
Chapter Thirty Eight

Rowdy Golf weekend at the Lake of the Ozarks

June 6-7-8, 2008

Deer Chase 27 holes on Friday and 18 on Saturday

Old Kinderhook on Saturday Afternoon

Osage National (River/Mountain) on Sunday

Rowdy Jones, Tom Shaughnessy, Bill Hawkins, Wes Morgan

Hawkins is astounded at how demanding Anheuser-Busch can be, even in light of InBev merger rumors. AB is the 800 pound gorilla in his packaging business but he has the ultimate bargaining position. He can walk away at any time. F*%# 'em! Shaughnessy is secure enough with his success at Group 360 to plan this trip followed by a family vacation to Disney World (which we all know will cost a small fortune). It's a small world after all. The orderliness of Disney's theme park, no doubt, will inspire more software that brings accountability to project management. If only we can program people to do what they are supposed to do.

Rowdy is looking as sharp as ever. He's almost ready to go live with momslovesoccer.com and momslovebaseball.com. He's a natural marketing guy for these affinity groups. Case in point: Steve and Diane and their two kids – Thing 1 and Thing 2 are thoroughly amused at Lil' Rizzo's on Friday evening. Rowdy has a calming effect on the kids. Well sure, he can pull quarters out from behind your ear. Three-year olds love this kind of stuff. Rowdy magic is enough of a distraction to stop Thing 1 from playing with his spaghetti so mom doesn't have to yell at him anymore. Dad is so grateful he buys the Rowdy Golfers foursome a round of drinks before dinner.

Shaughnessy and Hawkins are pretty sure John McCann will be our next president. The Democrats (Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama) have been battling for the nomination – which now appears to belong to Barack.

Over the course of 81 holes, the Rowdy golfers are eating up the landscape. Search parties (in the rough) are remarkably efficient when Hawk is in your foursome. Everyone has a cell phone. It's nothing to call Bill Vann from the high ground at Deer Chase #15 tee box.

"Bill, these guys won't give me a mulligan and I really need one here."

"Tell 'em to get out the Bill Vann's Rules of Golf book. You deserve another chance."

Bill is too busy to make the trip this year but is pleasantly surprised by Friday afternoon call. All of us took a turn needling Bill before resuming play. (There is no pressure – the course is populated by remarkably few golfers in spite of the near perfect weather.)

Dave Cox is at Disney World with Joyce and the kids (three girls with boy's names - Nicky, Sammy and Danny). He's not gonna pick up his phone but that doesn't stop us from leaving him a voice message.

"Dave, your share of dinner comes to \$27.50 and we're gonna need you to let photo Mat and Uncle Gene know too. It's only fair, when you're in - you're in. We'll settle up with you when we all get back to St. Louis. Okay bye."

Rowdy extends the mischief, with a call to Terry Cook. God, I hope that wasn't his home phone. I'm not sure Terry Cook's wife is a big Rowdy Golf fan. (Without Terry – we dismiss the routine trip to Camp Bagnell karaoke night.) Terry is essential for any songs by the Rat Pack. So smooth, so cool – he's Dean Martin, Peter Lawford, Sammy Davis, Joey Bishop and Frank Sinatra all rolled into one.

Screw those guys. This is an all-star weekend. Everyone is hitting it 250-300 yards off the tee (except me). The Morgan Power Fade, according to Hawkins, is actually a pin seeking device that always lands in the fairway close to the 150 yard marker-stake. (My accuracy in hitting greens is not as reliable.)

We retire before 10:30 p.m. after dinner on Friday and

Saturday night. Shaughnessy remarks that the restaurant at Topsiders is aptly named The Poop Deck. We are lucky to escape that place before the gen-Xers take over. Topsider's club is ready with AC on 50 degrees, disco ball, lights and smoke machine all in working order. Yikes, we better get out of here. Who am I kidding? There is no way we can even make it to midnight when this place is likely to start coming alive.

The economic forecast from The Poop Deck and the dinning room at Dogwood Hills (two pretty reliable data points) is that we could be seeing a down economy this year at the Lake of the Ozarks. It seems like fewer boats, fewer golfers and less traffic all add up to fewer people. But the optimistic suggest that the season is not in full swing for a couple more weeks.

So I jump ship in Hong Kong and make my way over to Tibet... and I get on as a looper at a course in the Himalayas.

A looper?

A looper. You know, a caddy, a looper...a jock. So I tell them I'm a pro jock and who do you think they give me? The Dalai Lama, himself. With flowing robes, grace, bald, striking.

I'm on the first tee with him. I give him the driver. He hauls off and whacks one. Big hitter, the Lama. Long! Into a crevice right at the base of this glacier! Do you know what the Lama says?

"Gunga galunga. Gunga gunga da gunga."

So we finish and he's going to stiff me.

And I say, "Hey, Lama!

"How about a little something, you know, for the effort?"

And he says, "There won't be any money..."...but when you die, on your deathbed...

"...you will receive total consciousness."

So I've got that going for me...which is nice.

It's Monday morning and Tom's doing laundry and getting ready for Disney World, Rowdy is working though last minute fine-tuning of his websites, Hawkins is jumping through hoops to get product label designs to AB. I'm in my office with two graphic designers having my regular Monday morning 8:00 meeting. It generally starts around 9 a.m. (I wish I had

VisionPoint project management software).