

CHIP SHOTS

IN STORE FOR 24

SOMETHING NEW? – Do not expect flying carts to be introduced this year. That time has not yet come. And, despite the prediction from the ghost of Christmas future, steaks and potatoes remain the main course at the Commissioner's Dinner. Last year, for the first time in Geneva history, a Skins game for the Scramble was implemented and appeared well accepted especially for the team of Don Jander-Tom Prunte-Tom Black-Tony McGuckin, who won the only skin with an eagle on No. 6. It will remain part of the competitive curriculum in 2024. A new innovation for this year is currently being discussed by the Competition Committee in regard to rewarding the individual who has the best three days at Geneva. A trophy that was manufactured during the Great Depression before Baby Boomers and Dick Plageman ever came into existence is being shipped to the trophy shop to be spit shined and ready for presentation. It will be a rotating trophy like the Gavin Cup and the Stanley Cup. Details on how to win this award are being hashed out. The theory of this magnificent piece of hardware becoming a reward to the individual with the best weekend has generated the most interest. If that is the case, then what qualifies as the "Best Weekend?" Will it be strictly for the golfer who earned the most money over the three-day outing? Do other factors come into play like a hole in one? Besides golf, maybe include a total weekend package, for instance spending hundreds of dollars on the Geneva Strip buying rounds of Jello shots. The ground rules have yet to be determined. I will pass them along once they are established. Earning the right to possess this sensational sculptured piece of medal for a year will add class to every living room as it stands sturdy and proud on the mantle.

FUN LUNCH – The Holidays seem so long ago. I hope the memories of the 2023 Christmas Season are positively lasting. Mine are just that. One of those moments was the lunch at the Gahanna Grill on Dec. 26. Eleven from the Geneva fraternity gathered. Joining me was Legends Vince Gatto and Fritz Ford. Others in attendance were Pat Dorn, Dick Plageman, Tim Black, Mike Pagnanelli, Ray Ballard, John Skunza, Mike Weilbacher, and Gary Metzger. According to my calculations, the total number of years on this earth added upwards to 770, that is

close to three times the length the United States has been in existence. Of course, this herd of old men delved into extensive chatter about aches and pains instead of the once dominated drooling over hot women. The Browns, grandkids, even golf was discussed. It was a nice two hours and then it was time for the old men to nap. My intention is to continue this tradition next year.

LAST MAN STANDING – I think many of us experienced times when slumber calls amid a good time. I am guilty of nodding at inopportune times. My wife often reminded me when such an occurrence took place while the family attended the circus. I was wide awake however when a man was shot from a cannon. That was great. Many witnessed me take sleep breaks at the Suburban or Milano's restaurants during dinner back in the day. I was tired. Do not ignore the fact this could and quite probably did happen to you. I have a unique catnap story to tell. Last July when most golfers left Geneva and returned home, the trio of Legend Fritz Ford, Bob Rutherford, and Mike Sachs remained for one more night. After dinner at a fine Geneva establishment, at least fine by Geneva standards, they stumbled back to Lumpy's Hideaway. The long weekend had taken its toll. Stamina becomes more of an issue with each passing year. Grabbing some quick zzzzz's before calling it a night would not be unusual. The way Lumpy accomplished the feat was. The three gathered at the bar preparing to pack and most likely drinking a final cocktail when lo and behold, it drew Doc's attention that Lumpy was sound asleep, standing on his feet. Ralph DiCarolis and I can vouch how hard it is to stay upright while sleeping. Fearing Lumpy may fall and hurt himself or, God forbid, break a table, Doc shook him awake and guided him to the recliner. His state of conscientiousness only lasted a few minutes and Lumpy was back to his old tricks. Reentering the room minutes later, Lumpy was back at the bar, drink in his hand, standing on his feet, snoring away. This time, Doc and Fritz did the smart thing and led him to bed. Some say Lumpy's golf game is a sleepwalk around the course. Next July, when I see Lumpy wandering around Geneva, the question will arise, "is he awake or napping?"

THE JOURNEY BEGINS – It is hard to be pumped about Geneva golf during these cold, wintry days. I would rather be whipping a driver any day than a snow shovel. My swing speed is the same with either tool, slow like molasses. Before we know it, however, the azaleas will bloom in bright colors introducing Spring. The dates for this year's extravaganza are July 26th thru 28th. There will be a practice

round on July 25 for anyone interested at Hemlock Springs, the site of Geneva's opening round. For those who played last year, we have rain checks to be used on Friday. If you do not return for this upcoming outing, I will try to make arrangements for a refund. One other point of business that may interest you, I am leaving room #12 at the Summertime Inn. The Geneva offices that weekend will operate at a cottage next door to Lumpy's Hideaway. This change creates a Geneva Open Village on Golf Avenue and opens a two-bedroom suite with four beds at the Summertime Inn. Anyone interested in occupying that lovely palace please contact me before July 1. If I have no takers, I will cancel my reservation. The vision of a Geneva Open Village fascinates me. Some ways, this quote from Teddy Roosevelt seems appropriate to end this entry. "Reach for the stars but keep your feet on the ground."

CHIP SHOTS

MARCHING TO JULY

HIBERNATION DECISION – “Wintertime is a razor blade that the devil made, it’s the price we pay for the summertime.” These words sang by the James Gang over 55 years ago still ring loud and clear each January and February. Where art is how we decorate space, music is how we decorate time. Though the 2024 winter ranks far below other brutal winters of the past, it was still too cold and wet to golf. The Village of Geneva-on-the-Lake bragged about their two days in January without cloud cover. In the old days bowling would fill the gap, “drink a few beers, bowl a few frames.” These were ordinary, average guys of the past. Those bowling leagues would last until the middle of May. Too long, they interfere with our golf habits. Many of the Geneva Committees use these “shut in” days to set groundwork for the next outing. Last year, because of the change of venue, the Geneva Open implemented setting tee times for Saturday morning golf instead of first come first play. The success of this project brought about a unanimous decision from the Pairings Committee to continue the policy. The Committee reasoned this ensures every golfer has a game and keeps us on schedule with our golf course allotted times. I find it a novel idea and stamped with the Commissioner’s approval to the proposed action. E-mail, text, or phone me with your Saturday playing partners. No stragglers will be left without a game. The Pairings Committee will fill the voids as needed. Thank God it is March because all this thinking and drinking gave me a two-month headache. The seasons change, says the James Gang. “Spring days come and it’s hard to know where the rain comes from, where the children go, it’s a nursery rhyme, a nursery rhyme.”

THE STORY OF DAGON – In 2016, a rookie named Dagon Abdon broke onto the Geneva scene. Sponsored by the Boggess clan, he was “Geneva Worthy” the instant he stepped foot on the hallowed grounds of Geneva. Ammoed for fun, booze and golf, his introduction was winged by Nick Boggess. Who better to show Dagon around? Last July, I sat down with Todd Abdon, Dagon’s Father, and learned a few facts I wish to pass along. Dagon’s rookie year, he played to a 2 handicap. Posting scores of 66 and 71 on Geneva’s course, the Handicap Committee pushed his

handicap to plus 3 for the next year. Dagon no longer plays and practices like then but is still good enough to play to a 4 handicap. According to Todd (granted he may be a touch bias), Dagon played for the Kentucky State Title and was the Commonwealth's best golfer. Unfortunately, a young stud named Justin Thomas from Louisville (yeah, that Justin Thomas), beat Dagon in a close match on the final day. Dagon earned a scholarship to Western Kentucky, but a broken wrist and a new golf coach halted his promising career. Maybe booze and women had something to do with it too, I am not sure. I heard once that hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard. Was that the difference between Justin Thomas and Dagon Abdon? Attempting to make a career in golf may have gotten in the way of fun. He is not as dedicated to the sport as his pre-Western Kentucky life. He spends more time fishing these days. His competitiveness still boils. The rivalry with Nick every July has taken center stage just as the battle of the Legends (Gary Glanzman vs Vince Gatto) once dominated the Geneva weekends. Fate may have prevented Dagon from joining the PGA Tour but as Commissioner of the Geneva Open, I am thrilled he is part of our curriculum.

VEGAS UPDATE – Ten months ago amidst a marijuana fog in a hotel room near Lexington, Kentucky the idea of taking a Geneva holiday to Las Vegas was born. It was a far out thought rooted by former Gavin Cup Champion Tony McGuckin. I was not sure the gleam in his eye was from the weed or the vision of golf and gambling in America's premiere adult playground. Everyone and most every event migrates there. Why not us? Exact plans have yet to be written in stone but here are a few options being discussed. The excursion will take place this October. Dates will be finalized as soon as availability is determined. Bear's Best appears to be a must play golf course. These are 18 holes replicating some of Jack Nicklaus' favorite creations from across the world. Two other tracts considered for play are Las Vegas National and Highland Falls known for some breathtaking views. Club rentals are available. These layouts are west of Vegas. There is interest in staying at the Red Rock which is closer to the courses but 20 miles from the Strip. Others may stay closer to Vegas proper because rolling bones may be of more interest than three days of golf. Molding the trip's final structure will form after Jelly hears input from participants. If you have suggestions contact Tony McGuckin. One activity

Jelly mentioned often during our talks is bringing the group together for dinner either in cook-out fashion or at a restaurant. Thus far, there are 12 solid commitments but 20 to 24 look feasible. I would be remised if I did not mention Geneva fraternity brother Greg Gudenkauf who lives in Vegas is much involved in putting this trip together. He is the eyes, ears, and guide supplying valuable information for Tony to confer. Jelly is shooting to dot all i's and cross all t's by Geneva weekend.

GENEVA TARGETS – In case you forgot, I plan on reminding you often that the team of Ben Lloyd-Nick Boggess-Matt Mazzocco-Ron Szymczak are the defending Best Ball Champions. Sound familiar? It should. They won in 2022 also. That's right, back-to-back winners. Their winning score was 62 (ten under par), far short of their 56 strokes the previous year. A three-peat and we are talking dynasty. Like a glass of sipping whiskey and white lightning, they are smooth but with a powerful kick. The chance to prevent dynasty talk comes on July 28 when the 2024 edition of the Best Ball Tournament tees it up. "D" players will pick the teams to challenge at the Commissioner's Dinner. I would normally say the defending Gavin Cup Champions, Pat Dorn and Craig Marshall, will be just as hard to dethrone but Blaise Plageman made a commitment to keep Craig intoxicated. Sorry Pat. If I was a betting man, I would say the odds of Creature keeping Craig sober are slim and none, especially with Blaise's promise to the contrary. The Gavin Cup teams will be drawn Thursday night at Lumpy's Hideaway. The party is hardy in Geneva, but golf is the reason. It takes quite a temperament to handle both. We must stay seasoned like a good barbeque rub.

CHIP SHOTS

VENUES, TIMES SECURED

LOCKED AND LOADED – What a difference a year makes. Last year we were shut out from Saturday golf at Geneva because of a change of leadership and poor communications. When I called this year to confirm tee times, you would think we were having phone sex. Amie nearly orgasmed anticipating our return. Last July she stated the Geneva Open was the best outing she ever worked. The thrill she exuberated when we spoke was certainly the product of fond memories. Another feather in the cap for the Geneva Open. Amie bragged in a giddy schoolgirl fashion that she is a full-time employee of the golf course now and promised to be at our service. Tee times on the hallowed grounds of Geneva start at 8:30 AM on Saturday, July 27, followed by a 9-hole Scramble at 3:30. Sunday's round commences at 9:00 AM. Friday's golf at Hemlock was harder to confirm. Calls throughout the month of March were answered by a recorded message stating Hemlock was closed. In past years, this was not a reason to panic. Other options are available whether it be Powderhorn, Manakiki, Painesville, or never played Black Brook. But I am sitting on rainchecks, 45 of them. My responsibility as Commissioner is to get this matter resolved. I drove to Hemlock. Let's see Roger Goodell show this much dedication. On arrival, it was obvious the course was closed. The maintenance crew was inside the clubhouse. When I told them who I was and the business I sought, they quickly summoned Brian, the course manager. Hemlock reopened April 1. Our tee times for noon on July 26 are secured. The rainchecks will be honored. Let's play golf.

BILL KIRK – The death of long time Geneva fraternity brother, Bill Kirk, was neither a shock nor surprise. It has been evident for the past few years his health has been deteriorating. His whereabouts were unknown. The family stashed him privately away. Bill last played in Geneva in 2019. His appearance in that outing exposed memory disfunction. Ron Szymczak and Tom Jech stayed close to his side making sure Bill did not lose his way. Despite his dementia, his golf game was barely affected. He shot 84 at Hemlock, then 85 and 86 on the Geneva course. A year earlier in 2018, Mr.

Kirk partnered with Jay Green to win the Gavin Cup. His swing was elegant and graceful like a ballet dancer. He controlled his golf balls, able to flutter them left to right or right to left with accuracy. It was like watching a Gaylord Perry knuckleball usually splitting the fairway when touching down. If Kirk missed the green, count on his chipping to save his score. Bill had a knack of advising struggling golfers during a round. His lessons were constructive and if heeded, improved one's game. Many called him Pops because of his golf knowledge, experience, communication skills, and age. Geneva worthy? What do you think? He came to every Geneva Open armed with cases of Budweiser. Mini-Legend Jack Berger e-mailed these words. "We would call him Pops or Old Man (affectionately). First met him when Peanut (Jim Plageman) brought him down to sub in the Friday Night Golf League. I played him when I thought I was hot shit. He kicked my ass. He traveled on the Anheuser-Busch golf team. Very accomplished." He is an entrenched dividend of Geneva lore. Bill Kirk was 82. Rest in Peace.

HOMELESS NO MORE – Last November, I reported on Jay Green's horrific return home from Geneva weekend. On his arrival, strong indications suggested Jay missed a life changing event. Closer investigation revealed Jay hosted a blazing house party, one that he was not present. Those in attendance were firemen bearing big hoses and axes. The fire left Jay with no place to live and only the dirty clothes from Geneva as his full wardrobe. Oh yeah! Jay still had his golf clubs, a prize possession. He slept in his car for two nights before moving to a motel for shelter. Here is Chapter 2 of Jay Green's saga reported by Jay himself. "I am staying in the Ritz," Jay told me in gleeful fashion. The Ritz to him is his new dwelling. As of March 1, he moved into his "own place isolated from neighbors." Piecing his words together, I concluded he lives in a small independent unit as part of a senior assisted living community on East Broad St. across from Mt. Carmel Hospital. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions. He was exceptionally happy that his electricity, gas, water and sewage were not his financial obligation anymore. He was proud that the furnishings inside the home he chose himself including pictures for his walls. With the intention of stocking his closet and spicing his brand, Jay ordered several high-quality shirts from the head of the Geneva Merchandising Committee, Fritz Ford. It was at this point in our conversation when Jay admitted being victim of some small semblance of

senility. As for his old digs, he ignores it for bank foreclosure. He says it is still inhabitable. I brought up the million-dollar prize from the magazine giveaway he claimed to have won. Jay brushed me off giving the impression he realized he was played. Passing from the dream of chasing a million bucks to living in a place of his own came across as a happy transition. If you see Jay at a wedding, funeral, or class reunion which he often crashes, he will have plenty of stories to tell.

BACK TO NORMAL – Since the pandemic closed life back in 2020, so much has changed and returning to normalcy has been long and tedious. It was difficult but Covid-19 did not shut down the Geneva Open. We played on. I like to believe we guided the procedure the NFL followed to play their season. That is what I would like to believe. One more victim of the coronavirus reopened recently. Chops, the long-time favorite restaurant of the old timers who have been chowing down there since 1977, is once more dishing grub. That is a big thing. Some of us handle forks and knives more expertly than a driver or wedge. Back on common ground for Saturday's round of golf, with cooperation from Mother Nature, the Skill Shot competition will return to familiar Geneva holes. The Saturday rain out on the Hemlock course moved several of Saturday's games to Sunday. Even in today's high-tech world, this overburdened our IT people. Not every winner was paid. Rick Jonas (\$50), Dagon Abdon (\$20), Keith Boggess (\$10), and Mark Johnson (\$10) will receive their winnings this July. The Geneva Open vows to do right to those who do right. We are old-fashioned that way. So old-fashioned, I remember when native tribes beat the ground with clubs and yelled. Back then it was called witchcraft. Today, in civilized society, it is called golf.

CHIP SHOTS

SIGN UP TIME

POTENTIAL GENEVA PLAYERS

Dagon Abdon	Todd Abdon	Frank Alexander *
Andrew Badea	Michael Badea	Alex Ballard *
Connor Ballard	Ray Ballard *	Dick Barrett
Jack Berger *	Tim Black *	Tom Black *
Bill Boggess *	Keith Boggess *	Nick Boggess *
Jarold Boling	Shannon Boothe	Jim Centorbi
Jacob Davis *	Pat Dorn *	Shawn Dorn *
Bob Elflein	Fritz Ford *	Vince Gatto *
Gary Glanzman *	Greg Gudenkauf *	Jerry Graves *
Jay Green *	Richie Heskett *	Brian Hughes
Tim Hughes *	Don Jander *	Mark Johnson *
Rick Jonas *	Zack Jonas	Kerry Joyce *
Mark Kovachi *	Sam Kovachi *	Ben Lloyd *
Mark Maatz	Craig Marshall *	Gary Mazzocco *
Matt Mazzocco *	Nate McCorkle	Tony McGuckin *
Steve Miller *	Todd Moore *	Dan Mountcastle
Don Mountcastle	Ken Mountcastle	Dan Novak
Mike Pagnanelli *	Blaise Plageman *	Dick Plageman *
Jason Plageman	Ton Prunte *	Bob Rutherford *
Don Rutherford *	Brian Shoemaker	John Skunza
Ron Szymczak *	Brien Thunberg	Jamie Vernon *
Paden West	Kyle Willis *	

IN OR OUT – The above list are the potential Geneva participants. The * indicates the golfers known to be committed. If a * is not by your name and you plan on playing, please contact me and I will be glad to add your * to the group. Of course * can be subtracted and names can be added until the field fills. In the past, I set July 4 as the cut off date. With the bigger field, this year that may be earlier. Final touches will then begin. Pairings, Scramble, and Handicap Committees commence their duties. I try

to keep some semblance of structure. Believe me, putting together the Geneva Open over the years has humbly gained the respect your wives deserve in keeping your household orderly. Women have a certain power over men that I cannot achieve. What I can do is appeal for your cooperation and courtesy to those working hard and understand their efforts are driven by fun and fair. I cannot deny that many decisions are made with the help of a decanter of bourbon, a few bottles of beer, and a puff or two of smoke, but I am very pleased with their conclusions. These are fine gentlemen committed to Geneva's well-being. The Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were written by men under the same spells and how did that work out? Fair and fun. Fun and fair. Anyway you prefer, Geneva memories last a lifetime. Add that * next to your name and enjoy this 2024 phenomenal experience.

MELISM – I had the opportunity to talk with Geneva frat brother, Mel Voll, last month. I asked how he was. “Old” is all he said. Coming from a man who is a prolific storyteller, this Jack Benny like one word response left me speechless. Once I recovered and the silence broke, Mel became Mel again. I learned he spends lunch delivering Meals on Wheels. He is proud of this civic duty, sort of a heavenly door dash without capitalistic greed. In typical Mel Voll behavior, he tops his humanitarian efforts with a couple of brews at the VFW. He is flirting with the idea of returning to Geneva this July. His golfing days are over, remember he is “old”. His socializing skills, recalling stories from the past, telling jokes, drinking a few beers...Hell, who are we kidding? ...Drinking a twelve pack of beer is still very much a part of his constitution. Mel always took pride in grilling the steaks at The Commissioner's Dinner and I promised to hand him the spatula if he returned. Like always, he closed with a story about a man who checked into a hotel. Once settled, he decided to go to the Lounge for drinks and maybe some dancing. One of his dance partners noticed his large shoe size. He must have stepped on her feet during the song “I Only Have Eyes for You.” She told the man about the rumors girls often discuss how foot size suggests a man's particular build. She agreed to accompany him to his room to investigate. The next morning, he awoke alone. The woman left a note on the bedstand that read, “Get shoes that fit.”

REMINDERS – The different Geneva Committees are hard at work. Some have been preparing for this year's event since New Year's. Others

cannot fully function until the field is set. Currently, guesstimations are over 50 players. That is the participation numbers being used by the Merchandise Committee. We strive to leave no golfer behind. Thirteen tee times for both Hemlock and Geneva sets the cut off figure at 52. Lids, gifts, and steaks rely on such numbers. Pairings, Scramble, and Gavin Cup cannot proceed until all commitments are made. A couple of months ago, I mentioned creating your Saturday foursome. Four groups are confirmed, and several twosomes asked me to hook them up. If you have a game for Saturday, please inform me. This was a policy we adopted last year. I like this approach because all golfers are hooked up and none are left without partners. Sober or hungover, the first tee awaits at specific times. We all have crosses to bear, and I have taken the chore of moving Legend Vince Gatto along. He will be my roommate this year. There has been many Saturday mornings when corralling Vince to the golf course has been harder than herding cats. I will say this, he always makes it as has Craig, Nick, Dagon, Jacob, Jelly and others. Organizing a group of John Barleycorn followers can be chaotic. If it works, it is a stroke of genius. Albert Einstein said, "The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits."

CHIP SHOTS

REGISTRATION CLOSED

FIELD IS SET – The number of players planning to hack around Geneva is 48. That is a nice even total making team events all foursomes and twosomes. Rookie Bryan Shoemaker committed in mid-May, and he is the final entrant in this year's field. Barring any unforeseen adventures, the Commissioner closed registration. He will pass the list to the Handicap and Pairings Committees. Once handicaps are established, the Scramble Committee will exercise their duty. The hope is to publish Friday and Saturday tee times with the July newsletter. Teams for the Scramble will more than likely come later in a separate document. Best Ballers will be chasing Ben Lloyd-Nick Boggess-Matt Mazzocco-Ron Szymczak who have won the event back-to-back and are one victory away from considered a dynasty. "D" players pick their opponent at the Commissioner's Dinner. Gavin Cup partners will be randomly drawn by Assistant Commissioner Blaise Plageman on Thursday night in front of a ruckus crowd. Twenty-three teams of two take aim at defending champs Pat Dorn and Craig Marshall for the honor of engraving their name on the coveted trophy, an honor that will immortalize golfing accomplishments for generations. Perhaps this is the time to heed the words of Marshall Matt Dillon who said, "There has never been a horse that can't be rode and there's never been a man that can't be throwed." Look out defending champs. Geneva stallions are kicking like wild broncos to unseat you. Geneva will be here before you know it. Bring it on.

MEET THE NEW BOSS – Same as the old boss. We won't get fooled again. Per usual, there is a new sheriff running Geneva-on-the-Lake Golf Course. Unlike years past, this one need not be trained. Amy is very familiar with the Geneva Open. She was part of the clubhouse staff last year. Her exuberant personality blended quite nicely with our alcoholic and fun temperament, sort of like Buffalo Trace Bourbon and Sweet Vermouth. The elegance and charm paid dividends for her career. The Village of Geneva-on-the-Lake pocketed the most money ever at the Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing last October. Those results elevated Amy to

Operations Manager. Although Brian is still employed, his major concerns are the conditions of the course or, as we called it in the old days, greens keeper. Amy gleamed with the improvements she had administered. Among the upgrades are brand new carts. The patio has working lights hanging around its borders allowing for longer 19th holes. She promised to have all new grills by July for better barbecuing, propane included. It sounded like she had more changes in mind although she did not reveal her plans to me. Put the Village Entertainment Budget in the hands of a woman and I guarantee the money will be spent. Maxed out. She is very excited to show off these upgrades. I recommend we give her some love and tell her what a fine job she is doing. Compliments, especially towards women, is a much easier way to live.

OLD TRADITION RETURNS – I spent the first five months writing about new procedures for this year's Geneva Open. One tradition returns after a year hiatus. Because of juggling venues last year, everyone was responsible for their own green fees at each day's play. This was a break from the 30-year practice of Saturday and Sunday green fees collected by the Commissioner along with other financial responsibilities. After discussions with Amy, she preferred the ritual of one payment for the entire group. As hinted in the previous paragraph, that gal has a way of pushing her agenda to reality. The price of golf remains the same as last year. In reality, we will benefit by playing all 27 holes on Saturday at the Geneva course. The Scramble round will cost \$10. We paid the nine-hole rate in 2023. The total for the 2024 Geneva Open is set at \$210. That is it. Remember, those returning from last year have golf at Hemlock paid by virtue of rain checks. The \$210 includes Geneva green fees for Saturday and Sunday, Best Ball, Gavin Cup, Scramble, and Skill Shot payouts as well as the Commissioner's Dinner, and other commodities. Cash is accepted. Wait! Cash is required. Nobody wants to collect their winnings with credit. Thank you for your cooperation.

PRACTICE? – Is it worth it? You be your own judge. We heard Allan Iverson rant about practice being overrated, but recent results may question his philosophy. The last three Gavin Cup winners played a Thursday practice round. Three of the Best Ball teammates sharpened their game on Thursday as well. Some unload their wears at the Summertime Inn then tackle the Geneva course. Others join Shawn Dorn for a Skins

Game. This year's track is Hemlock Springs, the same course as Geneva's opening round on July 26. The remaining players either arrive on Friday or sit around Lumpy's Hideaway mentally preparing for the weekend. I cannot explain it but those hanging at Lumpy's, in the loving care of Doctor Hate and consuming his magic potion, have had trouble winning recently. Those interested in playing Hemlock on Thursday, contact Shawn Dorn by text, phone, or e-mail. He will be more than happy to slot you in. I enjoy all the narratives as the boys come together later that evening. Some are whoppers. I have come to appreciate the words of Ulysses S. Grant. Substituting golf for wars, President Grant said, "(Golf) produces many stories of fiction, some of which are told until they are believed to be true."

CHIP SHOTS

CRUISING TOWARDS GENEVA

“FORE PLEASE” – It will not be long before we hear those words on the Hemlock Springs Golf Course first tee. Charter members (Legend Gary Glanzman and Mini-Legend Jerry Graves) will be accompanied by 45-year veterans (Legend Vince Gatto and Mini-Legend Jack Berger) to do the honors and hit the ceremonial tee ball opening the competition for the 2024 Geneva Open. Though much of the party begins Thursday, their drives raise the curtain on golf. It is imperative at the conclusion of each round, to turn your scorecards over to Ben Lloyd and Blaise Plageman who will record them into a computer to tally results. It is an obvious responsibility. Failure to execute will result in Gavin Cup disqualification and possible loss of Skin money. I would not want to be in Jack Berger’s shoes if Gary Glanzman forfeits a skin because of negligence. Green fees for Hemlock are already paid. Show up, find your playing partners, gear up, share a celebratory drink and play. Pretty simple. Those 65 years and older may hit from the white tees at Hemlock and gold tees in Geneva. The others play the blue tees on Friday and whites on Saturday and Sunday. Green fees for Geneva are included in the \$210 I collect for the weekend. Unfortunately, Jay Green did not win his millions from Publisher’s Clearing House like he once believed because, if so, he promised to pay for everyone’s trip. The \$210 fee will cover Geneva financial obligations. As a nonprofit entity, all monies will be returned in the green fees, golf payouts, dinner, and merchandise. Due to overwhelming support and the many volunteers, this procedure continues as a long-standing policy of the outing. Only cash is accepted as your entry fee. Nobody wants paid by check or credit. It is time to clean the grooves on your wedge and wax the metal heads, we are less than a month away. “Fore Please”.

PRACTICE ROUND – Every year Shawn Dorn arranges a practice round of golf on the grounds where Friday’s play takes place. Due to the fact that Hemlock Springs has two outings on July 25 and the course will not open until 3 PM, this exercise needed tinkered. If there is one thing the Geneva Open has learned in 48 years, it is how to tinker. There will be golf on Thursday, July 25, just not at Hemlock. Instead, times have been

reserved at Little Mountain. Note the first group tees at 11:30. Der Dutchman breakfast must be scarfed like a starved caveman or moved up a half hour because Dick Plageman's Geneva trip officially begins at the restaurant. If he starts bitching the grounds would shake like a 4.8 points earthquake. Six spots are booked at the golf venue. The Geneva Open was played twice at Little Mountain. The last time was in 2021. In case you forgot, many swore this track had more sand than the beaches on Lake Erie. Even so, it is very playable for our skills or lack of, with plenty of challenges and rewards. A Skins Game will be part of the competition as well as proximity on the par 3's. Side bets are of your own doing. To be included in this extravaganza, contact Shawn Dorn.

DYNASTY BROKEN – It took the Almighty to accomplish results mortals could not achieve for the past three years. I am not talking the Almighty Boothia either but a Being with much bigger powers. He forced a split of the Best Ball Championship Team. In mid-June, I received this email from Gary Mazzocco. "Just wanted to let you know that Matt and I will not be attending the outing this July. Matt had to have surgery done on his right wrist and elbow 2 weeks ago. He will be starting PT this week and is unable to golf for several months." Matt was part of the three-time Championship Squad with teammates Ben Lloyd, Nick Boggess, and Ron Szymczak. Cold hearted Geneva hackers believe playing with three finally evens the field. That is a gutless attitude. Imagine the world if the Allies ran and hid from the German Tiger Tanks because they were the best armored tanks in the world. There is no place for that sort of thinking at the Geneva Open. Why is Takeru Kobayashi challenging Joey Chestnut in the hot dog eating contest? It is his desire and will to beat the best. Joey's record is 76 dogs in 10 minutes. As Geneva Commissioner, I will not allow such nonsensical thoughts to creep into Geneva's philosophy. Knute Rockne did not tell his team to participate for the Gipper in a showdown football game against Army. The decision has been made that Captain Ben Lloyd will receive a draft choice to replace Matt. His pick will come at the end of the third round. "D" players will draft this year. Those in line to choose include the Rutherford brothers, Jay Green, Tim Hughes, Greg Gudenkauf, Paden West, Kerry Joyce, Ray Ballard, Craig Marshall, Mini-Legend Jerry Graves, and Legend Frank Alexander. The draft order and those available to be chosen will be announced shortly.

FIELD SET? – If Geneva started tomorrow, I would feel much better about the field. At the time of this writing, we have 48 commitments. That is perfect. After 47 years of these events, I am not naïve to the fact numbers can change between now and July 26. One year Mark Johnson tore his Achilles heel skipping across a drainage ditch like a 4-year-old girl without a worry in the world during Thursday's practice round oddly enough at Little Mountain. Just last year Kerry Joyce experienced a TIA the week of Geneva and pulled out. They had legitimate excuses. On the other hand, Mike Harper just did not show. Pissed me off. As indicated above, Matt and Gary scratched for health reasons. On the Sunday Tour at Blacklick, Tony McGuckin could not finish his round because of back pain just recently. With the medicine he keeps handy, that had to be some serious discomfort. No worries, however, Jelly promised to participate in Geneva. "Wouldn't miss it for the world," he said. Tee times are set for Friday and Saturday. Scroll down on your device to the lower portion of this webpage to see with whom and when it is your turn to play. The Scramble teams will be revealed once they are composed. I will email that information. Years of Commissioner taught me that preparations are never locked in stone, but the better we prep, the easier it is to adjust on the fly. I learned "Man who runs in front of car gets tired, but man who runs behind car gets exhausted."

A LIFETIME OF CHRISTMAS

Oh Honey, just what I need,
Holding my shiny white briefs.
She said throw out the others,
They have streaks good grief.

Do you think they will fit?
My Dad played the straight man.
Came from Columbus Tent and Awning
The biggest on hand.

So it went every Christmas,
I was the butt end of jokes,
Whether digged by my wife
Or from my own folks.

The kids had a ball,
Adults drank the wine,
The toys Santa brought
Suited young 'uns just fine.

All the abuse of December
Is a forgotten thing
When we journey to Geneva
And the joy it does bring.

The years passed by,
Tots grew to be teens,
They came to the party
With holes in their jeans.

Try buying them gifts
Brought moods of despair.
But I'm still happy
With more underwear.

Mom cooked the feast,
Ravioli at our place.
The teens ate and ran
At an alarming fast pace.

I was long from my youth,
Still the wine was so fine.
It became easy to nap
Shortly after we dine.

Found room for cheesecake
Or pecan pie,
Needed to loosen the belt
About ready to die.

Times may have changed
From those Christmas of past.

But we're still going to Geneva
And it still is a blast.

Our kids now have kids,
Energetic and loud.
Grandpa I am,
Boastful and proud.

The noise became bothersome,
It's a constant parade.
Thank God for technology,
Turn down the ear aids.

The chef has changed,
Recipes are the same,
Staying awake until dinner,
Has become my new game.

We've grown grouchy with age,
Our talks are now rants.
Today's Christmas presents
Are Incontinent pants.

I would not change a thing.

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.

2024 GAVIN CUP WRAP UP

BACK TO ROOTS

Somewhere in the heavens, though many believe she is in hell, Sister Gavin glows brightly like the flames of the devil's headquarters. That fire scorched the chances of 23 teams but lit the ass of one of her favorite students from old Wehrle High School. Mini-Legend Jerry Graves, whose personality is respected by all and said to be able to make friends with anybody, Beelzebub included, proved this quality true when he friended Sister Gavin. His efforts were rewarded when he took home the prestigious Gavin Cup. Even in victory, Sister Gavin made him pay a hefty price.

She may be a devilish spirit, but her hands were all over Our Little Buddy's tumble into the burning pit of fire. Celebrating his opening round of 83 at Hemlock Springs, the witching hour long passed when Jerry decided to turn in. Climbing to his feet, he nearly stumbled headfirst into the flames. We breathed a sigh of relief when he caught his balance. He turned away from the fire. Before he took a step, I was sure I saw the long fingers of an old woman with nails as long as Edward Scissorhands push him. Mr. Graves plummeted into the center of the flaming ring as if plopping into his Lazy Boy. Don Rutherford was quick to the rescue. He pushed Jerry out of the flames in a matter of seconds. It's a good thing. As much alcohol in his system Jerry may have exploded like a 4th of July cherry bomb. The hot iron pit scorched the back of his legs just above the knees. I am no doctor, but they looked to be 1st degree burns. This accident cannot be blamed on Don Jander. He was nowhere close to the mishap. I swear this was the doings of Sister Gavin.

Jerry Graves did not win the Gavin Cup on his own. He partnered with Michael Badea. 85, 82, 82 read Michael's scorecard. Mr. Badea earned runner-up status for the most productive weekend behind Nick Boggess who you will read much about in the next two articles. Michael was on both the BEST BALL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM and the GAVIN CUP winning squad as well as collecting skin money in the SCRAMBLE. There is much to be said about Michael's golf game but, with my apologies, it is Mini-Legend Jerry Graves getting most of the ink in this piece.

The Badea-Graves team led from start to finish. Playing in the first group at Hemlock, Jerry birdied No. 1. They never relinquished that lead. Acting like a leprechaun, Our Short Buddy hopped around the course chasing the pot of gold shouting, "Catch me if you can." We should all be thankful he did not don his Irish leotards. He carded no more birdies that Friday but managed seven pars. Their lead was four shots after day one. Jerry's worse round of the weekend came on Saturday, merely 8 hours since his fire act. He played the Geneva course in 93 strokes. It was moving day, but their lead was still 4 strokes heading into the final round. They won the competition by 5 smacks over Dagon Abdon and Legend Fritz Ford who started the Sunday trailing by 8 strokes. Not to be on this weekend, not after the barbecued adrenalin administered by Sister Gavin's devilish potion drove Jerry to victory.

The defending champions, Pat Dorn and Craig Marshall, finished 5th in the competition. They passed eight teams on day 3. They came into the tournament with Craig bragging to the world of last year's win. The back window of his truck read in billboard fashion, "2x DEFENDING GAVIN CUP CHAMPION – CRAIG MAC". It is important to note that Pat Dorn was part of that team. He was more discreet in his approach, not wanting to draw extra attention and bias to his team. Craig thumped his chest for the both.

The winning team shot a net 409 score, which adds up to 21 under par. They will defend their title in 2025. The Handicap Committee promised to reevaluate the 22 strokes Our Little Buddy caught this year. A damning task for sure with Sister Gavin on his side. There has been talk about changing the name of the trophy. Woe betide if you do. That nun will haunt you the rest of your life. I swear when I flew over Rochester, Minnesota, she flew alongside on her broom still scolding me like she did in high school. Before making a name change on the trophy just understand we live life moving forward, but only do we understand it when we take a look back at all we've been through.

2024 SCRAMBLE WRAP UP

SCRAMBLE THEATRE

Every year Geneva produces an off-Broadway performance more real than any reality TV. The actors are mostly the same but the drama changes with each new production. The intrigue and suspense captures attention like a good Agatha Christie novel. After 27 holes of golf, the Scramble creates a clubhouse relief from the stress and grind of stiff competition.

It starts when the first foursome finishes their round. Atop the hill with a bird's eye view of the 9th hole they park. Four by four they are joined after each group putts out. The scores are revealed when each team takes their parking spot. Kudos to the Scramble Committee because the results were closer than a Dizzy Dean brush back pitch. With ten squads finished, there were 4 teams at five under par, 5 teams at -4, and one at minus 3. Waiting for the last foursome to complete their round, the gathering prepared for playoffs. I guess it is appropriate at this time to quote the words of a 1963 Beatle song. "The fools on the hill see the sun going down and the eyes in their heads see the world spinning round."

One more group to finish. As traditional as the celebratory first foursome to open Geneva every Friday, expect Nick Boggess to captain the last Scramble team each year. Nick loves this stage. Most often count on him to give a Tony Award performance. His supporting cast for the 2024 production was Steve Miller, Kyle Willis, and Tony McGuckin. Of course, championships cannot be earned unless the supporting cast deliver their lines and play as compatible partners, lifting Nick back in contention when he stumbles. Think of Dean Martin, Walter Brennan, and Rick Nelson performing with John Wayne in Rio Bravo. Their contributions were vital in making the movie an instant classic.

I wish I could report a sensational shot on the final hole giving this play a Hollywood ending but that is not the case. Nick has done it before. Don Rutherford has video on his phone of Mr. Boggess sinking a 35-foot birdie to win the Scramble. Not this year, however. Nick Boggess, Steve Miller, Kyle Willis, and Tony McGuckin came to the closing hole needing a

par to win. Nothing spectacular in the way they finished, just a routine par. The spectacular play came on holes 5 through 8 when they carded four consecutive birdies. They won the Scramble by one stroke and split \$240 for their effort.

Four Skins were earned during the Scramble but zero by the Nick Boggess crew. Blaise Plageman, Mark Maatz, Jacob Davis, and Bob Rutherford won two Skins with eagles on both par 5's. Don Jander, Dick Plageman, Shawn Dorn, and Craig Marshall captured a Skin by birdieing the fourth hole. The other Skin went to the team of Michael Badea, Keith Boggess, Todd Moore, and Ray Ballard scoring a rare birdie on No.9. It was a striking contrast from last year when only one Skin was claimed, and it took an eagle 2 on No. 7. Each Scramble Skin was worth \$60.

The deal with the Scramble is each year brings a new collection of teams. Nick Boggess-Steve Miller-Kyle Willis-Tony McGuckin will be scrambled with other teammates presenting opportunities to play with different golfers. The one certain thing about the Scramble is Nick Boggess will compete in the last group in another attempt to display an award-winning performance.

CHIP SHOTS

FINAL THOUGHTS ON 2024

THANK YOU – I sincerely hope the memories from the 2024 Geneva Open are mostly pleasant. Many volunteers worked long and hard to create a competitive and entertaining environment. Usually, I name several who help organize these yearly events. You know the normal suspects. I am very grateful for their efforts. But the real reason for Geneva's success is "YOU". Pat yourselves on the back. 48 golfers came, dedicated to the cause. Each personality brings unique characteristics, but all have two things in common, a sense of humor and a goal to have a good time. Lord help anyone who stands in our way. Bitching and disagreements are at a minimum if at all. If there are misunderstandings, they are settled quickly over a strong beverage. Lessons that could be learned on the political stage. This year five rookies were introduced to Geneva. Like always, they were welcomed with open arms. Observations throughout the weekend was they felt comfortable, enjoyed themselves and quickly slipped into the spirit of Geneva. I have not heard anything to the contrary. That is a credit to everyone involved. I thank all of you for your contribution. Oh yeah! I forgot. There is the lure of golf which is Geneva's foundation. Silly me.

SICK BAY – Before this year's field was set, tragedy hit with the passing of long-time participants Tom Jech and Bill Kirk. May they Rest in Peace. They are missed for sure. Their deaths forewarned of trouble ahead. Though not as serious, four others were forced to withdraw because of physical conditions. Matt Mazzocco, Legend Gary Glanzman, Michael Sachs, and Ron Szymczak could not participate. This is the latest report on their recoveries. According to Gary Mazzocco, Matt is on light duty at work and still doing physical therapy every week. He lost his grip and feeling in his right hand. Unable to grab a golf club keeps him off the golf course. Gary promises future updates. Much of the same problem harasses Legend Gary Glanzman who fights conditions brought about by a bad upper back. Therapy is part of his recovery routine. He has not played golf since early July, and he is miserable. "I am becoming a combination of Doc Hate and Vince Gatto with a bad attitude," he said. Speaking of Doctor Hate, he recovered well from his heart condition which kept him home this

Geneva. We shared many drinks since, and he is as hateful as ever. We wouldn't want him any other way. He needs to stay healthy. Old Fashions and Manhattans are not the same without his sarcastic comments as he serves his masterpieces. Then there were Ron Szymczak and Mini-Legend Jerry Graves. Lordy-Lordy-Lordy. Both made it to Geneva, and both sustained their injuries on site. After a late-night Thursday which included intimacy with an inflatable chicken, Ron was still lubricating hours into Friday. He got a crazy idea to ride a bike that sat empty around the Summertime complex. In his attempt to fetch the two-wheeler, he fell and cracked 3 ribs. Out for the weekend. "All healed up, back to playing golf twice a week," he wrote. "Looking forward to next year." I am not sure about the chicken. Lastly, the healing of Mini-Legend Jerry Graves is complete after taking a seat in a fire pit. Although he only spent two seconds in the burning ring of fire, you would think he might find religion now that he has experienced true hellish conditions. The burns bothered him for a solid month, but he is much better these days. It is still amazing Our Little Buddy competed all weekend and won the Gavin Cup sporting 2nd degree burns.

VEGAS – Late last month, a few of us made our way to Las Vegas. It was not the golf trip that Tony McGuckin envisioned. This was all about craps, blackjack, roulette, keno, and football. The closest we came to golf was a slight interest in the President's Cup. Iran could have bombed Isreal, and we would not have known it. Mini-Legend Jerry Graves, Pat Dorn, Geneva founder Adrian Skunza, and yours truly stayed downtown at the Golden Nugget. Tim and Tom Black had rooms on the Strip. Greg Gudenkauf, a Las Vegas resident, came by on Saturday afternoon for cocktails. He presented us with a welcome gift that created more mind-altering ways to wager at the tables. After Ohio State whipped Michigan State, we spent our winnings on \$80 steaks at a top of the town restaurant. We were not as lucky with the BROWNS against the Raiders. That did not spoil our fun. Jerry made many friends at the crap table Saturday. He had control of the dice for over a half hour raking in chips and cheers around a crowded table. I had to rub his arm down. Tired or not, he refused to submit to a pitch count. I think the pit bosses were ready to cut him off. Adrian hit on the roulette wheel playing number 22 on the advice of Humphrey Bogart from the movie Casablanca. Creature and I were contributors to a fund to keep Las Vegas growing. They tell me Las Vegas was not built on winners.

I was so caught up in the Vegas mystic, I was given an extended visit. Kamala Harris closed the airport so she could leave safely, forcing me to spend an extra 14 hours in a casino. Darn! That may have influenced my vote. We had a great time. Somehow the frustrations on the tables are much more tolerable than the frustrations on the golf course.

CLOSING 24 – The lid is nailed shut on the 2024 Geneva Open. Adrian Skunza tells me “All our memories are in the past.” I spent the last three months rehashing some of them in print. I am sure many more tails will be shared from all 48 attendees. I plan on having our Christmas get together at the Gahanna Grill on Dec. 26 at noon like we have done for the past two years. We can share more memories over lunch and cocktails. We now turn our attention to the Holidays, Halloween candy, Thanksgiving turkey, and the variety of Christmas traditions of each family with plenty of meats, veggies, deserts, and fruit. Just remember, man who eats many prunes gets good run for money.

GROWING BY LEAPS AND BONDS

Turn the calendar back to 1991. The future of Geneva was in doubt. The 1990 event never happened. The one-year hiatus was due to the many distractions in founder Adrian Skunza's life. He was tied up with family, work, and other matters very common with 40-year-old men. Believing the Geneva weekend was too good to erase, Frank Alexander grabbed the reigns of Commissioner and resurrected the outing before the warm coals burnt out.

Frank will be the first to tell you that Geneva saved itself. Until 1991, there was a steady group of 12 to 16 golfers who attended regularly. The voices of these guys shouted loud and clear, sort of a harmonizing chorus, singing the praises of Geneva. Adrian Skunza, Gary Glanzman, Vince Gatto, Fritz Ford, Jerry Graves, Jack Berger, Jim Nogawick, Dick Barrett, Bob and Don Rutherford, John Skunza, Shannon Boothe, Buck Luzader, and Frank Alexander sang the songs which sounded like swing and never the blues. One of the ears affected by this beat was Jay Green. Always a man searching for a new and exciting adventure, Jay was struck by the urge to become part of the fun. He heard Geneva was on again and declared his intention to attend. He was not coming alone. He brought an inkling of dance partners from the Sunday Tour and the Plank's Golf League. These fellows were the likes of Bob Elflein, Mike Weilbacher, Mel Voll, Joe Casa, Ralph DiCarolus, Gary Miller, Wally Maley, Pat Dorn, Donice Foreaker, and Welby. Jay was not finished recruiting. He dipped into the plumber's world. Bill Boggess, Keith Boggess, Mark Schmitt, and Scott Riffle became Geneva regulars. The field grew immediately to 28 players.

There was added significance to the plumber's addition. Billy and Keith were from the Ironton area. Until they entered the fold, Geneva was a fraternity of Southenders from Columbus, Ohio. The Boggess boys harmonized perfectly, adding a Kentucky twang to the choir much like Michael McDonald brought a unique sound to the Doobie Brothers. They opened the door for more outsiders to join in. The Southend bond is still strong but no longer exclusive. They come from the Columbus suburbs, Kentucky, Texas, Las Vegas, Florida, Cleveland, and Utah among other places.

Much has changed since 1991. The idea of playing a practice round on Friday was the brainchild of Gary Miller. Manakiki Golf Course became the venue for several years. Originally, this round was not part of the Geneva competition. A few years later, the round was switched to Hemlock Springs. While at Hemlock, Geneva grew into a three-day tournament. An influential John Skunza thought Hemlock was growing stale and bent the Commissioner's ear to change courses. Early in the new millennium, rotating Friday's tracks became a staple of the tournament.

Before the Gavin Cup came into existence, there was a mishmash of games played. Best Ball was always a mainstay, sometimes four-man teams others two-man teams. You could count on a Skins game every round. Something was missing, however. Dick Barrett is a mastermind of running games of chance. For several years he organized different competitive competitions. He spent many Geneva nights calculating winners and losers in a four-flight tournament play. He even instituted parimutuel betting for a few years. He was good with numbers. He crunched figures for the State of Ohio Taxation Dept. If it was not for his government benefits, I would lay odds Dick would have become a bookmaker.

Dick was relieved when Joe Casa masterminded his plan of building a trophy to be passed around to the winners of a three-day event. The first Gavin Cup was awarded in 2001. The initial winners were the team of Legend Gary Glanzman and Jeff Graessle who is still referred to as "The Ringer." It is only fitting that Gary won the original Gavin Cup competition which appeared as a stamp of approval by God. Another tradition came to be about the same time. The 9-hole Scramble gained instant Geneva ratification. Held after Saturday's round, it is the opportunity to play in a group who would not normally be part of your foursome. Many believe it is the most entertaining round of the weekend. Several factors contribute to this train of thought and many of them can be counted by the empty cans in the Geneva trash containers. The Scramble Committee deserves credit also for comprising balance teams every year.

The end of the ought decade of the 2000's saw bigger fields. Geneva became yearly stops for mainstays like

Dick Plageman, Ron Szymczak, Tom Jech, Don Jander, Mark Spangler, Bill Kirk, Tim Black, Gary and Matt Mazzocco, Mike Pagnanelli, as well as Chuck Rotter and Jim Centorbi from Cleveland. One trip to Geneva brings a desire to return. The Geneva reputation, and the phrase Geneva Worthy makes taking that first trip intimidating. How so? The Dick Plageman venture best describes it. "I thought Geneva was just Pera's, the golf course, and the Dairy Queen," Dick said. He was unaware of the Geneva Strip. Many of his friends complained about Pera's accommodations but they were always excited to return. Years of pressure from Jay finally came to fruition. Scared to come on his own, he swayed brothers Huck and Jim to accompany him. For a big, bad retired policeman, this sounds wimpy. I guess Geneva's intimidation factor is real. Before Dick made the trip, he was given four valuable pieces of information by Dick Barrett and Jack Berger. "No.1-Bring sandals to walk around the room," Dick quoted. "No.2-Bring extra towels. No.3-Advised to bring disinfectants and air fresheners. No.4-Don't expect to win money. Jack finished by saying if Frank walks toward you on Sunday, you were a winner." As fate would have it, Dick Plageman partnered with Pat Dorn to win the Gavin Cup in 2009, Dick's first year.

Geneva had not stopped growing. During the two thousand and teens, an influx of younger generations of golfers made their presence. Fathers brought their sons. I have already mentioned Gary and Matt Mazzocco. Others include Dick and Blaise Plageman, Pat and Shawn Dorn, Tim and Tom Black, Keith and Nick Boggess, Brian and Tim Hughes, Ray and Alex Ballard, Mark and Sam Kovachy, Rick and Zach Jonas. Then there is Dagon Abdon who reversed fields and dragged his dad, Todd, to Geneva. These millenniums invited their friends. By 2020, Geneva's field pressed 50 players. The year of the Coronavirus pandemic staged a roster of 44 players.

To think, that initial gathering of eight has become one of the most anticipated events of every year. So many wonderful personalities hold so many extravagant memories. America may be a melting pot but think of Geneva as stew. The meat is the cast of characters who set the tone during Adrian Skunza's reign. Jay and his troops could be considered the potatoes. The offspring and their friends are the vegetables. The Strip adds spice. The Geneva golf course is the broth. Slowly cooked for decades and

we have a tasty outing. Looking forward to many more Geneva Opens. There are more memories to be made. Whether we like it or not, history goes in only one direction.

2024 BEST BALL RESULTS

1st PLACE -14 \$660

Kerry Joyce

Keith Boggess

Michael Badea

Tom Black

2nd PLACE -13 \$140

Craig Marshall

Pat Dorn

Mike Pagnanelli

Tony McGuckin

2nd PLACE -13 \$140

Bob Rutherford

Blaise Plageman

Dick Plageman

Vince Gatto

Todd Moore

4th PLACE -12

Ben Lloyd

Bryan Shoemaker

Rick Jonas

Mark Kovachy

Jay Green

5th PLACE -11

Bob Rutherford

Nick Boggess

Richie Haskett

Kyle Willis

5th PLACE -11

Ray Ballard

Don Jander

Alex Ballard

Mark Johnson

7th PLACE -10

Padon West

Dagon Abdon

Fritz Ford

Bill Boggess

7th PLACE -10

Jerry Graves

Steve Miller

Todd Abdon

Tim Black

9th PLACE -9

Tim Hughes

Jamie Vernon

Andrew Brinkmeyer

Jarod Boling

10th PLACE -8

Frank Alexander

Jack Berger

Mark Maatz

Sam Kovachy

11th PLACE -6

Greg Gudenkauf

Shawn Dorn

Tom Prunte

Jacob Davis

Steve Reed

2024 GAVIN CUP RESULTS

1st PLACE \$250 Michael Badea -23 Jerry Graves 409	2nd PLACE \$100 Dagon Abdon -18 Fritz Ford 414
3rd PLACE \$40 Steve Reed -16 Tom Prunte 416	4th PLACE \$20 Andrew Brinkmeyer -13 Paden West 419
5th PLACE Pat Dorn -12 Craig Marshall 420	5th PLACE Jarod Boling -12 Tony McGuckin 420
7th PLACE Rick Jonas -11 Mike Pagnanelli 421	8th PLACE Bryan Shoemaker -9 Kyle Willis 423
9th PLACE Dick Plageman -7 Jay Green 425	9th Place Don Jander -7 Tom Black 425
11th PLACE Todd Moore -5 Shawn Dorn 427	12th PLACE Alex Ballard -3 Tim Hughes 429
13th PLACE Richie Heskett -1 Jamie Vernon 431	14th PLACE Nick Boggess +3 Don Rutherford 435
14th PLACE Keith Boggess +3 Kerry Joyce 435	16th PLACE Jack Berger +4 Greg Gudenkauf 436
17th PLACE Mark Maatz +9 Frank Alexander 441	18th PLACE Vince Gatto +13 Ray Ballard 445
18th PLACE Mark Kovachy +13 Bob Rutherford 445	20th PLACE Sam Kovachy +15 Bill Boggess 447
21st PLACE Blaise Plageman +17 Jacob Davis 449	22nd PLACE Tim Black +26 Mark Johnson 458
23rd PLACE Blaise Plageman +30 Ben Lloyd 462	24th PLACE Steve Miller +60 Todd Moore 492

2024 GENEVA OPEN

SATURDAY TEE TIMES

8:30	9:10	9:50
Blaise Plageman Don Jander Dagon Abdon Nick Boggess	Ray Ballard Alex Ballard Mark Johnson Kyle Willis	Pat Dorn Andrew Brinkmeyer Tom Black Todd Abdon
8:40	9:20	10:00
Ben Lloyd Jarod Boling Michael Badea Don Rutherford	Frank Alexander Vince Gatto Jerry Graves Fritz Ford	Rick Jonas Richie Heskett Jay Green Todd Moore
8:50	9:30	10:10
Bill Boggess Keith Boggess Padon West Steve Reed	Jacob Davis Tony McGuckin Jamie Vernon Tim Hughes	Shawn Dorn Kerry Joyce Mike Pagnanelli Bryan Shoemaker
9:00	9:40	10:20
Dick Plageman Jack Berger Ron Szymczak Steve Miller	Mark Kovachy Sam Kovachy Mark Maatz Tim Black	Craig Marshall Tom Prunte Greg Gudenkauf Bob Rutherford

2024 GENEVA OPEN

SATURDAY TEE TIMES

8:30	9:10	9:50
Blaise Plageman Don Jander Dagon Abdon Nick Boggess	Ray Ballard Alex Ballard Mark Johnson Kyle Willis	Pat Dorn Andrew Brinkmeyer Tom Black Jerry Graves
8:40	9:20	10:00
Ben Lloyd Jarod Boling Michael Badea Don Rutherford	Frank Alexander Vince Gatto Gary Glanzman Fritz Ford	Rick Jonas Richie Heskett Jay Green Todd Moore
8:50	9:30	10:10
Bill Boggess Keith Boggess Padon West Todd Abdon	Jacob Davis Tony McGuckin Jamie Vernon Tim Hughes	Shawn Dorn Kerry Joyce Mike Pagnanelli Bryan Shoemaker
9:00	9:40	10:20
Dick Plageman Jack Berger Ron Szymczak Steve Miller	Mark Kovachy Sam Kovachy Mark Maatz Tim Black	Craig Marshall Tom Prunte Greg Gudenkauf Bob Rutherford

2024 GENEVA

HEMLOCK TEE TIMES

NOON	12:40	1:20
Fritz Ford Vince Gatto Jerry Graves Jack Berger	Mark Johnson Nick Boggess Dagon Abdon Pat Dorn	Don Rutherford Michael Badea Bob Rutherford Kerry Joyce
12:10	12:50	1:30
Blaise Plageman Ben Lloyd Craig Marshall Andrew Brinkmeyer	Frank Alexander Mark Kovachy Sam Kovachy Mark Maatz	Rick Jonas Richie Heskett Mike Pagnanelli Tony McGuckin
12:20	1:00	1:40
Don Jander Ron Szymczak Steve Miller Bryan Shoemaker	Steve Reed Dick Plageman Todd Abdon Paden West	Shawn Dorn Jamie Vernon Jay Green Tom Prunte
12:30	1:10	1:50
Ray Ballard Alex Ballard Kyle Willis Todd Moore	Bill Boggess Keith Boggess Tim Black Tom Black	Jacob Davis Greg Gudenkauf Tim Hughes Jarod Boling

2024 GENEVA

HEMLOCK TEE TIMES

NOON	12:40	1:20
Gary Glanzman Vince Gatto Jerry Graves Jack Berger	Mark Johnson Nick Boggess Dagon Abdon Pat Dorn	Don Rutherford Michael Badea Bob Rutherford Kerry Joyce
12:10	12:50	1:30
Blaise Plageman Ben Lloyd Craig Marshall Andrew Brinkmeyer	Frank Alexander Mark Kovachy Sam Kovachy Mark Maatz	Rick Jonas Richie Heskett Mike Pagnanelli Tony McGuckin
12:20	1:00	1:40
Don Jander Ron Szymczak Steve Miller Bryan Shoemaker	Fritz Ford Dick Plageman Todd Abdon Paden West	Shawn Dorn Jamie Vernon Jay Green Tom Prunte
12:30	1:10	1:50
Ray Ballard Alex Ballard Kyle Willis Todd Moore	Bill Boggess Keith Boggess Tim Black Tom Black	Jacob Davis Greg Gudenkauf Tim Hughes Jarod Boling

2024 SCRAMBLE RESULTS

1st PLACE \$240 Nick Boggess -6 Steve Miller Kyle Willis Tony McGuckin	2nd PLACE Dagon Abdon -5 Tim Black Mike Pagnanelli Jay Green	2nd PLACE Andrew Brinkmeyer -5 Bryan Shoemaker Ben Lloyd Greg Gudenkauf
2nd PLACE Don Jander -5 Dick Plageman Shawn Dorn Craig Marshall	2nd PLACE Michael Badea -5 Keith Boggess Todd Moore Ray Ballard	6th PLACE Rick Jonas -4 Steve Reed Bill Boggess Paden West
6th PLACE Blaise Plageman -4 Mark Maatz Jacob Davis Bob Rutherford	6th PLACE Pat Dorn -4 Jarod Boling Tom Prunte Jerry Graves	6th PLACE Jack Berger -4 Mark Kovachy Jamie Vernon Tim Hughes
6th PLACE Todd Abdon -4 Alex Ballard Mark Johnson Kerry Joyce	11th PLACE Sam Kovachy -3 Richie Heskett Tom Black Don Rutherford	

SCRAMBLE SKINS

Blaise Plageman – Mark Maatz – Jacob Davis – Bob Rutherford

Eagle on No. 1 \$60

Don Jander – Dick Plageman – Shawn Dorn – Craig Marshall

Birdie on No. 4 \$60

Blaise Plageman – Mark Maatz – Jacob Davis – Bob Rutherford

Eagle on No. 7 \$60

Michael Badea – Keith Boggess – Todd Moore – Ray Ballard

Birdie on No. 9 \$60

2024 SCRAMBLE TEAMS

TEAM #1 Nick Boggess Steve Miller Kyle Willis Tony McGuckin	TEAM #2 Dagon Abdon Vince Gatto Mike Pagnanelli Jay Green	TEAM #3 Andrew Brinkmeyer Bryan Shoemaker Ben Lloyd Frank Alexander
TEAM #4 Rick Jonas Steve Reed Bill Boggess Paden West	TEAM #5 Don Jander Dick Plageman Shawn Dorn Craig Marshall	TEAM #6 Blaise Plageman Mark Maatz Jacob Davis Bob Rutherford
TEAM #7 Sam Kovachy Richie Heskett Tom Black Don Rutherford	TEAM #8 Pat Dorn Jarod Boling Tom Prunte Jerry Graves	TEAM #9 Ron Szymczak Tim Black Jamie Vernon Greg Gudenkauf
TEAM #10 Jack Berger Mark Kovachy Fritz Ford Tim Hughes	TEAM #11 Todd Abdon Alex Ballard Mark Johnson Kerry Joyce	TEAM #12 Michael Badea Keith Boggess Todd Moore Ray Ballard

2024 SCRAMBLE TEAMS

TEAM #1 Nick Boggess Steve Miller Kyle Willis Tony McGuckin	TEAM #2 Dagon Abdon Vince Gatto Mike Pagnanelli Jay Green	TEAM #3 Andrew Brinkmeyer Bryan Shoemaker Ben Lloyd Frank Alexander
TEAM #4 Rick Jonas Sam Kovachy Bill Boggess Paden West	TEAM #5 Don Jander Dick Plageman Shawn Dorn Craig Marshall	TEAM #6 Blaise Plageman Mark Maatz Jacob Davis Bob Rutherford
TEAM #7 Gary Glanzman Richie Heskett Tom Black Don Rutherford	TEAM #8 Pat Dorn Jarod Boling Tom Prunte Jerry Graves	TEAM #9 Ron Szymczak Tim Black Jamie Vernon Greg Gudenkauf
TEAM #10 Jack Berger Mark Kovachy Fritz Ford Tim Hughes	TEAM #11 Todd Abdon Alex Ballard Mark Johnson Kerry Joyce	TEAM #12 Michael Badea Keith Boggess Todd Moore Ray Ballard

2024 SKINS RESULTS

FRIDAY SKINS at HEMLOCK

\$52

Vince Gatto	Birdie	Hole #3
Blaise Plageman	Birdie	Hole #6
Fritz Ford	Birdie	Hole #7
Don Jander	Birdie	Hole #9
Alex Ballard	Birdie	Hole #11
Dick Plageman	Birdie	Hole #12
Dagon Abdon	Birdie	Hole #14
Tom Black	Eagle	Hole #15
Steve Miller	Birdie	Hole #18

“A” SATURDAY SKINS at GENEVA

\$45

Nick Boggess	Birdie	Hole #4
Nick Boggess	Birdie	Hole #10
Nick Boggess	Birdie	Hole #13
Pat Dorn	Birdie	Hole #15
Rick Jonas	Birdie	Hole #17

“B” SATURDAY SKINS at GENEVA

\$48

Tony McGuckin	Birdie	Hole #2
Mike Pagnanelli	Birdie	Hole #5
Jerry Graves	Birdie	Hole #13
Jay Green	Birdie	Hole #14
Jacob Davis	Birdie	Hole #15

SKILL SHOTS at GENEVA

\$50

“Little Sexy”	Closest to Pin	Hole #3
Alex Ballard	Closest to Pin	Hole #9
Jay Green	Closest to Pin	Hole #14
Nick Boggess	Closest to Pin	Hole #16
Frank Alexander	Longest 1 st Putt	Hole #9
Don Rutherford	Longest Drive	Hole #11

2024 SKINS AND SKILL SHOTS WRAP UP

THE ANGRY GRIZZLY

Nick Boggess woke up on July 27 with an empty feeling. For the first time in many years, he did not win a Skin on Friday's round. If he was unaware of his lackluster accomplishment, I am guilty of rejuvenating his competitive juices. "Don't poke a sleeping bear" Lee Trevino warned about Jack Nicklaus in the 70's I did not heed his warning. Before Saturday's golf, I informed Nick of his underachieving play. The blood boiled. His eyes grew hungry. The Geneva course became a huge picnic basket for him to feast. And feast he did.

Let's start from the beginning. On a beautiful sunlit day at Hemlock Springs, temperature hovering in the mid-70's, the winds as menacing as my late wife, the course could have been the Garden of Eden. The low hanging fruit was ripe for the picking. Nine Skins were earned each paying \$52. Think about it. One out of every two holes relinquished a Skin. With 47 guys in the field, the likeliness of nine Skins on this golf course is as far fetched as catching Tyrek Hill. The dudes cashing in on Skins were Legend Vince Gatto, Blaise Plageman, Legend Fritz Ford, Don Jander, Alex Ballard, Dick Plageman, Dagon Abdon, Tim Black with an eagle, and Steve Miller. Who would have thunk it? Just goes to show you golf is a crazy sport. Lee Trevino knew it which is why he said, "Golf is a game invented by the same people who think music comes out of a bagpipe."

That brings us to Saturday when Nick had his big day. Trevino also said, "There are two things you can do with your head down – play golf and pray." Nick played winning golf leaving the rest of us to pray that he leaves a few scraps. He won three Skins totaling \$140, two Skill Shots pocketing \$100 more, and captained the winning Scramble team for \$60. Cha-Ching! That adds up to \$300. Most all of the low hanging fruit remaining after Friday's Skin barrage was gobbled by Nick satisfying his hungry grizzly bear appetite. Back in his parts (lower Ohio and upper Kentucky), he is known as Scottie, nicknamed after today's top golfer. I apologize. Next year I will keep my observations to myself. Pat Dorn and Rick Jonas also earned

\$45 apiece with their Skin in “A” flight. They were lucky Nick left them anything to win.

The good thing for the high handicappers is Nick Boggess is not in the “B” flight. That made room for five more winners of Skin money claiming \$48 for each. Tony McGuckin, Mike Pagnanelli, Mini-Legend Jerry Graves, Jay Green, and Jacob Davis cashed in for their fine play. Adding it up, 19 Skins were won in two days, and all were birdies except Tom Black’s eagle. More Lee Trevino insight when he said, “Chipping and putting for par is like a dog chasing cars, he won’t be doing it for very long.”

I mentioned the Skill Shot Competition. It is time to give them due diligence. Each winner is \$50 richer. Richie Heskett, Alex Ballard, Jay Green, and (must I repeat) Nick Boggess were Closest to the Pin on the par 3’s. Wreaking more havoc on the field, Nick’s second shot was Closest on No.10. Legend Frank Alexander made the Longest First Putt on the 9th hole. Finally, Don Rutherford outmuscled the big hitters by spanking the Longest Drive on 11.

Those are your 2024 Skins and Skill Shot winners. It would be fitting to close this article with one more Trevinoism. “Nobody but you and your caddie care what you do out there, and if your caddie is betting against you, he doesn’t care either.”

Little Mountain Tee Sheet

Group #1
Don Jander
Ron Szymczak
Steve Miller
Bryan Shoemaker

Group #4
Pat Dorn
Pags
Rich
Richie

Group #2
Dick Plageman
Blaise
Shawn Dorn
Andrew

Group #5
Tim Black
Tom Black
Mark
Ray

Group #3
Tim Hughes
Brian Hughes
Ben Lloyd

Group #6
Tom
Greg
Jelly