital room. Her grandson, Frank, held his phone near Madeleine's face every so often so she could see the leaderboard. She really was paying attention, despite all the morphine that had been pumped into her.

Suddenly, she gripped Frank's fingers tightly and

wouldn't let go. She said something about "playing the last hole." Then she closed her eyes. She passed peacefully within a few minutes.

She was a mother, a wife, a radiant source of positivity and a good soul. If it was up to Madeleine, though, I'm pretty sure she would enjoy being remembered as one other word:

Golfer.

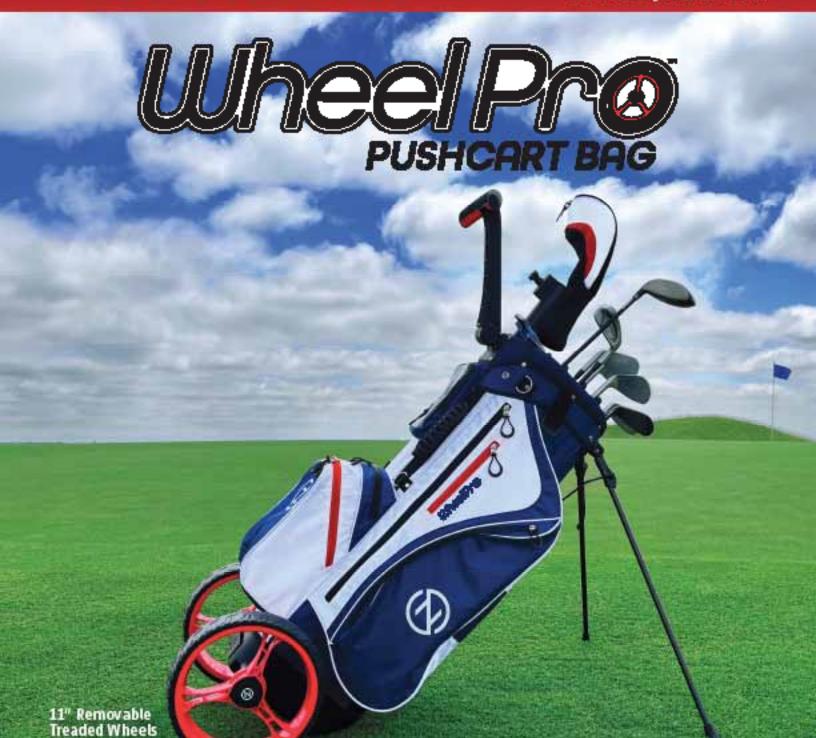


She earned it. A memorable line from "Caddyshack" aptly described her life: "That's a peach, Hon."

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### **Profile**

## **LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS**

## Love Of Golf Returns To Lift Blind Golfer Out Of Depression

#### BY SCOTT KRAMER

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Poincenot Jeremy loved playing golf as a kid. He was immersed in the game, as his parents worked in the golf equipment business. "All I wanted to do was go play with my dad," recalls the 33-yearold Carlsbad resident. "I wanted to be a part of what he was doing. So I learned by getting lessons and chipping and putting." Eventually he worked his way onto his high school varsity golf team.

But at age 19, darkness set in.

Literally. Poincenot started losing his vision. The San Diego State University sophomore was diagnosed with Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy, which is a very rare genetic disorder that causes sudden loss of central vision and affects roughly 1 in 50,000 people. Most of those affected are 18-to-25-year old men. Over a two-month span, he became legally blind and, understandably, fell into a state of depression. That lasted several years.

His mother Lissa desperately wanted to help. In her quest to find some way to comfort her son, she discovered golf tournaments for the blind. "She thought it was going to make me happy again, make me whole again," Jeremy recalls. "She saw there were world championships and told me I could compete in these one day, and she was right. At first, I was against the idea and didn't want to embarrass myself. I hated slow play when I was fully sighted and thought blind golf was probably the epitome of slow play. I didn't want



to do it. But I finally decided to go to the range."

As he started swinging, some shots felt pure. As he continued hitting better shots more frequently, his confidence and enjoyment began emerging. Soon, he decided to go play a course, with his father Lionel serving as his guide. He shot 99 the first time out. He expected to score better, as he was used to shooting in the 70s when he was sighted. But he continued to practice and play — ultimately lowering his Handicap Index to 9.8.

"Just getting out there playing and being in golf tournaments has given me so much fulfillment and joy," says Poincenot, who CNN has called the world's best blind golfer. With his dad at his side, he's captured three World Championships and nine National Championships.

He's quick to point out that the contestants are somewhere between completely blind to legally blind with some degree of sight. Poincenot's somewhere in the middle, able to make out some objects in his visual



"I lived every day wanting to one day see again. Now I could care less. I'm perfectly happy in my situation."

--Brian Poincenot



periphery. "At every tournament around the world or country, we play and afterwards drink a beer, eat dinner and have a great time," he says. "And if you just hung out at any of the tournaments, you'd never hear a single person complain about their lack of sight. They've gone through challenging times but have gotten off the couch and are pursuing their passion again. There are some phenomenal blind players around the world, and I've gotten to play some amazing places with my dad through blind golf."

#### **Fundraising for a Cure**

What are the biggest physical challenges he faces on the course as a blind golfer? "Finesse shots," he says. "When I was fully sighted, any shot inside 100 yards I'd pull my 58-degree wedge and kind of eyeball the pin and hit the shot. Now I can't see the flag from off the green. So, anything inside 100 yards, I need to know if the pin is front, middle or back — and then dial in a swing for that yardage without being able to see the flag. When I was sighted, I'd want to land up beyond a bunker and have it trickle out from there. Now it's all numbers based, more than eyesight Hitting a drive or a full iron is no different. In fact, I think it's actually a little easier. On the greens, I pace off all my putts and walk the yardage from ball to hole. I feel that in my feet and have someone there with their eyes telling me what they see."

Now an inspirational speaker, the father of two aims to provide blind people with a fresh perspective, to empower their interdependence personally and professionally by realizing that asking for help is actually a strength and not a weakness. His advice to those considering taking up golf? "Do it, 100 percent," says Poincenot, who is a member at Morgan Run Club & Resort in Rancho Santa Fe, where he often plays. "Don't think of reasons not to do it. Just jump in."

Poincenot also fundraises for a Leber's cure. After he went blind, Poincenot says, "I lived every day wanting to one day see again. Now I could care less. I'm perfectly happy in my situation. It's my new normal, but I fund raise so that they find a treatment or cure, so others don't have to go through that experience of losing their sight and the challenging emotional and psychological impact that comes with it. I hate that others go through it. It's not a fun experience.

#### Scott Kramer

Veteran golf writer Scott Kramer has covered the golf equipment market full-time since 1990. His career has spanned senior editor positions at both Golf Pro Magazine and GOLF Magazine. He now works on a freelance basis for many consumer and trade publications, including the SCGA's FORE magazine.

## **ARCHITECTURE**

# **DEAD ARCHITECTS SOCIETY**

### Donald Ross Enthusiasts Started Trend; Now It Is A Movement

#### BY TONY DEAR

(Reprinted with permission from The First Call)

It's hard to tell but Vaughn Halyard is probably only joking when he says prospective members of the Donald Ross Society, and those planning on playing in society events, should come prepared for a long and exhaustive discussion of Ross's architecture and lifetime.

"Folks should be forewarned," he adds with a smile, sort of. "Yes, we visit a lot of outstanding courses, but if you're not willing to chat about the arcane details of Ross features, his course-routing acumen, his train travel, his prowess with hickories as a player, his roots in Dornoch and emigration to the US and Massachusetts, and a litany of other things Ross or golf course architecture/history-related, then perhaps you shouldn't come."

The CEO and Executive Producer at a Los Angeles-based media company, Halyard says his own immersion into Ross culture is a relatively new phenomenon, but admits the pull of Ross-chat with like-minded souls now goes far beyond mere geekery. It all began in 2011 when Cedar Rapids CC embarked on a major course project and hired Ross specialist Ron Prichard to restore the Ross features lost over time. Halyard was a member of the greens committee but, in his own words, "largely illiterate with regard to course architecture". In an effort to better understand Prichard's proposals, be a more useful part of the conversation, and help his home club realize its full potential, Halyard thought it prudent to became a member of the Donald Ross Society.

"I sensed we might benefit from affiliation with the Ross architecture brand and got a crash course on Donald Ross," he says. "I subsequently became



the Golf and Green Chair at the club, and the Ross Society has been an invaluable resource and supporter of our project."

Make no bones, membership of a society dedicated to the safeguarding and promotion of a certain (dead) architect's work is really only for the truly obsessed, the utterly pre-occupied, the genuinely fixated, and the helplessly spellbound - take Brad Becken, author of the encyclopedic 'The Golf Architecture of Donald Ross' published last November by Classics of Golf.

The society's President since 2018, Becken has played every single one of the 370 Ross designs that remain in the US and Canada and says that, while the 600-strong roster (members renew dues every year) does include clubs, 99% of the society's members are



individual enthusiasts.

Becken says the Ross Society, which holds several events at Ross designs every year, has been a significant player in the course-revival movement since being founded in 1989. "We were established at a time when the restoration and renovation of courses from the classical era (Ross, Tillinghast, Mackenzie etc.) was gaining momentum," he adds. "The objective was to undo the damage done to so many courses by subsequent architects and green committees as well as unfortunate maintenance practices." To date, the Ross Society has consulted on 125 course restorations (at no charge to the club). "It continues to be particularly gratifying to see recent restorations of such

prominent courses as Oakland Hills, Inverness and Oak Hill," says Becken, adding that he is in contact with Ross-designed courses every day, especially now as a number are currently celebrating, or are about to celebrate, their centenary.

At age 34, the organization devoted to Ross is the eldest of the architect societies and remained alone in the field until 1994 when it was joined by the Walter J Travis Society whose mission is to promote the legacy of Walter J. Travis (R), America's foremost amateur golfer of the early 1900s, golf journalist and publisher, turf grass expert, golf course architect, and one of the great pioneers of golf in North America.

While Jerome Travers, who won four US Amateur Championships to Travis's three (Travis also won a British Amateur), might take issue with the first part, the rest of the statement is undeniably true, and fans of the Australian native who arrived in the US at the age of 23 and didn't start playing golf until he was 34, seem especially loyal to the man who would design or remodel 50 or so courses before his death in 1927.

Because so few of the courses attributed to him are publicly-accessible, Travis remains something of an unknown quantity, but Travis Society members will tell you his original designs at Ekwanok, Cape Arundel, the Country Club of Troy, and Westchester CC, and redesigns of Garden City GC, Hollywood GC, Sunningdale CC, and Columbia CC are as good as anything from the Golden Age of Golf Architecture.

Like any good architect society, Travis's group of admirers keeps in close contact with Travis-designed clubs and maintains a comprehensive collection of Travis memorabilia.

The roughly 100-strong membership (as well as 22 clubs) also boasts an impressive list of accomplishments which include establishing and organizing the inter-club Travis Cup which is held every year, verifying the accuracy of Travis's World Golf Hall of Fame database, establishing and underwriting a scholarship

for students pursuing a career in the golf industry, and being approved by the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) public charity allowing it to receive tax deductible donations.

One wonders why it took five years for other architect societies to appear after that devoted to Ross but, following the arrival and early success of the Walter Travis Society, new groups came on the scene fairly regularly. The Alister Mackenzie Society was officially formed in 1995 though it had been operating informally since 1987

when Meadow Club member Gary Nelson organized a two-day event involving friendly competition and much Mackenzie-related discussion that was attended by three other California Mackenzie clubs – Green Hills, Pasatiempo and the Valley Club. In 1994, a Pasatiempo member named Barry Staley who had become an important figure in the increasingly active, though still as yet unincorporated, organization took a phone call from a gentleman named Ray Haddock who, it turns out, was Mackenzie's step-grandson. Haddock had recently taken up golf and wanted to



## **ARCHITECTURE**

ask Staley how he might get access to some of his famous grandfather's designs. Staley and Haddock had a game at Pasatiempo during which Staley explained the Mackenzie enthusiasts' aspirations and desire to collect as much relevant and historical material as possible.

Haddock returned home and located an old cedar chest that had belonged to his father - Mackenzie's stepson and secretary, Tony Haddock. Inside was a document Mackenzie had written with Tony Haddock's assistance but which had remained un-

touched for 50 years or more. To cut a long story short, the manuscript was published in 1995 and 'The Spirit of St. Andrews' quickly became a mustown for golfers and golf historians selling 25,000 copies in Scotland in one day during the week of the Open Championship at St. Andrews. Ray Haddock was there to sign copies of the book and he generously donated the proceeds to the now officially-recognized society for the establishment of a design competition in which contestants submit their design of a single hole. The 'Lido Prize' remains one of the most notable aspects of the Mackenzie Society which is now made up of 15 member clubs from seven different countries - Argentina, Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, and the US.

The legally separate, but philosophically-linked, British-based Alister Mackenzie Society (founded in 1999) operates differently to the US society in that it welcomes individuals from its 64 member clubs to become members.)

The year after the Mackenzie Society was established in the US, Britain's first architect society – The James Braid Golfing Society – formed with Australia's Peter Thomson – like Braid a five-time Open Championship winner - playing a significant role in its creation. The JBGS operates fairly informally compared with, say, the Donald Ross or Alister Mackenzie Societies, holding events 'a few times a year' with the main event always at Brora GC,

20 minutes north of Royal Dornoch and one of Thomson's favorite courses.

A couple of years later, two more societies incorporated – the Toronto-based Stanley Thompson Society honoring Canada's greatest ever architect, and the Tillinghast Association whose membership currently stands at 'around 3,000' says Vice-President and co-founder, Stuart Wolffe. Tillinghast-devotees pay once for a lifetime membership so that figure represents the total number of Tilly fans who have joined the association over the last 25 years.



Allister Mackenzie's Stunning Cypress Point

Wolffe, a member at Baltusrol GC, says the association was instrumental in nominating Tillinghast for the World Golf Hall of Fame which he entered in 2015. "We also assist Tillinghast courses in researching their history, and have been guest speakers at several including Winged Foot and Baltimore CC."

It's likely the Tillinghast Association has the most members of any architect society though it will be interesting to see how many the newly-proposed Harry Colt Society attracts.

The great English architect, who contributed significantly to the design of George Crump's Pine Valley, performed masterful remodels of Muirfield, Royal Portrush, and Sunningdale (Old), and designed the



superb Swinley Forest, St George's Hill and New Course at Sunningdale, was previously celebrated by the Colt Association based at Stoke Park west of London and where 007 took down shameless cheat Goldfinger. The association was owned by businessman Hertford King but disappeared when the King Family sold the 300-acre estate to Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani for £57 million (\$70m) in 2021.

However, a new Harry Colt Society is being planned by author Adam Lawrence and Jasper Miners of evalu18.com, and will be launched alongside Lawrence's forthcoming biography of Colt - 'More Enduring Than Brass'.

The Harry Colt Society may not be the only architect society born in 2023. Twenty-one years after first announcing his idea of a William Flynn Society, Flynn expert Wayne Morrison is finally poised to realize his dream. "The concept has languished for a long time," Morrison admits. "But I'm working with two young computer geniuses from Richmond, VA who are helping me start the Society that will be interestingly differentiated from other societies, particularly with respect to historical assets, data analysis, and AI applications."

The Devereux Emmet Society, meanwhile, is being revived by Emmet aficionado Mark Chalfant after it faltered in 2019 following a nine-year run. "I'll be relaunching Devereux Emmet Golf on May 1," says Chalfant who plays at the Emmet-designed Cape Cod CC in Rockville, MA and who is planning two or three member outings this year at Emmet courses located in either Long Island or Connecticut.

Fans of Robert Trent Jones, Tom Simpson, Seth Raynor, Wayne Stiles, William Bell, and Perry Maxwell also have societies in which they can commemorate the work of their design heroes and, though it's not a society as such, a coalition of sorts exists to spread the gospel according to Mike Strantz. Five years ago, childhood friends Landon Owen and Brett McNamara began a 'golf crusade' to play 1,000 courses and somewhere along the way focused their attention on their love of Strantz courses, becoming known as the 'Strantz Fantz'. To share their love of his seven original designs, they organized an event called the Iron Maverick which was touted as 'Half Mike Strantz tribute, half golf Ironman, 100% fun'. The first event was played at Royal New Kent in 2019, the second in 2021 at Caledonia, True Blue and Bulls Bay – a South Carolina extravaganza that went on sale nine months before the first round and sold out within 45 seconds! While 88 alert, quick-typing golfers guaranteed their places, 200 got added to a wait list.

It's doubtful even the Donald Ross Society has experienced a rush for event spots quite like that, and yet it's not unreasonable to suggest it remains the gold standard of architect societies. Former Board member Mark Larson says it's the most active and engaged of the societies and even has a foundation that raises money to support its mission. "The Tufts Archives in Pinehurst and municipal Ross courses have been beneficiaries of this activity," he adds. "For example, Mill Creek Park in Youngstown, Ohio has received grants of over \$40,000 in the last 4-5 years to help with their two 18 hole Ross municipals."

Vaughn Halyard who has accepted an invitation to join the Board is, like Larson, pretty bullish about his chosen society. "The events are phenomenal," he says. "There is a strong sense of community between Ross club members, public players and historians. We're also blessed with a philosophical home base at Pinehurst and a tremendously well-run repository of Ross information at the Tuft's Archives in Pinehurst's Given Memorial Library. I'd say that, amongst the community of dead architect societies, we're definitely the clubhouse leader." But Halyard is also a realist. "The Mackenzians are blessed with an outstanding rotation for their annual event which includes Meadow, Crystal Downs, Valley Club, Cypress Point, and Royal Melbourne. So really, they don't care what the Ross Society thinks."

rosssociety.org
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travissociety.com
stanleythompson.com
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harrycolt.com
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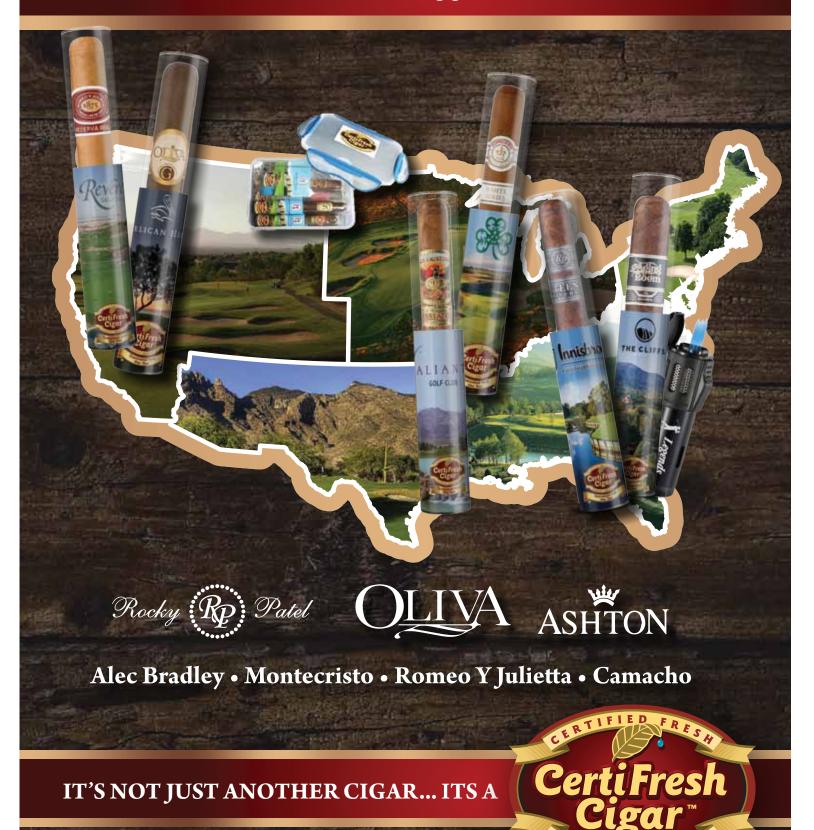
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The 2023 *PGA Buying & Education Summit* doubled in size since last year's edition in Las Vegas, welcoming more than 1,000 golf industry professionals from 44 states and eight countries to preview and source Spring 2024 apparel collections, and the latest accessories, equipment and technology from 166 participating golf brands in the sold-out exhibit spaces of the Omni PGA Frisco Resort and Monument Realty PGA District, in Frisco, Texas, July 31 – Aug. 2.

The Summit, serving the \$102 billion golf industry, was filled with valuable mid-season business opportunities, including product sourcing, national level education and buying appointments by day; and a Live Fashion Show, Demo Night and experiential networking events at night. Vendors in the One2One buying appointments were capped; both exhibit ballrooms were sold out; education sessions were at full capacity and the PGA Coaching Center activation spaces were maximized to accommodate equipment and technology companies for Demo Night.





"We are so pleased with the amazing energy, positive feedback and excitement for the new event format and the extraordinary new destination for the PGA Buying & Education Summit," said PGA Golf Exhibitions Vice President Marc Simon. "The new Home of the PGA of America, the Omni PGA Frisco Resort and the Monument Realty PGA District seem like they are custom built for a golf industry event like this. The days were filled with significant business opportunities, and the nights with networking and enjoyment for all that PGA Frisco has to offer."

Tour Edge announces their all-new Exotics Wingman Wedge Series featuring three different grinds available in five total bounces. The design goals behind the milled Wingman Wedge were to produce one of the most performance-based forged wedges in the game and Tour Edge's most advanced wedge to date.

The Exotics Wingman Wedge Series will be available at a Tour Edge authorized retailer for an MSRP of



\$139.99 and will be available at retail starting October 2nd. One of the major keys to the Wingman's forgiving nature is the 3.0mm constant offset applied to the design.

**Bridgestone Golf,** the #1 Ball-Fitter in Golf, today announced the new e9 Long Drive (\$29.99/dozen) is available in gloss colors, including pink, yellow, and

orange. Designed to produce extreme ball speeds, the e9 Long Drive was created with input from World Long Drive (WLD) contestants and is the official ball of WLD.

"The e9 Long Drive was engineered with direct feedback from WLD competitors using key Bridgestone technologies, and until now were only available to consumers in white," said Elliot Mellow, Golf Ball Marketing Manager, Bridgestone Golf. "With WLD

majors in Kingsport, TN, Oceanside, CA, and Atlanta, GA, rapidly approaching, we knew people would see the colored balls on the telecasts and be interested in buying them. Now they can."

Steve Pike, an award-winning golf journalist, has joined the staff at NewEnglandGolf.Com. He has written about every facet of golf for over 30 years. His resume includes working for such publications as Golfweek, Golf World and Golf Digest. In his new role, Pike will be responsible for producing a weekly notebook-type column about the business side of the golf industry. He will frequently offer unfiltered commentary and reviews designed to be the most trusted and reliable source for insider golf information.

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Lyric, a healthcare technology firm based in **King of Prussia**, has raised \$90.9 million, and adds Irish pro golfer Rory McIlroy's company Symphony Ventures as an investor.

Thirty-five investors participated in the round, according to a U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission filing.

Lyric's software is used by health plans to manage pay claims.

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# Cup of Emotions

# Grown men unable to talk speaks volumes why the Ryder Cup stands alone.

have kind of an amazing job. I get paid to go to sporting events, just about everything you can imagine – Super Bowls, the Olympics, the World Series, the Masters, the Stanley Cup playoffs. As my kids would say: "Blah, blah,"

I've seen a lot. I even once covered the World Chess Championship (very quiet).

But I always say this: If you have a chance to go to only one big-time sports event, make it the Ryder Cup. It has no equal. Perhaps it's too late to go to this year's match in Rome in late September, but the next one is right here at Bethpage Black in 2025.

By now I'm sure you've heard it all. Where do I even start?

It's not about money. ... It's about playing for pride and/or country. ... In an individual sport, it's a chance to be part of a team. ... Blah, blah, blah (thanks again, Roberts boys).

It is all that for sure, but for me, the critical factor is something much more elemental. It's the energy.

More than a few times, I've seen golfers cry after winning. Only once have I seen a player cry after losing – Brad Faxon, now a colleague at NBC, at the 1995 matches. It just meant that much. Never was an athlete more human to me than in that moment.

"It is a reminder that **being a gracious**winner doesn't make you weak – it
actually makes you strong."

But I think the incident that cemented my understanding of why the Ryder Cup stands alone – and one that still gives me chills – came at those same matches at Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y. – the only other New York course to host a Ryder Cup.

An overwhelming favorite, the United States led by two points going into the final day. Never in the event's nearly 70-year history had the European team come from behind in the final session to win. It had only won the cup once on U.S. soil. The result seemed a foregone conclusion.

But the Euros stormed back, winning seven of the 12 Sunday singles matches—one was halved—and when unheralded Ryder Cup rookie Philip Walton beat Jay Haas in the second to last match, Europe beat the U.S.

in America for only the second time.

Ouch

After the event, a formal ceremony brought both teams to the stage. Context for what happened next is critically important.

The U.S. had dominated the competition through its history, arriving at Oak Hill that week with a record of 23-5-2 dating to 1927.

But there had been a bit of a blip in the competitive balance a decade before. Under the stewardship of Tony Jacklin, Europe won two straight cups and retained a third.

Jacklin then stepped down as captain; Bernard Gallacher took over, and the U.S. seized back the momentum, winning two straight.

The American captain at Oak Hill in 1995 was Lanny Wadkins. A fierce competitor himself, he'd played on eight Ryder Cup teams and won 20 matches – among the best in American history.

With all of that as the backstory, Wadkins stepped to the microphone at the post-match ceremony, took out his "readers," unfolded a paper from his blazer pocket, and began to speak.

Only he couldn't.

Clearly overwhelmed with emotion, he stood there searching for words he couldn't summon.

It was an uncomfortable moment until Gallacher, who'd captained two straight losing teams after a run of European success, appeared by his side, put his arm around Wadkins' shoulder, and uttered one of the most profound and wonderful things I have ever heard an athlete say:

"Let me help you out here, my friend. I've been through this a few times myself."

I still get goose bumps (and a smile) as I recall that day.

In my opinion, that is all you need to know about why the Ryder Cup stands alone.

It's enough to make men cry and lose their ability to talk. At the same time, in this era of in-your-face, "pointing-to-the-ring" incivility, it is a reminder that being a gracious winner doesn't make you weak − it actually makes you strong. ■









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# **PARTING SHOT**



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This is the view form one of the unique guest rooms at the quaint and beautiful Inn On The Lakes in Sebring FL. For the second straight year, this will be the host view - er - site for the ING Fall Forum Nov. 10-12.