

# CHIP SHOTS

## NEW SHERIFF – BIG SCREW UP

HEMLOCK TO THE RESCUE – Every three or four years the Geneva Open must render to the transition of a new leader running the affairs of the Geneva-on-the-Lake golf course. This is one of those years. As Legend Fritz Ford quoted, “It’s a pain to have to train new people.” Gone is Mark. Sitting in the manager’s seat these days is a dude named Brian. The exchange of power brought on a screw up we have only experienced one other time in 47 Geneva’s. The tee times according to Mark were set when we crowned our champions last year around the 18<sup>th</sup> green. Brian was not informed, and we’ll be damned if he booked another outing on Saturday, July 29. That was a kick in the ass moment when I was informed of this shocking development. Just imagine C.J. Stroud playing his senior season quarterbacking at the University of Michigan. After the anger and panic passed, it was important for Blaise and me to make new arrangements. SATURDAY’S EARLY ROUND WILL BE PLAYED AT HEMLOCK SPRINGS STARTING AT 8:30 AM. We will play the Scramble, Sunday golf and hold the Commissioner’s Dinner back at Geneva. This scenario occurred once before, many years ago, when we followed an all-women’s outing which Legend Vince Gatto called “dykes on spikes.” That year we skipped the Scramble. We are determined to keep the Scramble this time aware many look forward to the competition and brings an enormous amount of fun.

LOGISTICS RECOURSE – The change of venue brings a whole new list of considerations and approaches. Time will be of the essence. Tee times for the Scramble commence at 3:30. This may require lunch on the run. While the trip from Hemlock to Geneva-on-the-Lake takes 15 minutes, loading and unloading, organizing the unorganized, and getting the Scramble in motion on time is like a trail drive pushing the beef to the stock yard for timely USDA Prime cuts. I started watching reruns of Rawhide for lessons learned. The Competition Committee will gather to determine where to set the Skill Shots. And money? A recalculation of finances from both outing and individual pocketbooks is necessary. Thank goodness I have advisors and plenty of alcohol to guide me. A much more definitive agenda will be revealed in the next Geneva update.

TRULY LEGENDARY – I drove through the acreage of what was once Riviera Country Club in Dublin, Ohio last month. The only indication the property was a prestigious golf course are the ponds and creeks that tested golf skills throughout the track and now bring beauty and tranquility meshed around the newly constructed houses. So many homes built in such a short time. Homes that MAY sell for \$150,000 on Thurman Avenue, costing upwards to a million bucks because of the proximity of Muirfield Village. Why am I writing about a new housing development? A street sign caught my eye, “GATTO LANE.” Yep! Legend Vince Gatto is not only a Geneva Legend, but his legendary status also reaches far and wide around the Columbus scene. Vince was a charter member of Riviera Country Club and still belongs to the American Italian Golf Association which owned the course. For a while, Mr. Gatto had a voice in A-I matters. If you are unaware, Vince is not shy about expressing his opinion, and he will state his case using varied reasons, some from his Italian upbringing, some from personal experiences, and some just plain far-fetched. There was an incident in Geneva many years ago when Vince defended his decision to Chuck Webb, the Geneva pro, for playing an eightsome during the Scramble. Many moons have passed, and time has taken its toll on his golf game. He carries a 17 handicap these days after playing to single digits most of his golfing life. Vince lost hearing in one ear. The shuffling of feet when he walks is now permanent and not just when he is tipsy. This does not make him less of a Legend. Though his golf game has suffered, he is still strong with opinions. There is something special about having a street named Gatto, something of which to be proud. Not even does Jack Nicklaus has a street named for him at Muirfield Village. I drove through the Riviera complex and could not find a street named “Alexander Alley.”

CHALLENGED TO SUCCEED – My inspiration for this new 2023 Geneva challenge stems from two different facets. The great Deputy Barney Fife would say, “You have to nip it in the bud. Nip-it! Nip-it! Nip-it!” The legendary Beatles sang, “Take a sad song and make it better.” With cooperation of the field, if we work together, we can pull this off with little or no hiccups. It more than likely requires skipping breakfast at Mary’s Kitchen on Saturday morning. I have an idea of possibly arranging the Saturday foursomes ahead of time and setting up tee schedules like Friday’s round. This requires informing me of your groupings by July Fourth. This should be feasible since most already have arrangements. Those who

do not have a game will be slotted by the Pairings Committee. Another idea under consideration is playing with your Gavin Cup partner and paired with another twosome. Again, tee times will be assigned. The less chaos and stress I encounter, the longer my time on this earth. I am not naive. I know calm seas do not make a good sailor but at my age, rough waters have a Titanic impact.