

GAVIN CUP

MARSHALL LAW

Who was that man in Craig Marshall's Foot-Joys and what did he do with Craig? We know Craig was in attendance because he was often spotted Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights stumbling throughout the Geneva Strip. The photo of Craig hugging the Gavin Cup like a proud mother protecting her newborn certifies his golfing success at the 2021 Geneva Open if it truly was Craig who played. His rounds of 90 at Little Mountain, 87 and 95 at Geneva-on-the-Lake were as unlikely as DeChambeau and Koepka breaking bread together any time soon. The only logical explanation was this was the workings of the full thunder moon which hovered over Geneva that weekend and took control of Craig's body and sold his soul to Satan himself. What else could it be?

Craig teamed with Nate McCorkle who had quite an adventurous weekend himself. Nate's days did not end with his final putts on 18 green each day. Like Craig, he took to the Strip after dark enjoying the gaiety of the village. Neither Craig nor Nate were cheated this weekend. No one accused either of sleeping on their lead and they led from start to finish, well sort of. Nate bogeyed No.1 and Craig double bogeyed. Both birdied the second hole and it was a wall to wall lead thereafter.

Much has been discussed about Thursday's practice round at Little Mountain. The conception was hockey and lacrosse were the sports played with a stick deemed more injury prone. Not with this group. Mark Johnson's accident was the most serious. Leaping over a 6 inch rill, he popped an Achilles tendon. Those are too painful to continue. Surgery was performed and Mark promises to return next year. By the way, even at his age he made it across the rill he just landed wrong.

Oh! There was more. Living up to the name Little Mountain, Nate McCorkle also found the slopes treacherous. During his round, Nate lost his balance and rolled down one of Little Mountain's steep hills. For those of us who did not see it, we picture him rolling downward like Brutus in a Popeye cartoon coming to rest in one of their many sand traps, his body covered with sand looking like

powdered sugar topping a cannoli. We do know his fall caused irritation to a rib and certainty of his status for the Tournament was in question. Nate is a tough man. Instead of complaining about his hurt, he put a hurting on the field shooting the day's best score, 71. He followed Saturday and Sunday with rounds of 76 and 77.

The goal every year is to create new and lasting memories. One of the Geneva fraternity, Mike Smith, wrote me saying, "Memories tucked between the pages of my mind. Memories sweetened thru ages just like wine." Spending three days harping about the past, Legend Vince Gatto reminded everyone within ears length how good he use to play and each sip from his adult sippy cup brought back more memories than anyone wanted to hear. He told memorable stories of legendary shots followed by the statement he is now a "chop". Adding it all up, I'd say we heard about 100 anecdotes from different periods of Geneva's 44 year history and that doesn't include the tales repeated 5 different times. Vince partnered with Tim Black for his Gavin Cup team and they kept pressure on the McCorkle-Marshall duo all weekend. In one sense it was the quietest and in another it was the loudest challenge for the Cup. A win for Legend Vince Gatto in this event would have been fitting in a year Phil Mickelson at 51 years old won the PGA Championship. In the end the Gatto-Black team finished third.

McCorkle and Marshall needed to wait until the final group finished 18 to claim their title. A 75 score by Keith Boggess would have catapulted the Keith Boggess- Ben Lloyd team past the M&M boys. Having coasted to a smooth 39 on the front side, Keith looked ready to close the deal. A triple bogey on the 14th hole created a deficit too deep to climb out. Still, it was a fine showing for Keith and Ben finishing second in the competition.

Whatever potent Marshall found in 2021, we will be anxious to see if it works in 2022, providing that was really Craig Marshall on the golf course. McCorkle and Marshall will defend their crown next year. We know Nate will play his game as he sports a 4 handicap. Whether we want to believe Craig's mystified rounds or not, he and Nate will be forever honored as the 2021 Gavin Cup Champions and their names will be engraved on the trophy to prove it.