

2025 GAVIN CUP WRAP UP

RUN AWAY

Baby Boomers remember Secretariat winning the Belmont Stakes by 31 lengths, a performance for the ages. Generation X may recall the 49ers blowing out the Broncos in Super Bowl XXIV by 45 points, the biggest point margin in Super Bowl history. Tiger Woods also makes our list with his 15-shot victory in the 2000 U.S. Open at the fame Pebble Beach Golf Club. We now have something for the Millennials to remember. Mini-Legend Jack Berger and Mike Pagnanelli whipped the Gavin Cup field by 21 strokes in the 2025 event. They carded 45 under par net total for the three days. Pags shot rounds of 84 at St. Denis, then 84 and closed with a 76 on Geneva's track. Not bad for a guy playing to a 20 handicap. His teammate, Jack, was no hack either, scoring 86 at St. Denis and rounds of 80 and 79 on Geneva. He was catching 14 handicap strokes. Together, they made fools of the rest of us.

It would be hard to say anyone had a better weekend in Geneva than Pags although another was close and I will comment on him in a later article. For now, I want you to comprehend Pags' accomplishments. He captained the Best Ball team that won. Mike pocketed two Skins which he earned on Saturday morning. His total winnings added up to \$480 for the weekend. If that is not enough, he took home the shiny, refurbished, beautiful mantel piece called the Gavin Cup Trophy, a piece of hardware any wife would be more than happy to put on display in their living room.

I want to remind Pags of his responsibility to share the trophy with Jack. Kristen Berger is more than excited to show off her husband's excellent performance. This is Jack's second Gavin Cup Championship having won it in 2020 with Tom Black as partner. I am sure Mrs. Berger knows exactly where to flaunt it. It will be a ravishing addition to the furniture in their new house. There is an anecdote to this story. I spent Friday night at dinner with Jack apologizing that I believed the Handicap Committee did an injustice, giving him only 14 shots. Jack waved his hand

in a motion as if to say, "Don't worry about it." Reminding me of the '86 Masters when Jack Nicklaus played like he was in his prime, so did Mini-Legend Berger scorching Geneva with the confidence and precision he once played consistently twenty and thirty years earlier. If anything, the Handicap Committee gave him too much handicap. It would not have mattered.

Should I mention who finished second? Nobody remembers the Place horse to Secretariat or who was runner-up to Tiger in the 2000 U.S. Open. I guess they deserve their due. Steve Reed and Tim Black tallied minus-24 and Keith Boggess with Shawn Dorn were one stroke behind them for third place. There, I mentioned them. I still owe those guys money for their play.

On to other matters. Squabbit did its job. Knowing he was off the hook for scorekeeping duties, Blaise accomplished what he set out to do. He did it so well Thursday night, a patio chair on the porch of Lumpy's Hideaway became his overnight accommodation until the sun woke him. He then stumbled to his room and assumed a resting position on top of his bed. I sensed his father was not too pleased with his behavior. But there was golf to play, and Dickie thought it unwise to ground him. I asked Nick Boggess how he was able to get Blaise up for his tee time. He answered matter of factly, "I put a pizza outside his door."

The shot of the day on Friday was not a shot at all. Ron Szymczak found Don Jander's stray ball in the fescue at St. Denis. Don already hit a second ball opposite the fairway from the first shot, some twenty-five yards away. Szymczak, in a gesture of good sportsmanship, hit the found ball back to Jander. Do I need to go on? You guessed it. The shot was spot on and sizzled inches from Don's head and struck the back of his hand. Pictures of Jander flat on his face and stomach are circulating. Like Mini-Legend Jerry Graves last year who finished the tournament after falling into a raging fire, Don shook off his injuries and continued. Unlike Mini-Legend Jerry Graves, Mr. Jander did not win the Gavin Cup.

A tip of the cap to Mother Nature. Meteorologists across the region predicted rain, rain, and more rain. We received overnight moisture but

nothing that disturbed golf. It was hot and humid during the day. I heard nothing but praise about St. Denis which played more than admirable for Geneva's opening round. There is speculation we will return sometime in the future. The venue for next year's opening round has yet to be determined. Wherever we gather, we will be chasing Jack Berger and Mike Pagnanelli for their Gavin Cup Trophy. Until then, they will display their achievement proudly.