

2023 BEST BALL WRAP UP

BREAK UP THE DYNASTY

The BEST BALL TOURNAMENT was played on a soggy, marsh-like turf. Unintended water hazards sprung up in the damndest, most unwanted places, like acne popping out over a young teen's face. Most other areas had us hitting from wet, spongy lies. We are all aware that course conditions and the weather present different challenges each day even on the same course. Hmmm. I wonder if the game's inventors, drinking their Scotch Whiskey, had this in mind when they first started hitting the ball over a large piece of property in the 15th century? Unlike today's pansy, football players who want to play their games in a controlled atmosphere, there is no dome in golf. Somedays it takes enormous fortitude, willpower, and determination to play 18 holes in less than desirous conditions.

In 2021, early July rains blessed us with the best manicured Geneva in many years. Dry and hard was the state of the 2022 Geneva Open. This year was a slushy mess. Do you think any of these scenarios deterred the team of Ben Lloyd-Nick Boggess-Matt Mazzocco-Ron Szymczak from achieving their goal? Hell no! For the first time in Geneva history, we have a three-peat winner in the BEST BALL competition. They scored a 62, ten under par. The margin of victory was one stroke over the team of Dagon Abdon-Paden West-Jacob Davis-Bob Rutherford-Don Rutherford.

If only Jim Nantz, Trevor Immelman, the CBS cameras and the Goodyear Blimp was on hand to bring us the exciting action. We would have seen the Dagon Abdon squad was one shot better on the 17th tee. Both Nick Boggess and Ron Szymczak parred the hole that John Skunza named the Widow Maker. Catching a stroke that par netted them a birdie 3. Dagon's foursome had to settle for a double bogey and net 5. Despite the fact the Lloyd group could only manage a par on 18 and Dagon birdied, the damage from the previous hole was too much to overcome.

Last year the Lloyd boys shattered the field by 4 shots so this year's one stroke victory proved them beatable. Szymczak carded an 80, nine strokes higher than 2022's score. Ron did not have to carry the team this time. Ben Lloyd's 92,

including natural birdies on No. 6 and No. 12 were huge factors contributing to their win. Steady Matt Mazzocco played to an 85 like always and assisted when others faltered. Maybe the biggest reason for their success was Nick Bogges. Cannot overlook his 74 but that is expected. His non-golf prowess, tipping the cart girl (I heard \$100) like a wise guy kept her away from the rest of the field. Many showed signs of parchness as they climbed the hill on 18. It was a competitive practice from the Bill Belichick philosophy, bend the rules to the limit to get the advantage.

A general consensus believes the course in this swampy condition played much harder than usual. Most every golf club in the land would have demanded cart path only for the weekend. The new ruts we implanted in the fairways may become permanent craters. Next year Geneva may play more like golf's original venues back in Scotland. That will present a different obstacle for Ben Lloyd-Nick Bogges-Matt Mazzocco-Ron Szymczak to overcome in defending their title as they go for four in a row.