

Outlook on Lifestyle

Golf game is textbook putting

From time to time, we are all guilty of decisions that fly in the face of all common sense, logic and sanity.

As such, please don't be too judgmental when I confess the wretched truth: this summer, after 10 years of virtuous abstinence, I took up golf again.

My golf game has always been a model of textbook duffing — a duffer being someone who clings to the absurd belief that his game will soar with the eagles just as soon as he eliminates those few minor faults that invariably cause him to hook, slice, shank, top, or miss the ball completely.



Weir's View

By Ian Weir

Thomson News Service

In other words, the duffer approaches a golf course the same way Custer approached Little Big Horn. And with remarkably similar results.

I had abandoned my own duffing career quite suddenly, one sunny Saturday afternoon. I had quadruple-bogeyed the first two holes, and my drive off number three was nestling gently against an out-of-bounds marker 40 feet from the tee, when the truth suddenly dawned: I hated golf.

So I picked up my bag, advised my companion that he was welcome to continue by himself, and served notice that I would be — for the foreseeable future — in the bar.

As retirements from golf go, of course, this was hardly a dramatic one. A friend once told me of a fellow who

snapped quite suddenly on the ninth green, flung his golf bag — clubs and all — into a pond, and stalked off the course.

(Half an hour later, the fellow reappeared. Sheepishly, he waded into the pond to fish out his bag. Then he unzipped one of the pockets, retrieved his car-keys, threw his clubs back into the water, and left again.)

In any case, I did not set foot on a golf course for an entire decade. Until this summer, when that dark voice began to whisper in my ear: "G'wan — play a round of golf. Just one. Then you can give it up again. Heh heh."

Well, let's start with the bright side, which is that phase two of my golfing career is not (so far) quite so hateful as phase one.

To begin with, I seem to have mellowed with age. In the old days, I would throw shameful tantrums after hitting two or three bad shots in a row. Now, I can shank four or even five consecutive balls before beating my putter against a tree.

Plus, I'm heavier and stronger than I used to be — after missing a shot, I can throw my club a good 10 yards further.

Best of all, the Love of my Life actually approves of my golfing — so much so that she's decided to take up the game herself.

And as any golfer knows, it's great to play with the love of your life. This adds spice and variety to the round. When you weary of swearing at your equipment, you can swear at her instead.

Still, the question remains: why on earth does anyone play golf in the first place? It can't be for the exercise, much less the enjoyment — as someone or other has observed, golf is an ideal way to ruin a perfectly nice walk.

It can't be for the companionship either — although it's true that you meet

some very pleasant people on the golf course.

My personal favorite is the Eternal Optimist. He's the fellow who joins you on the first tee, and dedicates his afternoon to cheering you up.

When you slice your ball into the trees, he says, "Well, but it sure sounded good!" When you hook your next shot into a sand-trap, he exclaims, "Well, but at least you know where it is!" And when you send a ball dribbling 15 feet off the tee, he chirps, "Yes, but at least it's straight!"

At this point, you are permitted to drown him in a water-hazard. Doing so might be technically illegal, but no jury of golfers would convict you.

No, my own theory is that the urge to go golfing is much more primal than this. My theory is that golf answers the instinctive human need to cling — in the face of all logic — to Hope.

When one of our prehistoric forebears saw a sabre-toothed tiger bearing down upon him, the desperate thought must surely have come to mind: "Perhaps this is the one — the one sabre-toothed tiger out of thousands — that is a vegetarian."

No Medieval heretic was ever shown the Inquisition's instruments of torture without entertaining the brief, fond hope: "Maybe these guys are just fooling."

And here in our own enlightened era, no duffer approaches the golf course without brimming over with the belief that this is the day on which he will eliminate those few minor faults that cause hooking, shanking, slicing, topping, muffing, fozzling, hacking, slashing.

Oh, yes. Golf is grand. And sabre-toothed tigers eat quiche.

Therefore, the cure depends on the cause. For instance, after an injury due to crushing, surgeons can sometimes operate to re-establish nerve function; also, repair of a herniated disc may improve foot-drop.

controls foot-flexion. This can be due to nerve injury, poor circulation, nerve disorders or compression by a herniated disc in the spine, causing pressure on the upper nerve fibers that join to form the peroneal nerve.

ASK KATHY

Dear KATHY

How do I begin an exercise program that will work for me? I've started exercising in the past, and it seems like I always quit before I receive any real benefit from what I'm doing.

Reply:

Exercise plays a vital role in permanent weight loss, but many people have difficulty staying motivated. Two causes of waning interest are boredom and pain. If you begin a regimen that is too difficult, you may experience muscle soreness and other stress-related injury. This makes it almost impossible to stay motivated. Another problem is doing something you don't really like. If you don't like jogging, don't decide to begin a jogging program just because that's what everyone else in your neighborhood is doing.



KATHY HAJAS
Diet Center Consultant

At Diet Center we recognize exercise as an important part of a complete weight-loss program and as an excellent way to keep lost weight from returning. We teach you how exercise can be integrated with a nutritionally sound diet to achieve safe, permanent weight loss.

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Home Post Scripts

By Glenda Hughes, Sales Rep. **873-0300**

Over the summer, I'm sure that you have been watching, with great interest, the preparations for the new subdivision, south of Georgetown. What a treat to realize that we are finally going to have a better choice of homes here, and after 18 years of seemingly endless feuding, a little growth. It was with horror that I read headline news, in our local paper recently, that some poor young couple had been done out of the lot they had chosen and treated with not much courtesy to say the least. After all these years of waiting for this development, and a sign on the property with a phone number for information, I can't imagine how this screw-up happened. What I do know however, is that it sure puts a nasty flavor on a much needed new development in town.

Many of my clients have been waiting anxiously for this new subdivision, and I can't say I blame them, for lots of people want some of the new amenities that builders are now putting into homes as standard fare. What ticks me off is, that I have spent well over a year, upgrading the image of our real estate agents, and then we get this story on the front page of a salesman fouling up, and my heart sinks. I think you should know, that this was not a local agent, and hopefully from here on, there won't be any more problems. However, that does not help the poor couple that didn't get what they had dreamed of. Hopefully there has been some compensation and special priorities given to them, for I would hate to think that I have been writing in vain all this time. We do live in a very special town, with very special people and agents. A story like that one can do a lot of damage to our image, and it shouldn't have happened at all. I for one, am going to do my best to help my own clients to look out for possible problems by checking out details for them, if they don't know how to do it for themselves, and many won't know. It is a service I'd like to think that all our agents will do for their clients — just to make sure they don't run into similar problems. Don't hesitate to ask for help — it's your money that is on the line — and we are trained to help you.

Many happy thoughts go with you this week, if you are looking at new homes — it's a wonderful feeling to know that a new home is just around the corner!

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