

Column 30

NOBLE ON GOLF

**Many Hats,  
One Head**

It was one of our recent unusually grand days. Thermometer near eighty, clear skies and best of all the parking lot at Boulder Canyon Country Club was near capacity. As I got out of my car and walked to the clubhouse I was met by 100% smiling faces. No frowns from these folks. Remarkable what a sunny, blue sky do for a bunch of golfers. And, I do mean a bunch. The staff was playing too. Except for John Graves who was minding the store while everyone else got to enjoy the splendor of playing on this perfect day.

I have asked in this column, "Where are all the golfers?" and charged we should do a number of things to increase play to avoid the struggle now experienced by most golf facilities throughout the country. The answer lies up Boulder Canyon at BCCC. At least it was evident that wonderful day.

First, I introduced myself to John and began my usual interrogation. My questions always range from life history, their golf career and on to whatever path the interrogative leads. Next, I learned John grew up in Ethan. Most of you know Ethan is located just a few miles south of the famous Corn Palace City where I grew up. Not only has the little town proudly given us the Ethan Cheese Factory it also developed a host of talented baseball players (I discovered John is one of them). I know the cheese is still mighty tasty and the ball players produced are gifted.

The clubhouse phone rang. It was Dana Limbo calling to let me know he was running late for our appointment. He was very gracious in his offer to provide lunch. Dana is the current, but retiring president of the board of Directors. He held that office for several years while the new back nine holes were in planning, development and under construction. Dana is a Major in the National Guard working in the Guard in Rapid City. We salute Major Limbo for his service to our country and this column salutes him for his service to the game of golf. You will hear more on this. Also, John Graves is a retired Guard member and we also thank him for his service.

Dana rushed up. He immediately commandeered a golf car and we sped off on our mission of the day – to experience a trip around the new, back nine holes of the Boulder Canyon Country Club. Dana had come from his full-time work with the National Guard and was wearing his uniform cap, but my imagination told me he was wearing several hats. Besides being the BCCC president, he had performed the task of negotiator in behalf of the club for the land trade that would become the new nine. Dana was also the site engineer for the golf course project. When the plans needed a little help in the design he acted as the architect, too. He has worn many, many hats.

There is one conversation I need to have. That is a little talk with Dana's brother. I am told that brother has just been elected to the board and Dana has stepped down. I may have a paragraph or two to report a slightly revised rendition of this story. One thing is certain, however, the brothers have done well with this project.

The new nine is similar in length to the original course. It is just a little different in length, greens size is larger, greens surface has much more undulation and size of the tees is considerably greater. The players will find a challenge on the new course in being required to occasionally cross water, play position shots and use an array of clubs for tee shots. We will find the back to be nearly as long as the front. The entire course is a five tee layout giving high consideration for shot making. The emphasis will not be how limber your back, but how nimble your mind.

The grass seed is down. Mother Nature is in charge, but Chad Anderson, course superintendent is trying to be helpful every chance he gets. A measure of the work, according to Dana, was done "in-house". That account will be saved for another day. Perhaps when there is three inches of snow on the ground and I can catch them sitting around the clubhouse. In the meantime I recommend you plan to play BCCC yet this fall. Be sure to check the membership drive. It's about to begin December 1st or thereabouts. There is more to this story so stay tuned.

#### NOBLE ON GOLF INSTRUCTION

Today, I would like to talk about the part swing. You will recognize it easily. The part or short swing is used to make the ball travel a short distance. I like my students to think of a putt, pitch or chip as the short/part swing motion of the club swinging motion. The three strokes require slightly different physical involvement by different parts of the body. The putter stroke should be performed by the arms and shoulders only. Rarely do I see a student who incorporates more than the arms in making the putting stroke.

The conventional thinking before 1950's players utilized a small amount of lower body movement with some wrist cocking and uncocking. The longer the shot the more movement was employed. The face of the putter was lofted so that the strike of the club on the ball would result in the ball rising off the greens surface, skipping once or twice with slight back spin before beginning its rolling action toward the cup. This action required the club head to rise in the back stroke and descend in the forward stroke.

Modern instruction of the putting action suggests the club head stay low to the ground and produce a smooth stroking movement. Most teachers ask the putter face remain square to the selected line of roll. The vast majority of instructional opinion calls for movement of the arms while the shoulders rotate about the neck. Putter head stays near the ground, square and causing the ball to roll. It is a lot harder than it sounds, but nice putt anyway! We'll work on the chip next and the pitch in a couple weeks.

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