

2024 BEST BALL WRAP UP

DYNASTY CRUMBLES

The gods have spoken,
The dynasty is broken,
Through a twist of fate,
The champs did dissipate.

What mortal men could not accomplish the past three years, in an act of mercy, the Geneva gods disassembled the team of Ben Lloyd – Nick Boggess – Matt Mazzocco – Ron Szymczak. Over a month before Geneva, Matt sustained arm and wrist injuries requiring surgery and recovery forced him to cancel. On Geneva Eve, after hours of beveraging and doing the deed with an inflatable chicken, Ron Szymczak tumbled in front of his Summertime Inn room and bruised a rib. Not sure of exact details but I know Don Jander was on hand (of course he was). When I took my tumble years ago and destroyed a Pera's table, Don Jander was there. Coincidence? Did Don trip Ron? Maybe he pushed me into the table? I do not want to accuse him of anything but...I'm just saying.

The beneficiaries of not having to compete against the three-time BEST BALL Champions was the team of Kerry Joyce – Keith Boggess – Michael Badea – Tom Black. They played well enough that they may have won the Championship even if team Dynasty competed. The Joyce team finished 14 under par. Pretty good considering they made the turn at minus 4. The last 2 ½ hours of golf was an exhibition of near perfect golf registering 2 eagles, 7 birdies, and 1 par on No.15. So distraught with that par, they bounced back with Kerry's natural birdie on 16 and Tom's natural birdie on 17 catching a stroke. Tom finished the round birdieing No.18 giving him a 39 on the inward side. After no natural birdies on the front side, they recorded 4 natural birdies and a natural eagle on the back. Each member of the team carded at least one.

Team Joyce needed every one of those birdies as they finished one shot ahead of two teams. One runner-up was the squad of Bob Rutherford – Blaise Plageman – Dick Plageman – Vince Gatto – Todd Moore. Like

team Joyce, they made the turn at 4 under. The Geneva Factor had its claws into Blaise. He shot an unBlaiselike 87 with a 45 on the backside. That is the side the team played in 27 strokes. His only contributions came on two of the hardest holes, No.5 and No.8. Lumpy helped the team on three holes. Dick Plageman (the Big Dick) and Legend Vince Gatto (who calls himself a chop) carried the squad to their second-place finish. Both Big Dick and the Chop shot a 38 coming home.

A different storyline was followed by the other second place finisher. Craig Marshall – Pat Dorn – Mike Pagnanelli – Tony McGuckin shot 7 under on the outward side and 6 under on the inward side. On this day Blaise fell short of “A” player expectations. Quite the opposite for Pat Dorn. Creature shot a 71 with 2 birdies and 2 eagles. He played the backside in 35 strokes. On the few holes Creature needed help, his teammates came through and they stayed in contention until the very end.

For those who think picking Best Ball teams is scientific, here is a new method instituted by Kerry. Many times, I have mentioned the two theories in drafting. One is picking friends. Others choose the best available golfer. Kerry just picked names. He might as well thrown darts at a list of eligible draftees. “I didn’t know I was picking my team,” he said. “Blaise would come around and told me to pick a name. Then he came back and told me to pick another. I didn’t know why.” Until they gathered on the first tee, he did not know those names he picked were his teammates. And he was sober Saturday Night. “We had a good time,” he commented. “They were fun to play with.” That’s Geneva.

At the end of the day, Kerry Joyce – Keith Boggess – Michael Badea – Tom Black was at least one stroke better than the other ten teams. This team will be remembered in the annals of Geneva and can call themselves champions. The story of Kerry Joyce – Keith Boggess – Michael Badea – Tom Black has been written on both the course and in the Geneva history books. No one can take that away. They stand proud and each player is \$165 richer. Collecting for first place was also a surprise to Kerry as this was his first win of any team game in Geneva. Many more stories will be shared by word of mouth which is eventful because the truth is often exaggerated over time. Next year a select group of “B” and “C” players will pick the competition.

The new champs we crowned.

Played solid and sound,

When we meet again,

This title they'll defend.