
Chapter Forty Five

Playing a round with Ted Brown

Here's to Ten years of Ted – and looking forward to many more.

Ted Brown has been retired since the early 1990s. I first met Ted as his cart partner at an HBE golf outing at *Emerald Greens* in 1999. His reputation as the former head of construction at the privately held firm preceded him. I wanted to get to know him. I asked for him as my partner that day. I liked him instantly. At 44 years of age, I wanted to be just like him by the time I reached 70. As luck would have it, I got to know Ted as a regular in a Saturday morning foursome that met at Creve Coeur Municipal Golf Course for nearly ten years (and still going).

Every week is different of course, but a beautiful and amusing pattern has emerged. The following is a summary of a typical outing with Ted Brown in your foursome on Saturday Morning.

Before the round

“You know a man of my age should be able to play the forward tee boxes,” Ted says with no intention of moving up.

On the first tee box

“Okay, we get one Mulligan off the tee. That’s all.” Ted offers this rule every week. I’ve heard him say it maybe 400 or 500 times. Ted is like that. He cherishes each new round as it is a brand new day full of promise.

On the second tee box (a par three)

“If that had been straight, it would have been a hole in one.” Sometimes he’ll add that, as a point of fact, in all the years he’s been playing golf he’s never had a hole-in-one. He wonders how Jack Kennedy managed to get a hole-in-one on this hole and after all these years it just hasn’t happened for Ted. But he

remains optimistic.

On Number 3

“You are so consistent.” Ted liked to comment on how erratic my game is. Almost always by the time I tee off on hole number three it would be apparent that over the course of nine holes I would have great shots and horrible shots. Ted enjoys the cheerful sarcasm. I do too.

On Number 4

“You know this is a tough hole. As tough a hole as you will find anywhere.” THWACK.. He hits the ball. “Pretty good but I’m a little off center.” Ted is pleased with his shot and uses this comment to point out how near perfect his shot is. I never get tired of that comment.

On Number 5

By the time we reach the par five number five, Ted is busy evaluating the scorecard and enjoying the day. When he hits it well he offers a hearty laugh. When he miss-hits he simply shrugs and says “I don’t know what I’m doing wrong.”

On Number 6

“Bye Bye Ballie!” Ted sings if anyone hits it in the water on number 5 or number 6. Even if it’s his ball.

On Number 7

“You know years ago I could hit it over the top of the hill. I’ve lost a lot of distance over the years.” Ted comments. I know it’s true. People who have known Ted longer than I have tell me he was always full of life, a lot of fun, and a big hitter. He out-drives me nine times out of ten.

On Number 8

“I haven’t used my Mulligan.” Ted is likely to mention it if that is the case. He feels fortunate when he is hitting it well enough not to use that Mulligan. If he makes it to Number 8 without using it - the odds are pretty good that he’ll use in on the final hole. By the time we reach the green, Ted is already

thinking about the shopping list Willene gave him. He jingles change in his pocket.

**On Number 9 – the final hole
at Creve Coeur and another par 3**

“You know I’ve never had a hole in one.” Ted lets us know, one more time. I want him to have it. I really do.

Ted Brown has been retired from HBE since 1993. He was recruited by Fred Kummer to head of the construction group beginning in the early 1970’s. He’s a twin. (His brother is a minister. It isn’t hard to imagine the Virtuous Ted and the Mischievous Ted as icons for angel vs. devil). I first met him in 1999 at an annual HBE golf outing which was held at Emerald Greens (a course owned by the Pipefitters union). Ted is a prince of a guy. He drives Bryant nuts. The dynamic between those two is very entertaining. Ted is always in a hurry and Bryant wants to enjoy a more leisurely pace. Suki serves a referee between Ted and Bryant. You don’t want to make Suki mad. (We all know to be still in her backswing or suffer her icy rejection for the remainder of the round.)

Originally, the Saturday Game at Creve Coeur Golf Course didn’t involve me, except as a substitute. I worked my way in as a regular when Jack Kennedy retired and moved to Florida in 2003. (This year Bryant Conant joined the ranks of the retired.) He’s a design architect who once appeared on the TV game show “What’s My Line?” Suki is also an architect. She is in her early forties and single. I’ve lived just over half a century. We are a collection of characters. Ted, Bryant, Suki and Wes show up on the scorecard as T,B,Z and W when Ted is keeping track. The Z stands for Zuki. That’s the name Ted decided to use for Suzanne (Suki) Majesky some years ago

Ted Died October 1, 2009. Ted was truly a great man in my eyes. He found joy in simple things like golf, singing in church and civic involvement. He will be missed.