

GROHMAN GOLF GAZETTE

JUNIOR GOLFER EDITION

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INSIDE

TEAM TIGER

“No, number 2.” Tiger Woods in response to my suggestion that our **cross-country** destination hole be number 5. Cross-country golf is where you have an empty golf course (as Navy always was in the afternoon), and make up your own mammoth holes to play. The **fun thing** about cross-country golf is that there are no set fairways or ways to play the holes. The idea is to make them as long and **impossible** as your imagination will let you. Which is why I thought I had done good by suggesting number 5. From number 9-tee box it would have played well over 1,000 yards. But when Tiger said number 2 I immediately recognized genius behind the idea. It was as long and tough as one could have come up with. And from the side we would be coming in from it would be a next to impossible approach. “**Awesome**” I said. The most amazing thing about Tiger that really shined in cross-country golf is that he sees and plays shots that I **often** couldn’t see standing in the same spot he had just hit from! He’s the only person I’ve ever had to do that with. “You have got to show me what you just did,” I said many, many times. And he **always** would.

COACH JOE

HEADING TO VERO

I’m off to **Vero Beach** Florida the first week of December to help Joe McCourt and the U.S. Blind Golf Association with their big tournament and to “**Coach**” one of the players during the event. Something I look forward to very much and will share in this month’s gazette. We’ve had junior blind clinics but this type coaching is where I actually will be on the course with the tournament player and guiding and **coaching** them through all their shots. Whether we win or lose it definitely will be an amazing experience!

AMAZING

I just returned from **Florida** and the Florida Blind and Visually Impaired Open Golf Championship hosted by the USBGA. And indeed it was an **amazing** experience! Myself and Community Focus Golf Association National Director Suellen Garabedian headed to Vero Beach looking to learn all we could to **enhance** our Sarasota Junior Blind Clinic in January. USBGA Director Joe McCourt is helping us with it so it was only natural for us to help him with his event. We picked up 72-year-old Dorothy Naugle and her **guide dog** Pardee in Bradenton and had a wonderful time with them on the 3 1/2 hour drive to Vero Beach and

all weekend! Guide dogs are amazing animals and **Pardee** was no exception. It was amazing to watch this animal in action. I truly believe that Pardee **knew** Dorothy was blind. That dog was extremely careful to insure Dorothy’s safety at all times. At every door, step or potential hindrance, Pardee would stop and let Dorothy **know** something was there. And Pardee wouldn’t move until Dorothy conquered whatever it was and was ready to move on. I’m very pleased that **Southeastern Guide Dogs** will be joining us and providing a guide dog demonstration for our clinic. Until you see them in action you really don’t know how **special** these animals truly are. And what a pleasant and delightful woman to share the trip with. As with **all** the blind and visually impaired people we met over the weekend, life is good to Dorothy. Not one person we met over the weekend felt their lack of eyesight was a setback. They were all very **positive** in attitude and in character. In fact Angela O’Rourke, the Worlds number one blind female golfer and the person I “coached” in the tournament told me her becoming totally blind 10 years ago as a result of a car accident was “**a blessing.**” Angela is one of the most incredible people Suellen or myself have

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ever met in our lives. She has beaten cancer 5 times, survived 3 heart attacks, a **horrific** car crash that cost her the ability to see and 55% of her brain capacity, suffers from seizures (and had 3 during the 2 rounds I coached her) yet she remains the number one blind female golfer in the world, **won** the Florida Open beating last years National Blind Champion (and the man that taught me and several other SCPGA members how to **teach** the blind at the L.A. Foundation for the Junior Blind 3 years ago) Jim Baker. She also does everything she can not only for the blind but all disabled people with her Disabled Angels International Association that I am **proud** to say I am now a part of and looking forward to helping her any way I can. It was great to guide this lady up to the podium to receive our **gold medals** as tournament champions. I look forward to coaching her again in February for a Challenge Tour event in Las Vegas and with several blind and disabled clinics she has scheduled for next year. I also look forward to having **many** of the people we met join myself and Suellen in Sarasota in January. Jim Baker is now the President of the USBGA and has pledged his help and support of the Sarasota clinic. When you are **surrounded** by people that

share the same beliefs that you do, **anything** is possible!

BRITTANY

One of the inspiring people we met was 15-year-old Brittany. Suellen was the photographer during the **scramble** tournament held on the first day. In the scramble, 3 sighted players were paired with 2 blind or visually impaired players. Myself, Angela O'Rourke, Dick and David Gemmlinger and the only legally blind **PGA** Pro in the country Tom made up our group. Suellen followed our group and had Pardee with her in her cart. Pardee caught the attention of Brittany and with her father's permission, **joined** Suellen and Pardee for the day. Brittany is mentally and physically disabled and Suellen and I thought it would be a wonderful **opportunity** to learn from her for our mentally and physically handicapped junior clinic in February. Everyone in our group fell in **love** with Brittany. It was absolutely wonderful to watch this shy young girl come out of her shell as the day progressed and unconditional love and acceptance from all of us took effect. At the turn she got her **own** golf clinic from all of us and **giggled** at every ball she hit. By the end of the day Brittany was the happiest person you ever saw. **Unless** you looked at the rest of us!

DISABLED ANGELS INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

You wouldn't know it by her married name but Angela O'Rourke is a Native American **Mohawk** Indian from the Turtle Clan. Not only does she work with mentally and physically challenged children and adults, she also works with Native American Indians and lives six months of the year on a reservation. Like me, she also uses golf as her **medium** to bring hope and a little joy to others. I've enjoyed working with inner-city kids, the junior blind and troubled youth the past 2 years. I feel like these are our countries forgotten kids. I didn't **think** about kids on reservations until I met Angela. I guess these juniors are our countries really forgotten kids. I'm now looking forward to working with Native Americans in the near future through golf. I am also pleased to announce the **merger** of Community Focus Golf Association with Disabled Angels International Association. Suellen and myself look forward to working closely with Angela and Disabled Angels International. We hope to bring a lot of **smiles** to challenged people from all walks of life. With a game called golf!

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DISABLED GOLF CLASS ADDED

After coaching, working with, talking to and being inspired by Angela O'Rourke, I will be adding a disabled golf class on Saturdays at Chester Washington Golf Course in South Central. It will be from 9-10 a.m. and open to all ages. Cost to attend will be \$1 (for range balls) and I will provide golf clubs. It will be run under the banner of the Disabled Angels International Association, a non-profit organization. To sign up or be a volunteer instructor, or for more information, please feel free to call me at 714.293.5576 or email me at JoeGrohmanPGA@aol.com.

INSTRUCTION DIGEST BLIND PUTTING

I remember years ago reading an article written by Johnny Miller. (You kids probably aren't very familiar with Johnny Miller but at one point in the early seventies he was the best golfer on the planet. He won 8 tournaments one year and appeared to be the heir apparent to Jack Nicklaus's throne.) In the article he said that during the last round of one of his victories in a Major, he closed his eyes when he putted. Until my experience in Vero last week, I had always thought after reading that article that it

had been a foolish thing for Johnny Miller to do and he had been very lucky to win that day. However after lining up Angela O'Rourke for every shot and putt she hit in a winning effort and watching her playing partner, National Champion and totally blind golfer Jim Baker putt, I now think that Johnny wasn't so foolish after all. Both Angela and Jim are incredible putters. Angela only took 29 putts on her way to victory. Our formula was simple. I would line her up on the line the ball should start on and tell her the distance I wanted her to hit it. If it were a 20-foot uphill putt I would tell her to hit it 23 feet. If it were a downhill 10 footer I might say hit it 6 feet. I wouldn't tell her if it broke right or left or was downhill or uphill. She didn't need to know these things. They would have only been a distraction to her thought process while over the putt. So basically all her and Jim were doing in their minds was hitting a straight putt. And basically all they had to do was hit a straight putt the proper distance. If they were set up on the proper line for the break and they hit it the right distance, they made the putt. And since they can't see the hole, they never worried about making or missing the putt. The number one cause of missing putts is thinking about missing it or trying too hard to make it. How

much better would we all putt if we trusted our read and our only thought over the putt was proper distance? How much easier is it to hit a putt 3 feet than make a three footer! Under the incredible pressure of leading a Major Championship heading into the final round and having putting worries, I think Johnny Miller figured out one way to make his putting much simpler therefore less worrisome. Worry and great golf do not mix. Worry and bad golf are bedfellows. Whatever his reasons I now understand the logic behind his actions. I think we would improve our putting dramatically if we set up to the proper line, played every putt as a straight putt and our only thought was hitting the ball the right speed for the distance. Thinking about making or missing the putt has no business being in the equation in the first place yet it's the main reason most of us sighted golfers miss putts. I haven't tried putting on the course with my eyes closed yet so I can't recommend it at this time. However I do recommend spending some of your practice green time hitting putts with your eyes closed. You'll be amazed at how much more you think about than you need to when your eyes are open. Learn to keep it simple by putting blind. It will let you "see" how to putt. Ask Johnny.

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IN MY OPINION

By Coach Joe

I went to a local computer lab recently to do some work. School had let out and inside the lab were at least 40 kids playing video games on the computers. 21st century arcade I guess. Unless you see for yourself you cannot imagine how violent and graphic some of these games are. The teenager in me thought "cool!" The adult in me thought, "So that's where so many kids have learned to be cold blooded killers." (In reference to the rash of school shootings beginning with Columbine) I'm sure that the recent D.C. area snipers were video game trained. These days you can brutally murder all you want in Cyberspace. You can also access every demented psycho's philosophies, be preyed upon by some very bad people, be inundated with some very graphic email ads (called Spam), and be contacted by complete strangers and access pornography. The world you kids live in is much, much different than the pre-computer and Internet world I grew up in. I think the Internet is the greatest thing to come along in my lifetime. However there really are few controls over it so you kids basically are in charge of how you use it and what you allow yourselves to be exposed to. So here are my suggestions

with regard to the Internet. 1-If you don't do it in reality, don't do it in cyberspace. Why murder cyber people when video golf will expose you to course management and cyber pressure. Do you talk to strangers on the street? 2-Don't talk to strangers on the Internet. 3-Whatever your standards and values and character is in reality, maintain it in cyberspace. 4-Don't waste time on the Internet that could be put to better use in pursuing your goals and dreams. 5-Stay away from stuff, people and things you know are bad. You don't want to be influenced by any of it. 6-Manage your time and try not to waste it. If what you are doing isn't connected in some way to your goals, dreams, standards or values you are simply wasting your time and need to raise your standards to where you don't accept wasting time and energy. You kids are more responsible for shaping your own character and destiny than any generation before you due to what you are exposed to these days. Heck your parents probably don't even know how to use a computer. So keep everything in perspective. Don't let virtual reality adversely influence your reality. And if you want to be a professional athlete you don't have any time to waste. Or any standards and values that can be overlooked if they aren't set

high enough. And once again, whatever you become in life is your responsibility, nobody else's. People will be glad to help you along the way but ultimately it's completely up to you whether you succeed or fail at reaching your dreams. The sooner you understand that the sooner you can make it a core belief and a value you live by. You kids want your dreams you have to work hard towards them, stay focused on them and you will reach them. It's that simple. So avoid distractions in whatever form they come in. Keep your life simple and your house in order. This is the age of Tiger. Follow his example. And great things and all your dreams will come your way.

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