



HANGIN' WITH THE OLD GUYS...

Jim Deeks a 2013 New Member from Rosedale Golf Club writes regularly for FAIRWAYS GOLF MAGAZINE which is an Ontario publication. Jim's excellent blog was written after the first day of our Annual If you want to read Jim's column on a regular basis visit <http://www.fairwaysgolf.ca/article.php?sectionId=3>

Those of you who read my columns and blogs (and I concede, it may only be one of you), may have recognized that I'm a bit of a traditionalist when it comes to our game's heritage. I love playing in golf events, and do not apologize for actually enjoying wearing a blazer and perhaps a tie, and retiring to the Men's Lounge to share a refreshment, smoke a cigar, while discussing the day's shotmaking, in between off-colour and politically incorrect jokes. I can't say this sort of thing happens as much as it used to, either in my life or in society generally, but it's a fine tradition nonetheless.

In anticipation of such occasions, I recently accepted an invitation (after five years on the waiting list) to join the venerable Canadian Seniors Golf Association. If you're reading this blog within a day or two of its publication, I will be simultaneously situated on the fairways of either Mississauga G&CC or Oakdale G&CC, playing in rounds two and three of this year's annual members' tournament. (Our first round today (Monday) was rained out in the middle of play... just as well for me, as I was clearly suffering from rookie jitters, contributing nothing to my two-man team except a debate as to whether I have any remaining ability to hit a golf ball in the air.)

The CSGA is fine Canadian institution, having been founded in 1918. There are over 600 members, all of whom are at least 55 years old, and members of prestigious private golf clubs around the country, from Victoria to Halifax. Its roster of members past and present includes most or all of the finest names in Canadian amateur golf over the last century, and a

number of gentlemen who have been among the most successful and respected names in Canadian sport and business (excluding the author of this blog).

For eight of the first ten years of the annual CSGA tournament (which is not to be confused with the Canadian Senior Amateur, managed by Golf Canada), from 1918-27, the winner was George S. Lyon, playing then out of Lambton Golf Club in Toronto. Mr. Lyon, of course, was and remains the only person ever to have won a Gold Medal for Golf in the Olympics, in 1904. He would've been 72 when he won his last CSGA championship, in 1930 at Toronto Golf Club. The 1971 champion, Ed Ervasti of London Hunt, remains a member of the association to this day, at age 99.

Since just after the Second World War, the CSGA tournament has been so fully subscribed that at least two host clubs have been required to handle the traffic. This year, in addition to Mississauga, both Oakdale and Brampton have provided their courses to the cause. Because the participants come from all parts of Canada, the annual tournament is held centrally, in cities like Windsor, London, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal... although in the early years, the gents twice boarded trains and headed on down to St. Andrew's, New Brunswick. I'd love to see film from those two events! I can only imagine that liquor was consumed, habanas were smoked, cards were played, and who knows what

other entertainment might have been imported.

The CSGA does more than hold one annual tournament, though. As all the members are over 55, and many are retired and spending several months a year in the south, the association holds a winter "satellite" event in central Florida. A regional tournament is also held in June, with more localized events being added to the schedule in coming years. CSGA teams also compete against a US team in an annual match called the Devonshire Cup, which dates back 65 years, and also in other events this autumn in Scotland and Belgium.

Befitting an association of generally accomplished gentlemen, the CSGA has given back to the game, and to society, by having a vibrant scholarship program, to which every member is asked to donate at least \$100 a year. The fund annually enables 3-5 chosen candidates to pursue post-secondary studies in Canada. Whether or not these students will be joining the CSGA as members in roughly 35 remains to be seen.

In any case, I consider it a nice honour to be joining the membership ranks in the CSGA, as I'm sure all the other gentlemen do as well, and I'm grateful to my esteemed sponsors for nominating me. Golf may be declining in general popularity and participation in North America, but certainly not with this age group. And the high standards of fellowship and good sportsmanship that golf has always embodied, are no better represented anywhere than by the members of the CSGA.
