

SLICE OF LIFE



By Terry Moore

In the interest of full disclosure, I will admit that this column is written in haste but not without forethought.

Let me explain. You see, I usually set aside one morning to write my column. And that's tomorrow. But today one of the best and worse things that can happen to a golf writer occurred: I got an invitation to play a terrific golf course and at the cherished first tee-time of the day. And it's tomorrow. So what should I do? Will it be golf or will it be the column? The lady or the tiger? Door number one or door number two? Rationalizing that the Michigan spring has been terrible for my posted rounds to date, I easily conclude that the reality of the game trumps the abstract.

However, I do take my column and its select group of readers ("Hi Dad! Hi Mr. Prison Warden!") seriously. That's why I keep a "24/7 column" in reserve. Being a pack rat of sorts, I retain all sorts of emails, press clippings, and notes that catch my fancy over the course of several months. Sometimes they inspire me to write a column on a single subject. But this time, they serve

the glorious purpose of allowing me to commence a column NOW so I can tee off tomorrow morning. Fellow golfers, can I hear an Amen? Thank you. Allow me to proceed....

The lessons of Padraig Harrington—I saved an article read in the Irish Independent about Harrington commenting on his junior golf upbringing. At a junior clinic in Ireland in late April, he told the gathering that at 15 years of age and while representing his country, he had only a half-set of golf clubs because he shared a set with his brother. "I had the 4-iron, 6-iron, 8-iron, and wedge," said Harrington. "I had no sand wedge and no lob wedge yet I managed to get in the Ireland Boys Golf Team."

Although not stated in the article, I assumed Padraig had some woods but still he makes a valid point. Many juniors really don't need a full set of clubs to play the game. In fact, too much parenting, product, and pampering can ruin a young player's natural instinct for and interest in the game.

Harrington went on to say: "Golf should be a bit of fun for children. It's not about having all the latest equipment and the latest driver."

Thinking back to my own golf upbringing, Harrington is right on the money with his remarks. My parents bought me some new, "department store," inexpensive clubs which certainly weren't a

full set. No matter to me because I learned to hit all sorts of half and three-quarter shots with the clubs in my bag. I still recall my trusty ladies woods, called Mor-Flite, that had these gosh-awful aqua-colored grips. Let me confess, those grips caused me all sorts of grief. But growing up with those clubs, I still remember my Dad marveling how I could "lay off" my Mor-Flite three-wood from under 125 yards. Back then in those evergreen years, golf was all feel and instinct and target-centered. Harrington made another salient observation all parents of junior golfers should ponder: kids should learn to play team sports as well as golf. "Golf is a selfish game so it's good for kids to learn to be part of a team first."

Golf equipment: Hey, just because I grew up with a half-set of clubs like Paddy doesn't mean I don't prefer a full set now. Several new clubs have somehow found themselves in my bag this season. Foremost among them are the Adams Ovation stainless steel fairway clubs which I really liked when I tried them out at Demo Day at the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando last winter. I'm playing the Ovation three and nine metalwoods this season. Like those aqua-colored grips of my younger days, that nine metalwood (24 degrees of loft) in particular exposes me to some ribbing by my playing partners. A

month ago on a 180 yard, par-three where my playing companions hit an eight-iron, a seven-iron, and a six-iron respectively, I eschewed my five-iron for my more forgiving nine metalwood. Its low center of gravity and low profile clubface really allow me to hit a higher trajectory ball than with my five iron. Call it a concession to my age or to less flexibility in my swing but I no longer have a two, a three or a four-iron

in my bag. Hello three, five, seven and nine metalwoods! But when it comes to winning a skin against my Saturday morning gang, I'm not too proud about the non-macho nature of my equipment. Anyway, as my shot that morning was seeking the flag, one of golf buddies exclaimed in mock play by play commentary, "And now Terry hits a "turned down" nine wood into the cup for an ace!" In fact, I just missed by

a mere inch from holing the shot and instead made a two-footer for a deuce. But let me just state, I would not be embarrassed to have my name in the newspaper for making an ace with this club aptly named Ovation.

And here's the bigger point: Golf should be a bit of fun for adults. It's about having all the latest equipment and the latest nine wood. *MG*

Michigan Golfer

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Golf Course Architects

Paul Albanese

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2003shows/show19/index.html>

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2001shows/show22/index.html>

Steve Forrest

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2002shows/show19/index.html>

Ray Hearn

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2003shows/show21/index.html>

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Arthur Hills

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W. Bruce Matthews

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William Newcomb

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Jack Nicklaus

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Rick Robbins

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