The GolfHouse

GOLFER'S LIFE

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Cover Concept & Design
Shazzad Hossain

“It’s the only happening I know of in golf where people celebrate its calendar date three months in advance.



EDITOR’S CHOICE



“People describe Dustin as a ‘freakish athlete,’ which he is, but they also think that means he’s just coasting on his natural talent,” says trainer Joey Diovisalvi, who works out with Johnson in Florida and travels with him to tournaments.

Forward

Dear readers,

There’s a lot to love about this game. Even when it’s beating you up, the heart continues to swell. I think I speak for a lot of golfers when I say that my affection for the game peaks in April. That this timing coincides with the Masters is no accident. When Bobby Jones built Augusta National starting in 1931, and hosted the first Masters Invitational three years later, I wonder if he thought of how deeply fans and players would fall for the place, to say nothing of the tournament itself. It’s the only happening I know of in golf where people celebrate its calendar date three months in advance. You got a glimpse of Masters passion last fall, when the usually stoic Dustin Johnson, this issue’s cover subject, broke down in tears (the joyful kind) upon accepting his first green jacket. (A beaming Tiger Woods, standing behind Johnson during the post-round ceremony, knew exactly what DJ was feeling.) You’ll see it in this issue’s epic 2021Masters Preview too. The Masters champions provide an exclusive, insider’s tour of Augusta National— every one of its 18 spectacular holes. The only word that describes this coup is love—a champion’s reverence not only for the fraternity of green jackets, Norman got unlucky that fateful Sunday 25 years ago, but it didn’t diminish his admiration for the tournament he wanted most to win, nor the life lessons he learned that day. As I said, there’s a lot to love about the Masters. I know I’m counting the days.

Nazrul Hosen Ayon
Editor

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The GolfHouse GOLFER’S LIFE

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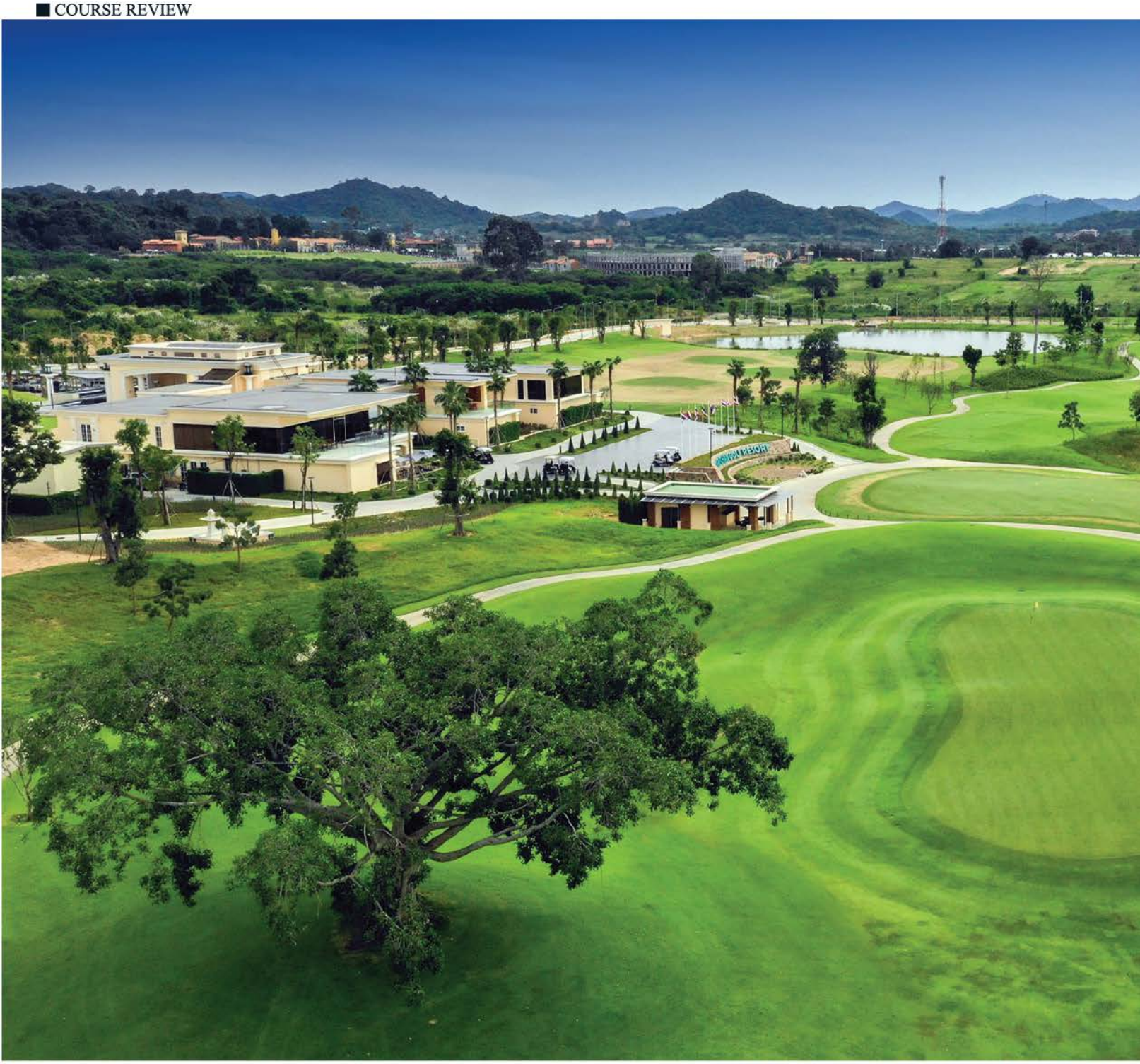
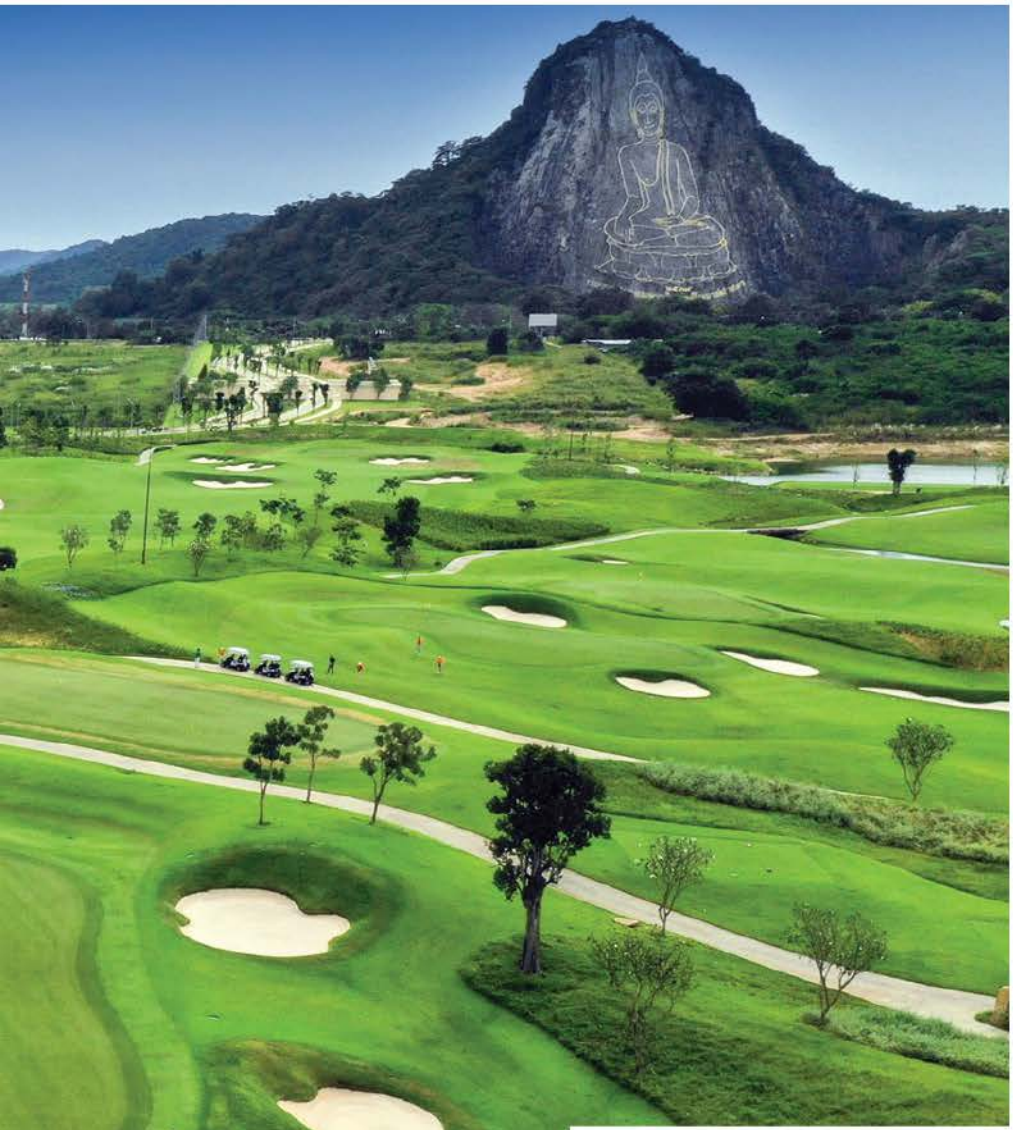


Someone To Watch Over You

Buddha Smiles Upon Chee Chan Golf Resort



dominant element is the Chee Chan Buddha, whose serene likeness has been carved into a limestone escarpment some 110 meters high. "Buddha Mountain" is one of the region's best known tourist and devotional attractions. Today, his gilt-edged visage is visible from nearly every spot on the 220-acre property, including the entire opening hole. "We couldn't afford to miss the opportunity to start golfers on their spiritual journey under the watchful eye of Siddhartha Gautama," said Golfplan Partner David Dale. "The Buddha invites a decision on the very first tee: play conservative to the right, lower landing area and approach the green uphill, over deep bunkers, or drive more aggressively (left of the center bunker) to create a downhill approach to an unguarded putting surface. "We have much to learn from the Buddha, who taught us a 'Middle Way' between sensual indulgence and uncurbed asceticism. For golfers the larger message is unambiguous: relax and keep it in the fairway." "At Chee Chan, the cultural aspect was ready-made and close by, but we accentuated the experience over and over again. By my count, holes 5, 6, 11, 14 and 17 all play toward Buddha Mountain, and 11 and 17 afford golfers excellent views of a Buddhist temple nestled into a different hillside. The experience is unique precisely because of the Thai culture."



With a December christening at Chee Chan Golf Resort, the course architects at Golfplan have again showcased their skill at integrating world class golf holes with signature elements in the local landscape and culture. Some of the Golfplan's other regional projects include Indonesia's New Kuta Golf Club, as well as Weihai Point Golf Resort in China, and several courses in South Korea. By the Gulf of Siam, the

An International Championship 18 hole, Par 72 course that is a challenging 7,345 yards from the Championship tees and a more leisurely 6,527 yards from the front tees. The course has been designed to suit all levels of golfers where layout provides sweeping movement on the fairways and greens and features intricate bunker facing, native landscapes and wetlands. Golfplan has worked extensively in Thailand. Their designs at Panya Park, Panya Indra and Mountain Shadow (down the road from Chee Chan, in Pattaya) all enormous features give the entire course both an amphitheater feel and a pleasing sense of seclusion. "In this environment, it's tempting to shape the golf course in competition with these large features. But I think we struck the right balance. The contour is flamboyant but toned down through the landing zones. There are several cavernous valleys that separate the holes, which tend to melt over and between these landforms. With the introduction of drought-tolerant bahia grass to frame and accent all this, it's a pretty stunning tableau." Buddha Mountain was created on the northern face of Khao Chee Chan in 1996, to commemorate His Majesty the King of Thailand's golden jubilee. It's been a major domestic tourist draw ever since, enough to invite subsequent development of a water park, winery and shopping district. With new accommodations and world class resort golf added to the mix, this corner of Pattaya (just 90 minutes from Suvarnabhumi International Airport) is a fully fledged destination unto itself. "I love golf," said Narit Chia-Apar, founder of Chee Chan Golf Resort and chairman of the developing entity, Chartered Square Holding Company. "I know how golfers think and what they want. I know the level of service that is expected, and so I built the course based on the needs of myself as a golfer, and not just as an investor. Whatever I see fit to give the best impression for our visitors, I will make sure that we have it here."







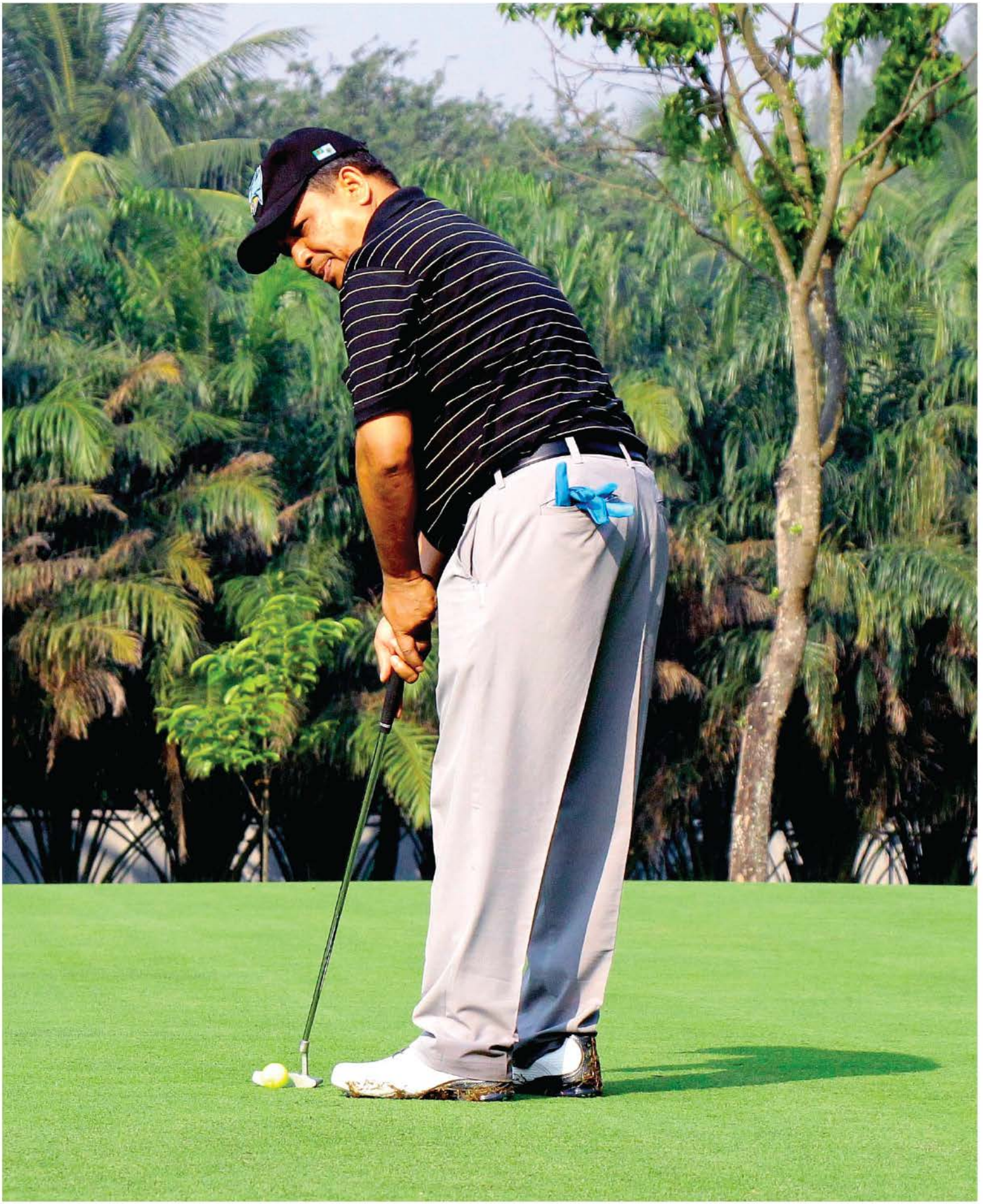






PERSEVERANCE IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

MASIHUZZAMAN SERNIABAT
AIR CHIEF MARSHAL





PERSEVERANCE IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat is the current Chief of Air Staff of the Bangladesh Air Force. He took over as the chief on 12 June 2018. While he has lived a very busy life serving the nation, he has devoted his leisure time to golf to be able to understand the game's nuances, its inner significance and positive impacts on life. Mr. Serniabat finds parallels between the struggle and success in golf and life.





"Everyone needs a break from the busy life that they live. When you are glued to something all the time, you need a bit of respite. Golf gives you that respite and makes you fresh to start your work again."

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF PLAYING IN DIFFERENT GOLF COURSES IN BANGLADESH AND ABROAD.

Due to my career, work and training around the world, I have had the opportunity to play in various renowned golf courses around the world. I have played at the Eagle Green Golf Course in Alaska; I have played in the marine-base golf course in Honolulu, Hawaii; I have played at a golf course near pebble beach. So I guess I developed an understanding of how golf courses should be in different regions depending on the climate and nature of grass of those particular regions. In Bangladesh, Kurmitola Golf Club is obviously the best one. However, Bhatiary and Shaheen Golf Clubs are very good too. People may think Shaheen is an easy course to play on as the distance is not that much. The challenge, though, lies in keeping the shots straight. It is a very enjoyable golf course with all the amenities in place.

HOW DO YOU MANAGE TIME AMID YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE?

Everyone needs a break from the busy life that they live. When you are glued to something all the time, you need a bit of respite. Golf gives you that respite and makes you fresh to start your work again. Those who work long hours need some sort of recreation. Golf gives a different sort of recreation as it brings freshness to your mental state. Golf course gives you the sense of being in the middle of pristine nature, surrounded by green and freshened by chirping of birds. You do not get to see the sunrise from your apartment, but you can see it if you are at the golf course very early in the morning. You can find different kinds of birds there which are hardly noticeable from the middle of the city. The feeling you get from being inside the golf course makes you a humble being, and being reminded of the greatness of Allah. There are so many other things in golf which you can draw parallel with your life. The ups and downs of golf reflect those that we encounter in life.

GOLF IS A SLOW-PACED GAME WHILE LIFE OF AN AIR FORCE OFFICER IS THAT OF A FAST ONE. HOW DO YOU MANAGE THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO?

I would actually say both are pretty similar. In flying fighter jets, you need to take split-second decisions taking into consideration other surrounding aspects. In golf too you have to combine all of the factors influencing your game to decide on your next shot. You have to align your aim, your decision and your swing and you can't wait once those things are aligned. Those who play well do not dwell on once they take their stance. Those who take too long at taking their stance or after taking stance do not do well. Golf may seem slow from the outside, but the decisive moments are instantaneous.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM GOLF?

The lesson from golf is perseverance and discipline. When people will have that perseverance and discipline, they will rise as a well-organized nation.

HOW WAS YOUR FIRST GOLFING EXPERIENCE?

My first golfing experience was in 2004. It was a weird experience because the more I tried the worse it came out for me. So I decided to stay calm and then things got a bit better. You can not get too serious in golf. The harder you play, the more difficult it becomes. There is a common prayer for golfers: "O God, give me the power not to use power."

WHAT OTHER SPORTS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED WITH?

I used to play football, cricket, basketball and carom in my younger days. Among those, I liked basketball most.

WHAT IS YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE ON GOLF COURSE?

There are days when you play so poorly that you feel like giving up totally. Those are nightmarish moments. But then I remind myself I would do better the next day and hence I continue playing.

WHAT IS YOUR REALISATION FROM ALL THESE YEARS OF GOLF?

I remember one thing that Tiger Woods said: "My intuition never fails me." I have tested it and found this to be very true. Intuition is always correct in golf.

"The lesson from golf is perseverance and discipline. When people will have that perseverance and discipline, they will rise as a well-organized nation."

WHAT IS IT ABOUT GOLF THAT ATTRACTS YOU MOST?

Once you face an obstacle, you work a way to overcome it. That is the biggest lesson I take from golf. You face lots of hurdles in life, but you should not give up and work hard continuously to overcome it.

HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS THE FUTURE OF GOLF IN BANGLADESH?

The way Bangladesh is moving forward, we are set to meet the SDGs in 2030 and become a developed country by 2041. However, being developed does not only mean being rich, it encompasses a whole lot of things. Golf, too, will be a part of this development journey. I believe golf will be much ahead of where it is now by 2025.

NOW LET'S HEAR ABOUT YOUR CAREER IN THE AIR FORCE.

To be honest, I never saw it like this that I would be the Air Force chief one day. However, probably flying and being in this job was probably inherent within me. Let me tell you my experience from childhood. When our War of Independence was taking place, I was very young. I used to see everyone coming to our house in Old Dhaka and taking shelter in a small room on the ground floor. People used to get scared of gunshots or bombings. But I used to go to the rooftop to see the fighter aircraft in action. Most of my drawings on my scrapbook were about planes and spacecrafts. But I still did not have the idea of becoming a pilot. When I grew up I used to think of becoming a scientist I participated in a lot of science fairs and earned a few first











prizes. I was a bit chubby, so nobody thought I would be able to become a pilot. But when I appeared for the ISSB exam, I passed, may be due to my curricular and extra-curricular activities. Once I joined the Air Force, I felt it was pretty tough. But I kept working on it. However, being in the Air Force not necessarily mean you would go to the top. I faced a lot of ups and downs and obstacles. Sometimes I thought it was the end of my journey in the Air Force. But I never gave up. I always had the knack of trying to get the bottom of things, to know things well. May be that is the reason I was successful. To be fair I got inspiration from a few Bengali science fiction novels too, mostly by Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal and by Humayun Ahmed. I used to read Sharatchandra Chattapadhyay, Mark Twain and others' writings. Those readings gave me a different perspective of life.


Titleist



WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO ARE JUST JOINING THE AIR FORCE?

Do not get bogged down by any adversary. You may not be proficient in one aspect, but you must have something where you will excel. So one should not get demoralised and should keep persevering.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU?

When I first went to school, my mother said, "Try to seat in the front bench, listen attentively to what your teachers say. Try to help others and not harm anyone. Accept what you get as your deserved reward from God." I believe success is like that. Not everyone will reach the top level, not everyone will succeed in the same fashion. But everyone can have success in their own sphere in their very own way.

TODAY'S GENERATION SPENDS A LOT OF TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND STUFF. DO YOU THINK GOLF CAN HELP THEM AWAY FROM THESE ADDICTIONS?

Today's generation want a very colourful, enjoyable life. But in reality life is never like that. There will be sorrow as there will be happiness; there will be achievement as there will be failure. If one is glued to the virtual world, he will not realise this. He should strike a balance between virtual and real life. We need a young generation full of sympathy and empathy for others. To develop that they need to increase their outdoor activities. In this regard, golf can contribute positively.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE LESSON?

Every human being should be aware of the world and be mindful of what is going on around him or her. Everyone should think about how to improve the quality of life and quality of things around them.

MEDIA CAN PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN PROMOTING ANYTHING. WHAT MORE CAN OUR MEDIA DO TO PROMOTE GOLF?

We need better write-ups, stories with a touch of humour. We need all media inclusive approach to promote golf.

DO YOU THINK GOLF CAN REACH THE STATUS OF SECOND BIGGEST SPORT IN BANGLADESH BY 2025?

It may even become the number one sport by 2041.

HOW TO HIT SOLID IRON SHOTS

MOST BEGINNERS HAVE DIFFICULTY HITTING THEIR IRONS SOLIDLY, AS A RESULT THEY TEND TO LOSE DISTANCE, TOPPING OR HITTING THE GROUND BEHIND THE BALL. THE ISSUES GET WORSE THE LONGER THE IRON.

First of all, we need to understand that each iron is designed with different lofts and they are designed to make the ball fly up through the air.

The most common fault is we tend to cast the golf club in an effort to make the ball fly up in the air but this will result in a poor impact and reduced distance.



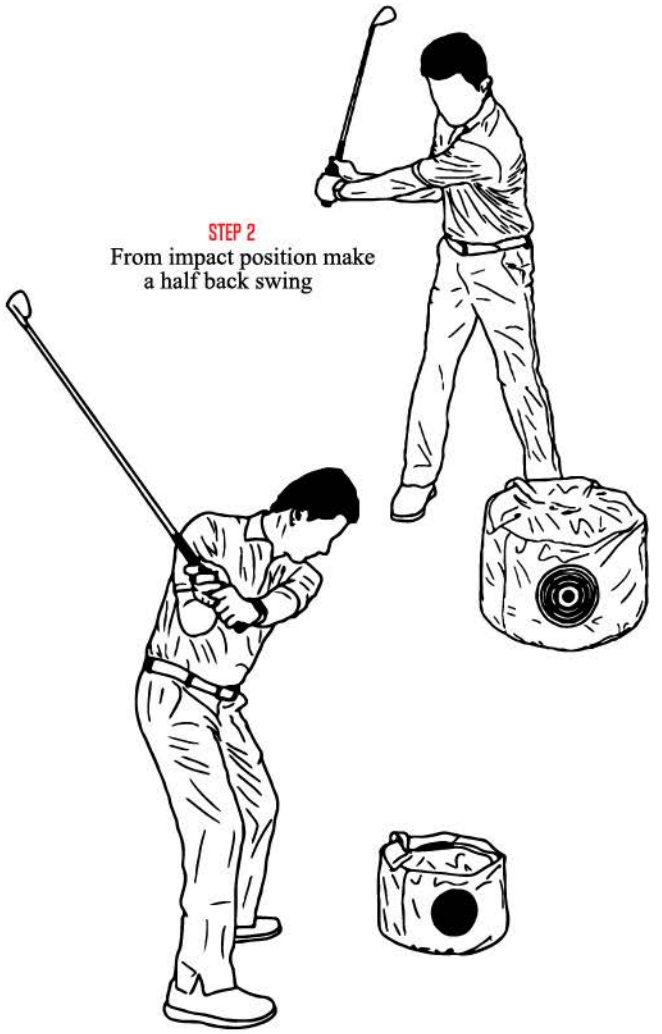
MOVE AT IMPACT

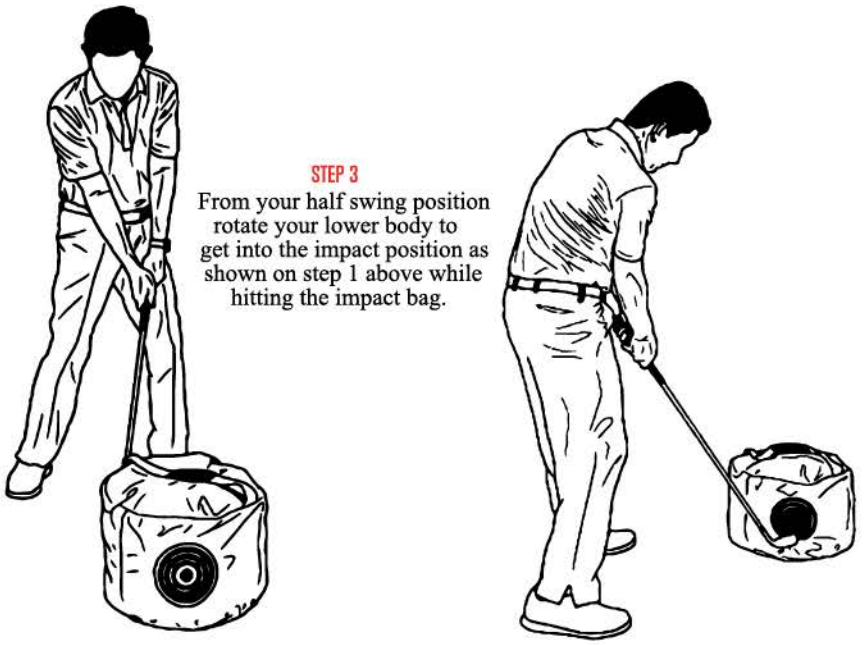
HERE ARE SOME STEPS TO GET IN TO A GOOD IMPACT POSITION WITH THE HELP OF IMPACT BAG.



STEP 1
Get into an impact position at the beginning

STEP 2
From impact position make a half back swing





STEP 3
From your half swing position rotate your lower body to get into the impact position as shown on step 1 above while hitting the impact bag.

This will train your lower body to start the downswing in the correct position for impact with your hips and shoulders open to the target and shaft leaning forward. Most of your weight is on your lead foot, while your are making contact with the impact bag. Once you get the feeling, try to hit some golf balls with half swing then with a full swing. Happy golfing!





JUNIOR GOLFERS MUST BECOME MORE FOCUSED

Major General Md Moshfequr Rahman
President, Army Golf Club



Major General Md Moshfequr Rahman, Area Commander, Logistics Area, Dhaka is newly appointed as the president of Army Golf Club (AGC) and Junior Golf Division of Bangladesh Golf Federation. TheGolfHouse editor Nazrul Hosen Ayon takes an interview with Major General Md Moshfequr Rahman after taking over as the President of AGC and Junior Golf Division of BGF.



We have to encourage the young golfers by sending them more to tournaments both home and abroad. The golfers need to be inspired well so that they keep on pursuing this sport as a profession.

Golf has seen some new horizons in recent times, what is that you would emphasis on promoting the sport?

Thank you very much for inviting me in Golf House Magazine. As the President of Army Golf Club, I have been observing that people are growing keen interest in Golfing. For example, we have registered more number of participants in last few tournaments held in Army Golf Club. The increased number of participants is very encouraging for golfing and I believe that day by day it will increase more. For promotion of the sport, Bangladesh Golf Academy (BGA) has been running lot of activities related to golf training, coaching, orientation with rules etc. If such endeavors are continued, I think more people will grow interest in golfing.

Do you have any package for the young stars in the country? It is an only sport which is yet to hit the school levels, do you have any plans to get the sports in this eluded arena (schools)?

As I mentioned earlier, that BGA has been running different activities in promoting golf which includes courses and training packages for young stars as well. Besides, BGA has also taken necessary steps to attract young golfers through different social media, orientation program, and day long visit to the beautiful golf club. Interested students are always welcome to enroll in different courses run by BGA, at almost half the standard cost.

What has to be done to boost this sport?

Presently we have good number of golfers. It is worth mentioning that all the golf clubs normally organize 10 to 12 tournaments in each golfing season, where a good number of amateur golfers participate. But at certain stage they don't go further. Because, young golfers hardly want to take golf as a profession. Besides, few lack proper motivation and financial support to continue. These are main barriers to boost the sports. To overcome this, young golfers need adequate training and motivation both. We have to encourage the young golfers by sending them more to tournaments both home and abroad. The golfers need to be inspired well so that they keep on pursuing this sport as a profession. If we can make few high performing professional golfers, this is likely to boost the sport as well.

Do you agree with the saying that this sports is only for the elite group?

There is no doubt that golf is an elite sport. But I want to say that it is every body's game. If you are devoted into it golf may be your great source of earning as well. We have many examples already in front of us who do not belong to elite background. You only need strong willpower to be an expert of the sport; you don't need to be elite.

Caddy's do play a major role in the sport, any plans for these people behind the iron curtain?

Yes, you are right, Caddies and ball boys play major role in golf. It is their profession as well. They are always welcomed in the golf club for playing. As I know, almost all the clubs also pay few numbers of caddies/ ball boys so that they can continue playing. We have allotted golf course for them to practice regularly. We are arranging golf tournaments for them both in home and abroad. We always encourage them by financial supports, golf equipment, accessories etc.

Say something about the current activities of Army Golf Club?

Army Golf Club (AGC) started its journey in 2001. At present we have more than 4000 members. Every year we are sponsoring about 10-12 tournaments, all amateur players are participating in the tournaments. AGC is a small 9 hole course. As per rule, we cannot organize national/international level tournaments, even though we are organizing one/two local professional tournaments. Facilities are developed to offer the members enjoyable golfing. Being co-located to BGA our members are benefitting from the academy initiatives as well.

What are the upcoming events for Army Golf Club?

I already mentioned that in each golfing season (Oct - Apr) we are running 10-12 amateur tournaments. So far we have completed 3 tournaments, in each month we run average two tournaments. Our upcoming tournament is "Priyoprangon New Year Cup Golf Tournament 2020" scheduled on 27-30 December 2019.

Your message to those who are not playing golf yet.

As I remember, ``David Leadbetter" the world number one golf coach came to Bangladesh in 2017. During his speech he said `` If you want to spend money play golf, if you want earn money play golf, if you want to remain physically fit play golf". My message to all will be in similar tone `Play golf, enjoy your time, and maintain your fitness'.

Message to our young generation.

Golf is the only outdoor game which you can play at any age, so I would request please learn golf at young age. The young generation can also think of choosing it as a profession.

Any other comments.

Media can play vital role in exposing the sport and creating interest among the people. You see, during golfing season 10-12 tournaments are taking place. All clubs are busy in their tournaments. Lots of activities including BGA are taking place. But hardly people come to know about it because of lack of exposure. Therefore, I would request media to promote the game through newspaper, television, radio and online telecast etc.

The Silver Lining in Golf

Bangladesh scoops all four silver medals in SA Games





I'm at a loss of words after this amazing experience. Being at the SA Games amid such big stars and winning medals for the country is a great feeling,

Although Bangladesh golf team failed to defend the two gold medals from the 11th South Asian Games in Dhaka in 2010, both men's and women's teams scooped all four of the silver medals on offer during the 13th South Asian Games which was held in December 2019 in Nepal.

It was a praiseworthy effort from a team of golfers who are not as seasoned as their predecessors – Dulal Hossain, Zamal Hossain Mollah, Shakhawat Hossain Sohel and Jakiruzzaman. These four were all on the verge of becoming pros when they won both the team and individual gold medals in Dhaka nine years ago.

For the first time in the Dhaka edition, golf was introduced into the regional multi-sport extravaganza, but the sport was dropped from the next edition in India before Nepal reintroduced the sport, both for men and women.

The Bangladesh men's team comprised Mohammad Farhad, Mohammad Samrat, Shafique Bagha and Shahab Uddin while women's team featured Nasima Akhter, Soniya Akhter, and Jakia Sultana.

Farhad and Jakia won individual silver medals while Bangladesh won both silver medals in team events and contributed to Bangladesh's total haul of 33 silver medals in the 10-day meet.

Farhad expressed his excitement and pleasure of being part of the SA Games contingent and coming back home with two silver medals.

"I'm at a loss of words after this amazing experience. Being at the SA Games amid such big stars and winning medals for the country is a great feeling," the 26-year-old from Mainamati Golf and Country Club said. "This course proved to be a challenge for me since I hadn't played it before. In fact, it was my first time in Nepal. The course was on a hill and it's pretty narrow. It was tough work, but I'm happy that we came back with four silver medals," Farhad added.



"I am satisfied with my own performance. However, it would've been better had all of our players been more consistent, which might've earned us a gold medal in the team event," Farhad said, expressing his gratitude to the coaches, federation and his sponsor, building technology & Ideas limited (bti).



It was a pity that Bangladesh did not get a gold medal from the Gokarna Golf Club in Kathmandu, but considering that the golfers went to a challenging and unfamiliar course with only four months' training at home, credit must be given to the players for bringing laurel for the nation. However, if more organizations come forward as the benefactors of the Bangladeshi National Golf Team and contribute to the development of the sport, it holds the possibility for astonishing progress which would lead to Bangladesh bringing home the gold in the future.





KEEP YOUR EYES



ON THE NEXT ISSUE





A CHANCE BEGINNING, A LIFELONG PASSION

Saidul Islam
Managing Director and CEO
Confidence Salt Ltd



Saidul Islam is the managing director and CEO of Confidence Salt Ltd, a pioneer in salt industry in Bangladesh. Born and brought up in the port city of Chittagong, Mr. Islam, who is also a chartered accountant, has worked in high positions in various companies. His profession and studies has taken him to different parts of the world, and such a chance incident drove him to the golf course. However, it took a quite bit of forcing from his wife, Kaniz Fatema, to convince Mr. Islam to take the game seriously. Now both Mr. Islam and Mrs. Islam cannot think of a week without golf. Lets here their story:



How did you get involved with golf?

Saidul Islam: There's an interesting story related to my introduction to golf. I was once on a business trip to South Korea where my business partner kind of forcibly took me to a golf simulation establishment. I watched them swing and hit the balls on the big screen, but when I tried I could not hit properly. Later when I was at the check-in at the airport, on my way back home, I got a phone call from him. Soon he came to the airport with a big kitbag of golf accessories. I was at a loss what to do with the golf kits. He said he wanted me to learn golf so that when he comes to Bangladesh I can play with him. I was surprised, but I took the gift and came back to Dhaka. However, I didn't make use of the golf kits for the next two months. Fortunately I had a friend who was a member of the Shaheen Golf and Country Club. He took me to the club and introduced me there. Later on my wife insisted on me becoming a member of the club.

Bhabi, tell us how surprised you were when he brought a golf kit all the way from Korea? And then how did you encourage him to start playing?

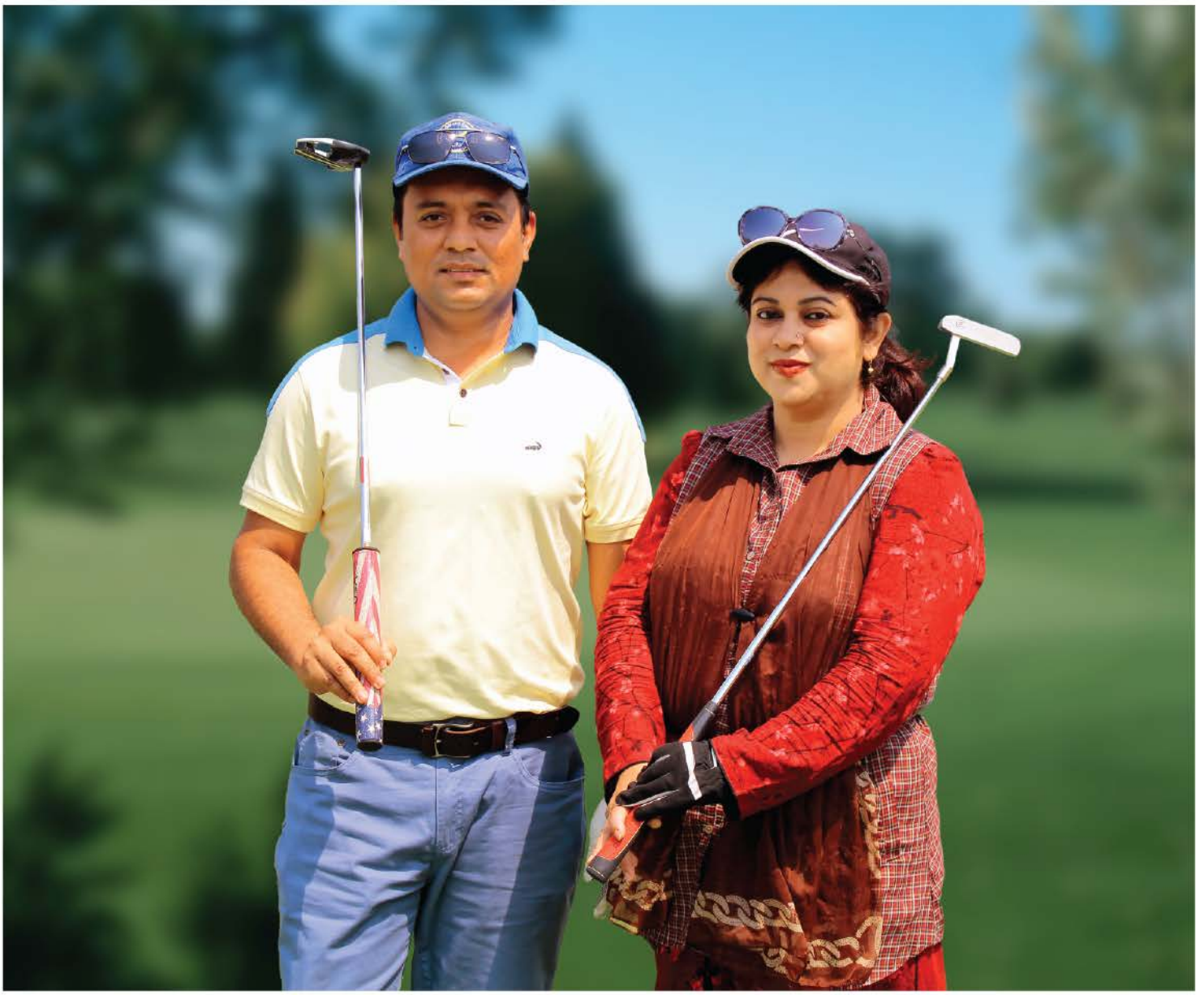
Kaniz Fatema: He was very excited when he came with the golf bag. He said, what would I do with this? I said, you will definitely play. My husband usually spends a busy time, worrying about his business all the time. So I felt there could be no better way for him to be relaxed than by playing golf. I filled in the club membership form for him. Once he came to the course and tried once or twice, he started becoming regular. And through him, I also git interested in playing the game.

You came here to encourage your husband. But now you have become the lady captain of this golf club. How did you get so much involved yourself?

Kaniz Fatema: It started little by little. At first I would wait for him at the clubhouse while he used to play. Then I started joining him in the middle of the golf course. Then I started to hit the ball. So it started like this for me. Fortunately I became champion in the first event I played after only two months' playing. It was still bit of a time-pass for me. But one day Humayun bhai told me they have selected me as the lady captain of this golf club. It was a big transition for me, from a complete housewife to a lady captain. For me, however, the most important thing is the recreating and the bonding that we develop with others here.

Which aspect of the game attracts you most?

Saidul Islam: The game itself and the environment at the course is refreshing, which we don't usually get in our city life. The second thing is that socialising aspect of the game. The friendship and bonding that we create here is very rewarding for me.



Does golf has any negative impact on your family life? Do you discuss the game when back at home?

Kaniz Fatema: There is no negative in golf for us, everything is positive. When we play well, even ourparents encourage us. At our age, golf is a very safe sport.

Saidul Islam: Even if I didn't play golf, I think I had to do some sort of physical exercise. I used to play badminton, but had to give it up due to a knee injury. Golf is the only game I can play now without any worry. Age is not a factor in this game.

Does golf help you in your business?

Saidul Islam: It may not help directly, but it does have indirect benefits. Golf is part of our corporate social responsibility. We are sponsoring a tournament here, which is giving us mileage. We are also helping caddies and ball boys financially, which works as an indirect branding for our company.

Bhabi, how do you manage your family while giving time to golf?

Kaniz Fatema: I maintain everything. Since I'm a housewife, family comes first for me. After completing all the household chores, I give time to golf. If you can organise in a proper way, golf doesn't hinder your family life.

What is your message for housewives?

Kaniz Fatema: If housewives can manage time after performing their responsibilities, they should spare some time being at the golf course in pure golfing entertainment. There is nothing better if both husband and wife spend the time at the golf course.

Do you have a message for the business people and entrepreneurs regarding golf?

Saidul Islam: Business people spend busy time. They go through a lot of stress due to their business and occupation. But we all need some recreation in life because life is too short to fret away. Furthermore, physical exercise plays an important role in physical and mental health. Golf can be the best exercise for us which we can do in the middle of nature. The positive impact that golf can bring to one's mental and physical health can also subsequently have a positive impact in business and profession.



36 2021 April ▪ TheGolfHouse

MASTER OF ONE

You might call him centered. Or maybe just chill. Who DUSTIN JOHNSON isn't? The guy who, for so many years, you've been told he is.

BY JOSH SENS
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN HAFER



YOU CAN TELL a lot about a man by what he names his S yacht. Just as Greg Norman's Aussie Rules reflected his brand of Down Under ma - chismo, Tiger Woods' Privacy speaks to a deeply seated personal need.

Dustin Johnson, who, after Woods and Norman, has spent more weeks at number one than any golfer, is no different. Nearly five years ago, when he purchased a 76-foot Viking Sportfish to celebrate his 2016 U.S. Open win, Johnson had Just Chillin' painted on the vessel's hull. The moniker could double as his motto. On any given day, when he isn't busy building on what is sure to be a Hall of Fame career, the reigning Masters champion finds chill time on the water near his Jupiter, Fla., home. Diving and spearfishing rate among his favorite pastimes, but he's equally content to kick back on the deck. "I would live out on that boat if I could," Johnson says. It's a midweek afternoon, and no such luck. Instead, Johnson is on terra firma, on a sun-splashed hotel patio in Santa Monica, just down the road from Riviera Country Club, where the Genesis Open will soon be underway. Fresh off a practice round, he has swapped his golf attire for sweatpants and a T-shirt. With his lanky build and five-day beard, he looks relaxed, though the conversation he's engaged in with a notepad- clutching reporter is oceans removed from his idea of bliss.

To be at the pinnacle of Johnson's trade means long hours on the range, early mornings in the gym and countless sessions of meet the press. Johnson loves the first two. He finds the third about as pleasant as a four-putt.

"I don't really know how to explain it, but I'm just not all that into talking about myself," he says. "Telling people about who you are or what you've done..."

He pauses, shakes his head. "It just sort of feels pompous to me."

Friends and peers recognize Johnson's reticence as an admirable trait, but in the public eye it has drawbacks. If you don't control the narrative, someone else will seize it for you. And over the years, through headline-making heartache and controversial hubbub, the soft-spoken South Carolina native has never fought very hard for the reins.

Partly as a consequence, Johnson, who, aside from Woods, might be the game's most scrutinized star, is also among its most misunderstood. Starting with his rookie season, in 2008, when he began amassing what are now near-folkloric numbers-24 Tour wins, two major championships, six WGC titles, to tick off just a few-a different kind of lore shaped Johnson's reputation among fans and media alike. His laid-back style was taken as a lack of passion, his inclination toward laconic answers construed as a lack of depth. There's little doubt that in his first few years on Tour, Johnson coulda, shoulda put in more sweat equity; he partied harder than he worked on his wedges. But at 36, he has long since matured, both on and off the course. A six-month "leave of absence," taken in 2014 to address "personal challenges," was one of many steps in his rise to the summit.

"Nowadays, we're used to players coming out and making a big splash in their early 20s," says Claude Harmon III, Johnson's swing coach. "Dustin did plenty right out of the gate, but when you look at how he's developed, it's been more of a throwback to the way guys used to do it. He's reached his mid-30s, and you could say that he's just starting to hit his peak."

Harmon is part of an intimate inner circle, among the most close-knit on Tour. If the group seems like family, it's because some members are, including Johnson's younger brother-turned-caddie, Austin, and his partner, Paulina Gretzky, daughter of the hockey icon and mother to Johnson's two young sons, Tatum, six, and River, three.

MASTERS 2021: EARLY ODDS TO WIN*A

Dustin Johnson	11/2
Rory McIlroy	10/1
Justin Thomas	10/1
Jon Rahm	11/1
Bryson DeChambeau	12/1
Brooks Koepka	12/1
Jordan Spieth	16/1
Xander Schauffele	18/1
Patrick Cantlay	25/1
Tyrell Hatton	25/1
Patrick Reed	25/1

*As of 3/1; Source: Draft Kings



Some things never get old–like DJ's spectacularly long swing, already in evidence when he was a South Carolina middle-schooler, and (opposite) that moment at Augusta when you slip into your first green jacket, with an assist from one of the game's GOATs.

The grounding influence of this entourage is hard to overstate, but there are limits. In 2016, when Johnson shed the label of Best Player to Never Win a Major, Wayne Gretzkyas- DJ's-Guru became the easy story, which The Great One says is quite the stretch.

"When we get together, we mostly talk about life and the grand-boys and the kids, not golf," Gretzky says. "Friends and family mean the world to Dustin, and he's an emotional guy. The fact that he's not overly demonstrative on the course comes mostly from him having such respect for the other players and the game. Off the course, it's different. We see him let his guard down all the time."

After years spent out of public view, the vulnerable side of Johnson had a memorable coming-out at last November's Masters, where a man of few words communicated more in actions than he ever could have in a speech. On a rain-sodden, extra-long-playing Augusta National, Johnson broke the tournament scoring record, and then, during a floodlit ceremony outside Butler Cabin, broke down in tears. It was a raw, revealing moment, and golf fans ate it up. That Woods, the 2019 Masters champion, was there to drape the green jacket on Johnson's shoulders lent a touch of pass-the-torch symbolism to the proceedings.

Though Johnson would never say as much himself, there is now an aura of dominance about him unseen in the game since Tiger's prime and a sense of self-belief that comes with knowing that your best golf is better than anybody else's.

"He's not going to go all Muhammad Ali and tell you he's the greatest," Austin says. "But he's confident, for sure. He'd just rather let his clubs do the talking. And from where I'm sitting, his clubs have been talking loud and clear."

Johnson first trained that voice as a kid

growing up in a middle-class neighborhood in Columbia, S.C., a little more than an hour's drive from Magnolia Lane. Athleticism was in his bloodline-Johnson's maternal grandfather, Art Whisnant, is a local basketball legend and a member of the South Carolina Hall of Fame-and the Johnson boys, who also have a younger sister, played all the major sports. Dustin, by his early teens, was all about golf, with his father, Scott, a local club pro, serving as his first instructor. Johnson's gifts were evident early. In seventh grade, he made the high school varsity golf team and mopped up on the local junior tournament circle. When he wasn't playing, he was practicing, banging balls so late into the evening at Weed Hill Driving Range that it was often up to him to shut off the lights when he left.

In those years, Johnson's nickname wasn't DJ, it was Styles DJ, a sociable kid known for showing up at school in crisp, button-down shirts, his hair slicked back. "Always looking to impress the ladies," Austin says. Not that he always went to class. Wednesdays and Fridays meant morning "dogfights" at a nearby golf club, and Johnson sometimes skipped school to take part in those grown-up money matches. In casual rounds with Austin, Dustin would pretend that he had putts to win the Masters. Competing in the dogfights-for $200 pots, with a few gambling bucks in his pocket-posed a real-world test, which Johnson handled well enough to turn a profit.

Once a boy among men, Johnson became something of a man among boys in college, at Coastal Carolina University, where, as two-time first-team All-American, he played a power game that drew head shakes and chuckles.

"Dustin was obviously a big hitter and a good player, but I'd be lying if I said that I knew how good he was going to be," says Allen Terrell, then the men's golf coach at Coastal

"He's not going to go all Muhammad Ali and tell you he's the greatest," says Johnson's brother, Austin. "But... from where I'm sitting, his clubs have been talking loud and clear."



Team DJ beamed after the big man's 2020 Masters win. The posse included (clockwise from top left) Johnson's brother and caddie, Austin; Janet Gretzky; trainer Joey Diovisalvi; coach Claude Harmon III; Paulina and son River; agent David Winkle; Johnson and son Tatum; Wayne Gretzky; and personal chef Michael Parks.

Carolina and now the director of instruction at the Dustin
Johnson Golf School at TPC Myrtle Beach. "The main reason
I put him on the team was pretty simple-I just wanted to give
the kid a chance."
As Johnson's skills developed, he combined prodigious length with cool play under pressure and a knack for the dramatic. Some of his feats had the whiff of fable. In one regional event, Johnson jarred a mid-iron on a par 5 for double eagle and then aced a par 3 with his next swing. By graduation, Johnson was the second-ranked amateur in the world, behind Colt Knost. The sports agent David Winkle, who has represented Johnson since he turned pro in 2007, still marvels at the memory of a scouting mission where he watched Johnson drive a 320-yard par 4 that few in the field could sniff. Johnson used a 3-wood. Winkle, who played collegiately at the University of Texas, immediately rang his business partner and gushed: "If this kid doesn't win the Masters someday, then I don't know golf."

Many others who know golf are by now familiar with the winding road that Johnson took to proving Winkle right. A key twist came in 2013, when Johnson fell for Paulina Gretzky. Shortly after, he became a father and took a leave from the Tour to get his private life in order. During that
break, Johnson was reminded of how much he loved the game and, with family around him, how much he had to play for. ("It was one of those you-don't-know-what-you've-got-tillit's-gone kind of deals," he says.) He returned with a redoubled sense of purpose, ramping up his practice and his fitness. As he toned his abs, he tightened his wedges, the closest thing he had to a weakness.
That dedication captured a competitive fire that friends and family say has always burned beneath the surface, masked by a languid gait and a mellow demeanor.
"People describe Dustin as a 'freakish athlete,' which he is, but they also think that means he's just coasting on his natural talent," says trainer Joey Diovisalvi, who works out with Johnson in Florida and travels with him to tournaments. "Fact is, he busts his a- harder than anyone I know."
A self-described "creature of habit," Johnson these days is at the gym by 5 a.m. He travels with a chef and abides by a lowfat, high-virtue diet. There are rituals and rhythms to his range sessions, and superstitions in his play: Johnson only marks his ball with quarters from the 1960s ("You want to shoot in the 60s, right?"), with Washington's head pointed down his line.
Since 2010, Johnson has been the Tour's most prolific winner, joining the elite company of Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer as the only players to have notched at least one win in each of their first 14 seasons. But he has also suffered famously devastating slipups-both literal and figurative-that would have shattered many lesser psyches. While Johnson's equanimity in the face of those misfortunes-crushing losses at both the 2015 PGA Championship and U.S Open; a tumble down the steps just before a 2017 Masters that he would have entered as the favorite—were viewed by some onlookers as a sign of apathy, keener observers saw something else.
"Dustin has a rare ability to keep things positive and to only focus on things he can control," Wayne Gretzky says. "A lot of athletes would pay a fortune to a sports psychologist to get to the place where he is." Adds Claude Harmon III: "You hear about the importance of putting the bad shots behind you but how many people can actually do it? If you were going to genetically engineer a golfer with the ideal attitude, Dustin would pretty much be the result."
As he powers through his 14th year on Tour, Johnson has emerged as one of the game's elder statesmen and an understated superstar-qualities that command widespread respect. This was made plain last summer at the PGA Championship at Harding Park, when Brooks Koepka issued a not-so-subtle dig at Johnson's career record in majors. Tellingly, Johnson's peers, including Rory McIlroy, leaped quickly to his defense. At the time, Johnson shrugged off Koepka's comments. But they must have been maddening and motivating, right? "Maybe a little bit of both," Johnson concedes. "But mostly my reaction was, What is Brooks thinking when he says that kind of thing?" Scour the internet today and one thing you won't find is

"Friends and family mean the world to Dustin," Wayne Gretzky says. "And he's an emotional guy. Off the course, we see him let his guard down all the time."



footage of Johnson tossing a club, throwing a tantrum or uttering an ill word about anyone. It doesn't exist. What you will encounter are snippets of a choked-up Johnson at Augusta, wiping his eyes and struggling for words while accepting the green jacket. The emotional scene capped an autumn week that was unusual for Augusta but emblematic of how Johnson has come to go about his business: walking softly and wielding a big stick, while backing up his brawn with brains.

Among the knocks against him in the past was that he could shrink a course to size but not plot his way around it. Over a pandemic-tangled 2020 season, Johnson proved this to be false, drawing on his full arsenal of skills by playing to positions, dialing in wedges and grinding, with Austin, over a punctilious putting routine. The strategizing helped produce three wins, a FedEx Cup title and the second Player of the Year nod of Johnson's career. His performance at the Masters brought more of the same, to the point where even Austin had to tip his cap.

Consider what transpired on the 13th hole on Saturday, when a well-positioned drive put Johnson in the fairway with his ball caked in mud. Though it was no more than a midiron to the green, Austin told his brother that he wasn't comfortable going for it. Even the layup made him nervous given their uncertainty of how the ball might fly.

"Dustin just says, 'Don't worry, I'll clean it,' " Austin recalls. "And before I could ask how, he punches this ankle-high 6-iron up the fairway. The ball skips along so the ground gets rid of the mud. We go on to make birdie, and I'm looking at him like, Dude, that was genius!"

Johnson signed for a bogey-free 65 that day, setting a 54-hole Masters scoring record that gave him a four-shot lead heading into Sunday. On four prior occasions when he'd entered the final round of a major in front, Johnson had either stumbled or been surpassed. This felt different, even after a jittery start. With a birdie on the 6th, he gunned the jets, racing off to victory and a celebration that soon became a blur. Literally.

If fans were surprised by his tears, so was Johnson. "The last time I remember crying in public was never," he says.

He has the whole shebang recorded: the entire Sunday broadcast, from opening tee shot to closing ceremony. But he hasn't had the time to watch it yet. He's barely had a chance to enjoy the green jacket and a title defense that is rushing up on him.

He'll be one of the favorites, and should remain so for many Masters to come. Not that Johnson is looking to the future.

He's focused on the moment, the finest golfer in the world and a contented family man savoring the full flush of his prime.

"I'm not into setting specific targets or making predictions," he says. "But I know if I stick with the process, the results will come."

Still, there is one thing he's willing to forecast. "When I retire," he says, "I'm going to buy a bigger boat."

Just don't expect him to change the name.

MASTERS 2021: ANNIVERSARIES

5 Years Ago, in 2016 Englishman Danny Willett held on to beat a collapsing Jordan Spieth for his only win on the PGA Tour.

10 Years Ago, in 2001 It took an unprecedented four closing birdies for South African Charl Schwartzel to finish two shots clear of Adam Scott and Jason Day.

25 Years Ago, in 1996 This was supposed to be Greg Norman's green jacket (p. 100), but a final-round 67by Sir Nick Faldo delivered the knighted one his third Masters win.

35 Years Ago, in 1986 In the greatest of all Masters Tournament triumphs (p. 104), Jack Nicklaus played his final 10 holes in seven under par to capture his record sixth green jacket.

45 Years Ago, in 1976 Four-time major winner Raymond Floyd went wire-towire, finishing with a total of 271 (–17), eight strokes clear of runner-up Ben Crenshaw.

50 Years Ago, in 1971 Texas shotmaker Charles Coody outdueled none other than the Golden Bear and a hotshot rookie named Johnny Miller to capture his lone major championship.

MASTERS PREVIEW 2021

VIEW FROM THE TOP

ISSN THE 65 YEARS SINCE THE MASTERS TOURNAMENT WAS FIRST TELEVISED, GOLF FANS HAVE SEEN EVERY INCH OF AUGUSTA NATIONAL'S BEAUTY IN HIGH-DEF CLOSE-UP. WHAT YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IS THE COURSE—HOLE BY HOLE, TEE BOX BY TEE BOX—THROUGH THE EYES OF 18 LIVING MASTERS CHAMPIONS, FROM THE BEAR, THE BLACK KNIGHT, DJ, GENTLE BEN AND BEYOND. UNTIL NOW. EIGHTEEN HOLES, 18 WINNERS, 18 WAYS OF SEEING THE NATIONAL ANEW. GET OUT YOUR GREEN BOOK.





"It gave me great solace to walk up to the 13th tee. There's an excitement about it. There's a quietness about it too."
—TOM WATSON

MASTERS WEEK 2021 SCHEDULE

Augusta National Women's Amateur	March 31–April 3*
Drive, Chip and Putt National Finals	April 4
Champions Dinner	April 6
Practice Rounds	April 5–7
Masters Tournament	April 8–11

*Final round at ANGC

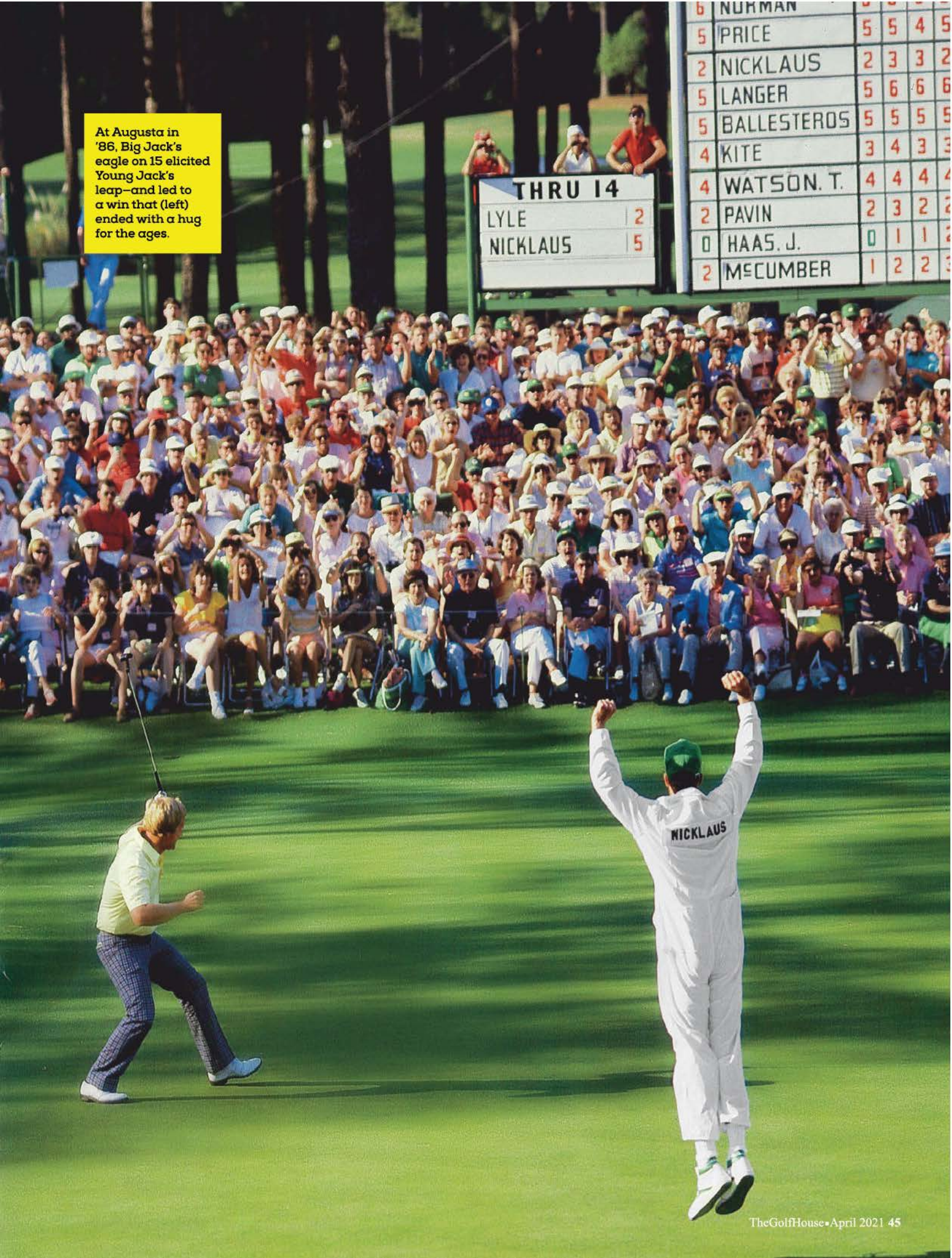
MASTERS PREVIEW 2021



A PAIR OF JACKS

It's been 35 years since the Golden Bear, in the twilight of his career, summoned that old Jack magic to bring home the greatest triumph in Masters history. His son Jackie was on the bag that day, but it wasn't the first time he'd looped for his dad. In this excerpt from his soon-to-be-published book Best Seat in the House, **Jack Nicklaus II remembers** putting the Bear's bag on his back–and being guided by his father through a lifetime of invaluable lessons.

BY JACK NICKLAUS II & DON YAEGER



At Augusta in '86, Big Jack's eagle on 15 elicited Young Jack's leap—and led to a win that (left) ended with a hug for the ages.

WHILE I CERTAINLY NEVER planned on it, caddying for my dad, Jack Nicklaus, presented an amazing way to learn more from him as he offered lessons about the game of golf and, more important, about life. The first time I ever caddied for Dad was at the Open Championship at Royal Birkdale Golf Club in Southport, England, in 1976. It wasn't by plan or design. Dad's regular Open Championship caddie was Englishman Jimmy Dickinson. Jimmy first caddied for my dad at the Open Championship in 1963. He was on Dad's bag for two of his three Open Championship titles (1970 and 1978), and they had a great partnership. I walked the course with Dad as he played his practice round with Raymond Floyd before Thursday's opening round. On the approach to the 9th hole, Jimmy tore his Achilles tendon and couldn't continue. Jimmy asked me to carry Dad's bag to the 10th tee while he looked for a replacement caddie. While we waited, Dad looked at me and said, "Why don't you carry the bag for me on the back nine?" At 14 years old, I really didn't have time to react or even process what Dad was asking. I certainly did not register how much trust Dad was placing in me. I just grabbed the bag, which probably weighed around 50 pounds, and went to work (so to speak). Dad's drive off the tee landed in the middle of the fairway, followed by a perfectly struck 4-iron that landed on the green about five feet from the pin. I watched the flight of the ball, and it seemed to defy gravity with its height and hang time. I hoisted Dad's bag over my right shoulder, and we walked side by side down the fairway. Although I had spent so much time with Dad on the golf course, it had not been as a caddie. I was like a deer in the headlights, and I was so overwhelmed. I was only a few minutes into my new gig when Dad quickly reminded me of my new responsibilities. We had walked about 30 feet when Dad stopped and asked me, "Didn't you forget something?"

I was surprised by the question and had no idea what Dad was talking about. I turned and looked back down the fairway, thinking I might have dropped a club or that maybe Raymond Floyd had not hit his approach shot yet. I was confused and looked it. Dad pointed to a small chunk of turf that was bottom side-up in the middle of the fairway behind us.

"You forgot to replace the divot," he said, regarding the green turf displaced by his approach shot.

Having let my new role get the better of me, I was embarrassed as I found the dislodged turf and replaced it. This was "Golf 101," an etiquette rule I knew as a golfer. It was time for me to focus since I was in Dad's office—and this was serious business.

I set Dad's bag down on the fairway, and nobody replaced a divot quicker or better than I did then. It was the best replaced divot in the history of replacing divots! Now, the nerves surfaced. I was a wreck, worried because Dad said he didn't need a replacement caddie for Jimmy. He had me, and I was wondering whether or not I was up to the task. Yet, as he always is, Dad was incredible. Honestly, it was hard to believe he played so well—Dad finished in a secondplace tie with Seve Ballesteros, six strokes behind winner Johnny Miller. Dad was at a huge disadvantage with an inexperienced son-turned-caddie on his bag. I didn't know anything about being a caddie other than the oft-repeated mantra, "Show up. Keep up. And shut up!"

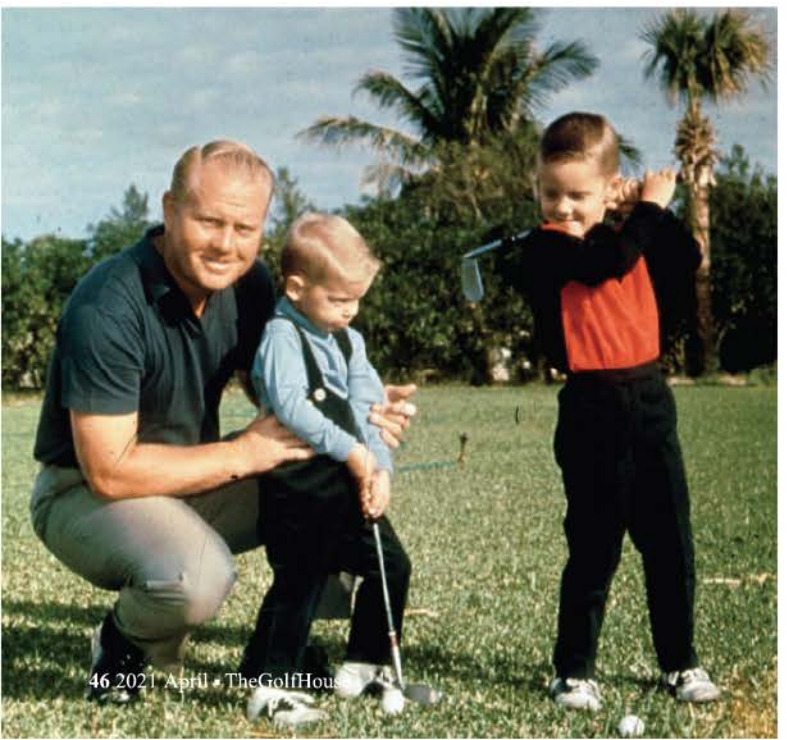
When I caddied that first time for Dad,

our relationship changed. He was Dad first and always, but I also quickly understood that he was working when on the course. Golf was his profession, what he did for a living to support his family. Out there I saw him as a competitor for the first time. With me on his bag, I also understood I could help or hurt his performance.

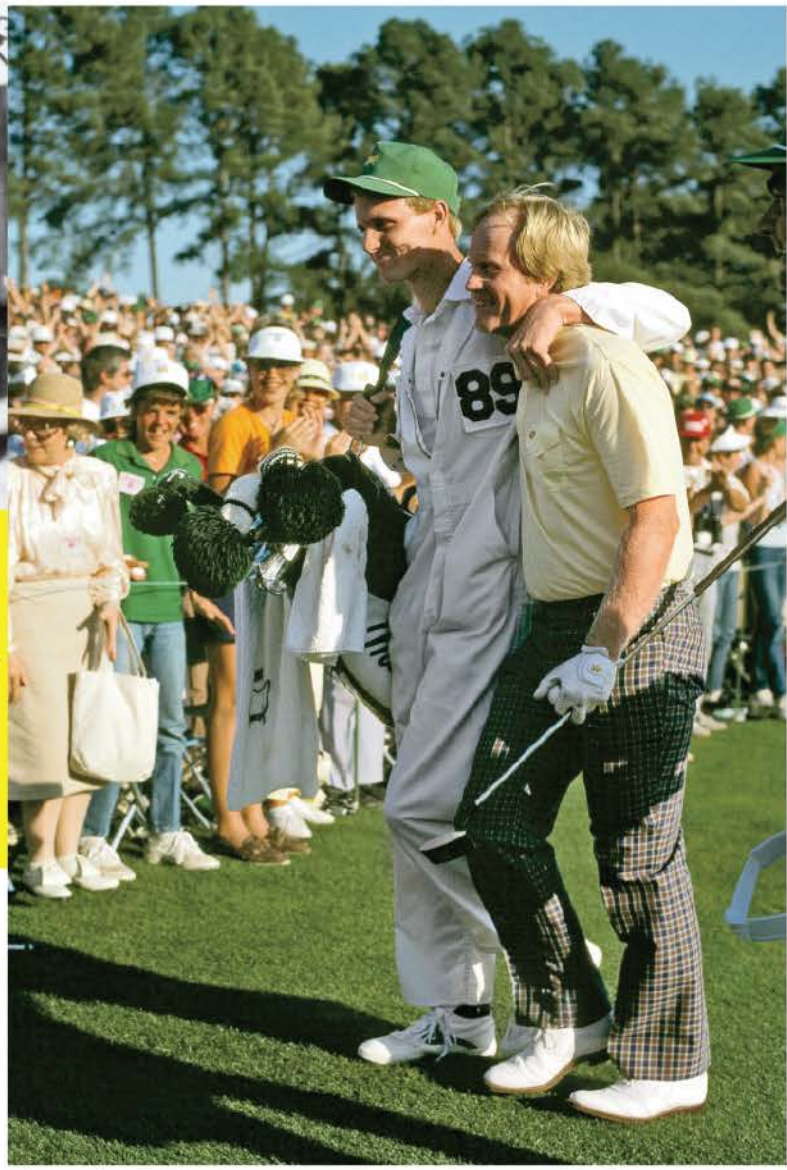
Mom and Dad had to have been entertained by my first efforts, since I was determined to be the best caddie I could be. And, boy, I overdid it at times.

Like most guys on the PGA Tour, Dad always marked his golf balls with a pencil mark on either side of the number on the ball. It was something he always did just before he teed his ball up on the first tee of a round. It was a light press of the pencil lead, barely visible, but enough to distinguish it if there was ever a question of golf ball identification.

Dad never marked his golf balls during a practice round. So, after his practice round at the Open Championship in '76, I wanted Dad to be prepared. I marked all the golf balls Dad







In the '60s, Jack Sr.'s trusty interlocking grip was on his young son Steven, with big brother Jack II swinging nearby. About a decade later, a then-14-year-old Jack II (opposite) shouldered Dad's bag at the '76 Open Championship, a caddie/player pairing that peaked at the '86 Masters.

planned to use in the next day's opening round before we went to bed. At that time, balata golf balls were the choice for professionals and low-handicap golfers. The soft balata cover allowed for more control off the tee and much higher spin rates on iron and wedge shots.

I was determined to mark Dad's golf balls like no others. I planned to have the most thorough markings ever on a golf ball. Well, I went through pencil after pencil after pencil as I marked those golf balls. I can't tell you how many tips of pencil lead I broke off into those soft balata covers. All I can say is there was no mistaking those markings on Dad's golf balls—they stood out like pimples on a teenager's nose. I am not sure how counterproductive my excessiveness was, but Dad's brand-new golf balls had slight pieces of lead sticking out of them.

Dad never demeaned my efforts as he gracefully searched for balls in his bag that were not terminally damaged by me to use in the competition. He gracefully asked me to give the foreverscarred golf balls to his adoring fans in the gallery. Everyone was happy—and, at the time, I didn't know any differently.

I still remember the 17th at Royal Birkdale, when I first caddied for Dad. At that time, Dad played with the Slazenger B51 golf ball. Dad's drive off the tee found the right rough, where the thick grass was nearly 18 inches long. A slight wind of five to ten miles per hour was at Dad's back, and the yardage to the pin was 247 yards. Dad looked at his golf ball, settled in the lower section of the grass, and grabbed his 7-iron. I was sure he planned to lay up and asked him about his line I thought he wanted to land the ball in front of the cross bunkers near the green.

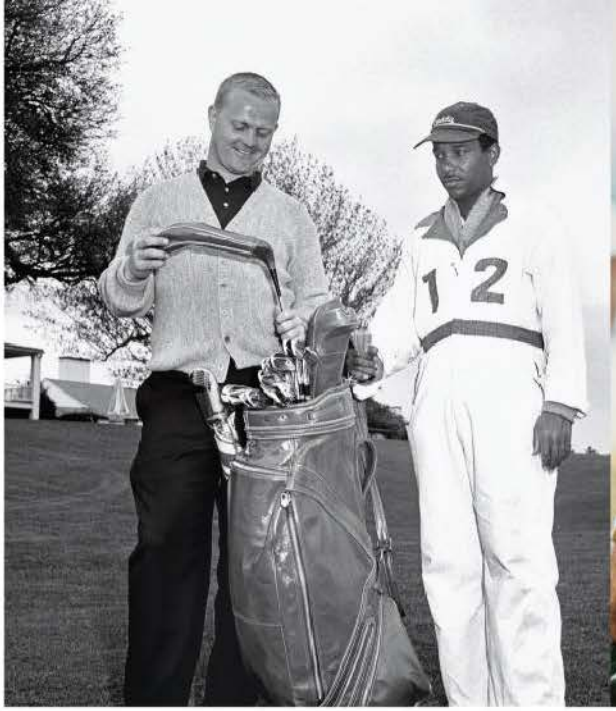
Surprised, Dad looked at me and said, "I am putting this on the green."

Dad's powerful swing tore what looked like four- or fivefoot strips of grass blades from the ground. Anyone who has hit from high rough understands how quickly that grass will grab the club's shaft, turn the clubhead and result in a quick shot to the left. Not only did Dad keep that 7-iron square, he made great contact with the golf ball. It sailed high and true toward the target. In fact, Dad hit it too strongly. The ball landed on the green, near middle, and bounded over. The ball traveled 265 yards!

Dad's steadfast support of caddies is well

known. He was, in fact, a caddie himself as a kid, carrying the bag for his own dad—my grandfather Charlie—at Scioto Country Club in Ohio.

Dad didn't rely on one specific caddie during his professional career, though Angelo Argea, Willie Peterson and Jimmy Dickinson were on his bag many times and were part of his championships. Angelo, who was known as the "Silver Greek" for





his gray afro, was on Dad's bag for 44 of his 70 PGA Tour wins. In fact, Dad won five of the first six tournaments he played with Angelo on his bag. Willie first caddied at the Masters at the age of 16 and was on Dad's bag for five of his six Masters titles. I was on the bag for Dad's sixth and final Masters win in 1986. More on that in a little bit.

For all the ways in which he counted on caddies, Dad has never been "clubbed" by one—that is, a caddie never told Dad which club to use or handed him a club for hitting a shot. Dad selected the club himself. For instance, if Dad's approach shot from the fairway was 158 yards to the pin, he might have played six or seven different clubs. He might have choked down on a 4-iron or hit a 9-iron to spin the ball.

The longer I caddied for Dad, the more I realized my main responsibility was to be his friend on the course. Yes, I did the tasks required as his caddie. I cleaned his clubs, held the umbrella when it rained, marked his golf balls, tended the pin, helped him sidestep any distractions. But my job was to be his friend and, if necessary, help him refocus.

Here's an example: I was on Dad's bag at Augusta, and he had a 155-yard shot over a front bunker to the pin. When Dad rolled the sod over his 7-iron and the ball landed in the bunker, he said, "I think there's something wrong with that ball." I asked him what he meant, and Dad said he felt the ball's flight wasn't correct. But I knew he hit the ball fat because I heard the sound.

I said, "Dad, you hit the shot fat."

Dad's immediate answer was, "No, I didn't."

I quickly learned my response wasn't what Dad needed to hear. Dad controlled what he could control on the course, and, in his mind, the ball didn't fly like it should. I learned after a short time as Dad's caddie to be more supportive and act as his friend. It was a quick learning experience as I took that golf ball out of play before the next hole. After Dad won the '86 Masters, Greg Norman, who finished tied for second with Tom Kite, thought having me on the bag was the secret sauce to his win. I regret to say I was not the secret sauce. It just so happened Dad was a great player, and he dragged me along on that victory.

"What is it like to be Jack Nicklaus' son?"

It's a question I've been asked many times throughout my life. I had never pulled back the curtain and given an in-depth answer until I spoke at the Congressional Gold Medal presentation for my dad in 2015, in Washington, D.C. During my speech, I discussed in detail the 1986 Masters, where I served as Dad's caddie. Not many had given Dad a chance at victory because they thought he was past his prime at the age of 46, but he proved everyone wrong. He shot a final round of 65, seven shots under par, with a 30 on the back nine, for a total score of 279 to win his record sixth Masters. He became the tournament's oldest winner and the second-oldest winner of any major championship, behind Julius Boros, who at 48 won the 1968 PGA Championship.

Honestly, I didn't think I was up to the task when Dad asked me to speak in D.C. In fact, I asked Dad if he wanted one of his peers, maybe his good friend Tom Watson, to introduce him. When Arnold Palmer was presented his Congressional Gold Medal in 2012, Dad introduced him. I knew how overwhelming it would be for me to introduce Dad, and I didn't know if I could do a good job. Trying to be funny, Dad smiled and told me to consider it practice for his eulogy.

That didn't make it any easier for me, but here is what I said: *To share some of my clarity with you, let's go back in a time in sports history that many of us remember, the '86 Masters. We've heard about it earlier, but I will tell it from a little bit different perspective.*

It was a beautiful spring day in Augusta, Georgia. It was Masters Sunday. I was a 24-year-old kid carrying the bag for Dad. We were on the 9th green, and Dad had just backed away for the second time from a slippery downhill birdie putt. There had been back-to-back roars from the 8th green, where Tom Kite and Seve



The Golden Bear's steady loopers–(from far left) Willie Peterson, Angelo Argea and Jimmy Dickinson–were legendary in their own right and shared a piece of Jack's championship success. Jack II calls his dad's support for them "steadfast," and he would know. It's the same loyalty he celebrated in his induction speech at the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony (below), where father and son were equally proud of each other.

Ballesteros had each made eagles to extend their lead. I stood with the gallery there on the 9th green. There was a tension in the air. We were caught up in the moment of nervous energies of golf history. It was a moment that seemed to swallow us, all of us, except Dad.

Unexpectedly, Dad turned to the surrounding gallery, flashed a boyish grin and said in his high-pitched voice with a certain level of levity, "Hey, let's see if we can make some noise of our own up here." He then steadied himself at the task at hand. As he walked that putt into the hole, the crowd erupted, the game was on. It was that final nine holes that is forever etched in my memory. I remember that fluid yet powerful swing. I remember the precision, the concentration, the intensity. I remember each heroic putt, each heroic shot. Above all, I remember the emotions. Dad clearly had a mission to give everything he had left. To manage the only thing he could truly manage, himself.

Yet I watched him struggle. I can still see the tears in his eyes and feel those in mine. It was the encouragement and the ovations the fans gave Dad those final nine holes that was unforgettable. Sure, the enthusiasm was fueled by the events of that day, but I knew it was more than that. The cheers represented an appreciation for a lifetime of accomplishments and the way he had doneit. They embraced a good man with good character.

Dad was now on the 18th green. I stood motionless, holding the flag, as Dad putted out for a final round 65 to complete his unlikely come-from-behind victory at the age of 46. As his final putt dropped, the crowd erupted. Dad quickly picked the ball from the cup and faced the crowd to greet their cheers.

And there I was, completing the mundane task of placing the flag back into the cup. For me, time was standing still as the cheers continued. I was thinking, Wow, Dad really played great today. Yet it was more, so much more. This man, this wonderful man, had accomplished so much. He is Jack Nicklaus; he is arguably the greatest golfer in the history of golf.

The Golden Bear had just won his sixth green jacket in incredible fashion. His fans adored him. It was his moment in time. A moment so earned and a moment so deserved.

Now, let's go back to that question that I am so often asked: What is it like to be Jack Nicklaus' son?
So there I was, turning from the flag, and all I saw was my dad. In the midst of this moment-that was all about Jack Nicklaus-there Dad stood, waiting for me with the most wonderful smile. His arms were outstretched to embrace me. Dad had made me a part of it. I knew I had Dad's full focus. I felt like I mattered. And I felt loved. That is what it's like to be his son.

The envelope came to my house, and in it was a handwritten note in black felt pen. It was dated March 29-five days after the Congressional Gold Medal presentation. It said:

Dear Son,
What can I say except that I am so proud of you and what you said Tuesday in Washington. Your talk was so good that I didn't care what I said. You made your father one happy and lucky man. To know he has a son as great as you. You are the best!!!

Love you, Dad

I have been very blessed to play a lot of golf with my dad and to caddie for him. I have watched him compete, I have watched him win, I have watched him get beat and I have watched him build his incredible legacy. I've learned more from caddying for Dad than I ever did playing the game of golf. As his caddie, I also learned more about golf course management, game management and, frankly, life management than I ever did from playing golf.

And I owe it all to my dad.





Adapted from Best Seat in the House: 18 Golden Lessons from a Father to His Son, by Jack Nicklaus II and Don Yaeger.
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Cobra RADSPEED
Cobra's Infinity face increases the sweet spot on the driver, while the addition of hybrids to the combo iron set ensures you'll have no problem hitting towering approach shots from all distances.

PING G Le2
A lighter overall package and thinner, hotter faces generate game-changing speed. Tungsten toe weights in the irons expand overall MOI by 10 percent.

Callaway Reva
The 11-piece set is comprised of metalwoods and irons designed to launch the ball high with ample forgiveness. Loft progressions throughout the set are based on testing with women golfers. A Big Bertha Reva version is also available.



PING's new G Le2 hybrid lineup has a 34-degree option for women who prefer hitting a metalwood to an iron.

Two baffler rails in the RADSPEED sole help the club glide through the turf for higher shots from any lie.



Draw-biased weighting in Callaway's Reva drivers help reduce slicing and produce longer, straighter shots.

PRO SHOP

LADIES SETS TAKE SHAPE

Brands are giving serious and deserving attention to gear tailored specifically for women with an oftenignored need for speed

EVERY PERSON IS BUILT DIFFERENTLY. Hence the importance of custom clubfitting.

In order to play your best golf possible, it's imperative to find clubs that are the right length, weight, size, design and shape for you. And while it's true that the ball doesn't care whether you're male or female, it does care about what happens at impact, and there are variances here between the sexes that have long gone ignored.

Compared to the average male golfer, female golfers tend to produce slightly slower swing speeds. Less speed, as you can imagine, usually leads to less distance and typically a lower ballflight.

To help ladies find the speed and launch they need, manufacturers design clubs specifically for women. They're lighter, more forgiving and make it easy to create launch and spin. These females pecific builds also have shorter lengths, more flexible shafts, thinner grips and are often engineered to help fight a slice. Thankfully, the days of women-specific sets taking a massive back seat to club design in general are over.

If you're a female player who's looking to hit long and towering golf shots, or simply interested in more feminine color ways, you definitely should consider the smart-looking new offerings from PING, Callaway and Cobra on this page. The game's hard enough without limiting your chances by swinging clubs that are too heavy, too long and unforgiving—or by simply fighting your anatomy. —Andrew Tursky



MAINAMATI HOSTS MUJIB BORSHO GOLF EVENT

Marking the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Mujib Borsho 13th Provati Insurance Cup Golf Tournament was held at the Mainamati Golf and Country Club in Cumilla recently.

The club's president and 33rd Infantry Division's GOC Major General Mohammad Jahangir Harun was present as the chief guest while Provati Insurance Company's Additional Managing Director Shakhawat Hossain Mamun was the special guest at the event.

More than a hundred golfers from Mainamati and other clubs of the country participated in the tournament.

---TGH Desk


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