

Men's Golf League News, March – 2024

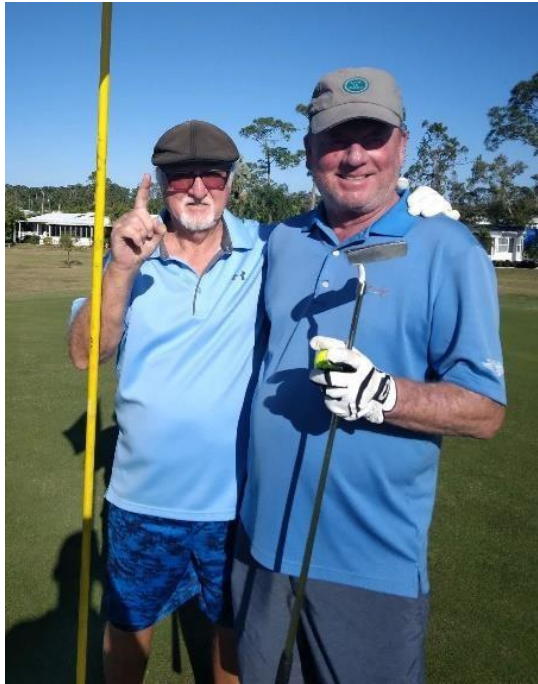
Fake News Reporter - Tad Lague

Hole-In-One Report – We start this month's update with a flurry of Holes-in-One to report. And head over to the Pine Lakes 11th hole where popular Men's League member, **Tom Ridenour** was facing a back left pin, straight into a stiff wind and behind a familiar, ball eating bunker. When asked by playing partner, **Jerry Jaromin** if he was going for the pin, a risk averse Tom replied "Nope, middle of the green if I can get there". Well, Tom admitted privately that he pulled his 9-Iron and was relieved when it appeared to clear the bunker and heard **Jim Divet**, no stranger to lucky shots say, "That could be close Tom". With no ball visible on the green, after the group checked the trap and looked behind the green, **Al Keefer** said, "Check the hole, Tom" and there sat Tom's 9th lifetime hole-in-one and 7th at the Lake Fairways community. Way to go Tom. We hope that will help to keep you and Juanita coming back to Lake Fairways for a while.



Tom Ridenour file photo

Our next hole-in-one to report is a rare Albatross, aka double eagle, aka a 1 on a par 4. **Phil Wenino** used a driver on the Lake Fairways 9th hole looking into a late afternoon sun. According to witnesses and playing partners, Dave and his son, Jeff Parmelle, Phil hit a driver, low enough and appearing to run up onto the green. After searching in front of and off the back of the green Dave had the bright



idea to look in the hole. “Hey Phil, here it is!” This is Phil’s 1st ever hole-in-one and he’s laid claim to a feat that not many golfers will achieve in a lifetime. Phil is quick to remind you that an albatross is much more rare than just an everyday hole-in-one.

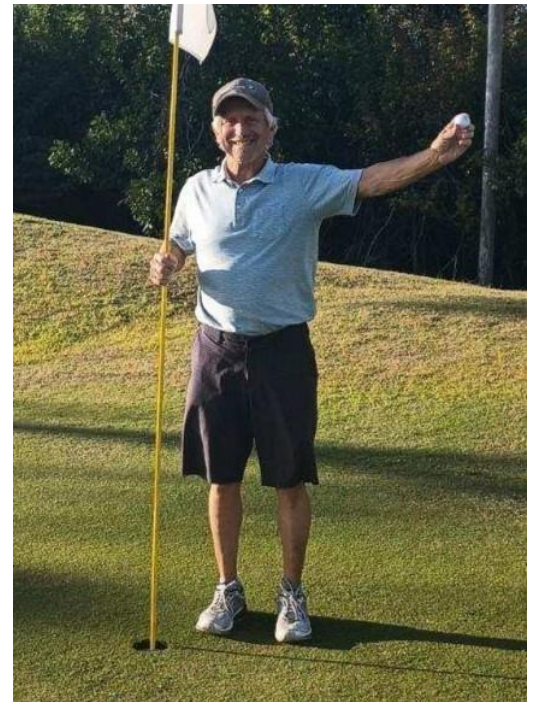
Dave Parmalee & Phil Wenino

The Hole-in-One arcade continues just a few days later with not one but two aces on the same day and within about an hour of each other. Massachusetts native and winter resident, **Gary Cushman**

who is working his way through a shoulder injury was trying to play his way back into competitive golf condition

spotted neighbors, **John and Julie Neth** heading out for a quick, late afternoon 9-hole jaunt and asked to join. Gary, being careful not to reinjure his shoulder, was taking half swings with a little extra club hoping just to make good contact and keep the ball in play, stepped up to the tee on the 7th hole with a 9-Iron in hand. The left hander made a smooth swing that never left the

center right pin as John said "That could go in". The ball landed in front of the hole and rolled up the slope, tapped the center of the flag stick and fell into the hole. This was Gary's 2nd lifetime hole-in-one following his 1st a couple years ago on hole #8. Congratulations Gary. We understand that there was an awkward hug before the group walked off the green and unfortunately for Gary, it wasn't from Julie, putting a bit of a damper on the occasion. No charges have been filed.





Same day, about an hour later, on the other side of the course, **Pete Greco** was playing with his son, **Travis** and nephew **Jeremy** who had just landed at Punta

Gorda airport about 90 minutes earlier, **Tom Charboneau** and **Phil Wenino**. Most who have played with Pete will agree that he's had more than his share of holes-in-one. Well, on this day, Pete launched a 68* wedge very high towards the 12th green. It landed just right of the front left pin and bounced twice, trickling into the hole carding his 8th ace and 3rd at

Lake Fairways. Tom, who had already jumped in his cart and was almost to the green when the ball landed and rolled in, got a close up view of the event. Phil, who had had an ace on the par 4, 9th hole earlier in the week was marginally impressed and will hold that one over Pete until he can match the feat of an albatross. Don't be surprised if that day comes sooner rather than later, Phil.

Men's League February Shootout was conducted on Wednesday the 7th starting on the front 9 at Lake Fairways. The usual suspects were rounded up for the **B Flight** including qualifiers **John Haggerty, Dan Beamer, Dave Malmberg, Dan Wagner, Mike Craven, Dick Cummings, Jeff Penders, Bob Bennett, Jim Albert** and former shootout champ, **George Files**.

We cut to the long par 3, 8th hole where we had 3 remaining gladiators. George Files and John Haggerty both hit impressive tee balls especially considering the building pressure of a competition approaching its conclusion. Dan Beamer had played well all day but feeling the eyes of the crowd anticipating another good shot was too

much and Dan pushed it right over the bushes and out of bounds. Knowing his afternoon was coming to an end, Dan re-teed and put it in the middle of the fairway short of the green. His 4th shot found the green but after John and George had nestled their 2nd shots close to the hole, Dan put his hand out, conceded and graciously accepted his 3rd place finish wishing his two buddies good luck on the final hole.

On #9, both competitors were receiving a handicap stroke, so they played the hole even up. George pounded one right down the middle rolling halfway up the slope in front of the green and inspiring the younger members of the gallery. John, playing from the white tee was a little intimidated and pushed his drive right over the cart path, into the hazard. Undeterred, John, who had been in that exact same spot before, dropped and hit a high soft wedge to about 15 feet from the pin. The crowd held their collective breaths as George pulled a wedge from his bag and chipped it to the top of the slope only to see it roll back down to his feet. Realizing that your worst putt is always better than your worst chip, George putted his 3rd shot and rolled it up to about 10 feet. Both players 2-putted for 5's and were relegated to a chip-off to settle the match.

This is when it got ugly! The chip-ff was slated from halfway down the slope, left front of the elevated green. John chipped first and it rolled past the middle right pin that was diabolically placed near the slope on the right and rolled off the green, into the rough. Just needing to get it onto the putting surface to win the match, George fozzled his chip just short of the green forcing the tournament marshals to measure the distance of the two balls from the hole. When the marshals realized that they didn't have a tape measure long enough, Kevin Young yelled out "I've got a long tape in my cart". Apparently, he keeps it next to his cow bell for just such an occasion.

We didn't get the exact measurements, but it had to be in excess of 35 feet and John Haggerty managed to win the chip-off and take home the winner's check. It wasn't pretty but there was still a winner and everyone was chuckling when they all shook hands. Way to hang in there John!



George Files, John Haggerty and Dan Beamer

Men's League February Shootout – A Flight pitted some of Lake Fairways top golfers, several of whom will eventually find their way into the Lake Fairways Hall of Fame. No surprise to see any of these names on this list of warriors ready to test their skills and handicap strokes against the course and each other. **Brian Gordon, Nick Martinello, Al Webster, Rick Gagnier, John Westfere, Rich Boutette, Larry Warner, Dan Johnson, Mike Williams** and 1st alternate, **Wally Landry** who was ready to step in for golf legend **Jim Mantini** who had made plans to wash his car that day.

The first 7 holes were loaded with drama, good shots, spectacular shots, bad shots, horrible shots, memorable shots and forgettable shots. Three golfers managed to survive several 4+ player chip-offs and arrived at the 8th tee. **John Westfere, Nick Martinello** and **Larry Warner**.

Nick, who maintains a low handicap had the additional disadvantage and honor of teeing off first most of the match, hit a memorable soft draw that ticked the flag as it landed on the green. John hit a low runner that rolled up onto the green. Larry hit a violent pull left, out of bounds, hitting a house and scaring someone's grand kids who were outside playing. The selfless Paul Falcone, was quick to run over, make sure the kids were OK, grabbing Larry's ball and the evidence declaring it OB. Larry hit his 3rd shot from the tee but despite getting a handicap stroke his fate was already written and he eventually conceded the hole to allow Nick and John to carry on to the 9th. You're a class guy Larry, just keep your head down.

On the 9th, neither player receiving strokes, played it straight up. Nick hit a nice 3-wood that hit the bank of the approach and stopped just short of the green. John, hitting from the forward tees, pulled it left, past the green and almost reached Lake Fairways Boulevard. John hit chipped back towards the green coming up just short next to the trap with a clear line to the hole. Nick chipped onto the green about 10 feet left of the hole. Referee, Al Cristello asked John if he wanted Nick to mark his ball which was directly in line with John's path to the hole. John, feeling a little deflated with his prospects in the match declined to have the ball marked then

hit a perfect chip that if it didn't go in, would have certainly been close to the hole but it hit Nick's ball deflecting to about 5 feet from away. Nick replaced his ball as was the rule and sunk the birdie putt removing any doubt as to who was the February Shootout winner.



Finally, Nick gets an elusive shootout title and money.

Nick Martinello, John Westfere, Larry Warner