



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER

THE INSIDE REPORT ON WORLD GOLF

NUMBER 325

OUR 30th YEAR

APRIL 2019

Dear Subscriber:

THE 83rd MASTERS TOURNAMENT Augusta National

When the winner prevails by one rather than 12 the secret to his victory or others' shortcomings is mostly a mystery. At the Masters last week, three finished within one stroke of the winner; seven within two, and ten within three. It was the first time that a man from Northern Ireland was favored, a man from Italy led or co-led for 35 holes, and a man from California became only the second player to win for the fifth time; and all of this in a tournament created by a man from Georgia who was the greatest golf champion of any era.

It was four days that set many new Masters records: On Friday, more players than ever before, 65, made the cut. Saturday was the lowest scoring day in the history of the tournament with 71 per cent finishing par or better. That same day, for the first time in one day, three 64s were posted each by Webb Simpson, Tony Finau and Patrick Cantlay. Mr. Finau just missed a putt for 29 on the front nine, which would have set a new record. The threat of weather pushed Sunday's start to 7:30 from two tees. The last group left the 1st tee just after 9:20. They finished at 2:30 - never before. The same weather conditions forced the cancellation of the Green Jacket ceremony on the terrace putting green - never before.

The scoring records can be attributed to several factors. There were four days of ideal scoring conditions. Rain during the weeks prior and some of the com-

petition days softened the course, particularly the putting greens, making approaches easier to hold despite difficult hole locations that were meant to offset the advantages of soft surfaces. For the same reason, putting speeds were slower. Putting from above the hole was not as penal as when the conditions are drier. There was little wind.

There were many talented younger players who openly stated they *needed* to win; there were many talented older players who openly stated they did not need to win, but they really *wanted* to win. Finally, Augusta National is always an inspiring course that produces great performances.

One of those performances came from Francesco Molinari, the 36 year old, 160 pound Italian with the heavy, hopeful eyes of a penitent Christian supplicant often depicted by 16th century painters. It was his eighth start at Augusta. His previous best was a tie for nineteenth. In the second round, Mr. Molinari turned in 33, then took the outright lead with a birdie at the 15th (-7). He finished with a 67 tied with four others for the lead. Continuing bogey-free on Saturday, he posted a 66 and was in sole possession of the lead (-13). There he stayed until his spiritless shot from the 12th tee on Sunday landed well short of the green and rolled into the water. The resulting double bogey moved him into a tie for the lead until taking another double bogey at the 15th, while Tiger Woods, Dustin Johnson, Xander Schauffele, Brooks Koepka, Jason Day, and Mr. Simpson were ascending, put him too far back to recover.

Mr. Koepka, 28, winner of three of the four previous

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

REFLECTIONS ON THE MASTERS



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL O'BRYON

Thursday Morning LADBROKE ODDS

McIlroy	15/2
D. Johnson	10/1
Rose	14/1
Rahm	16/1
J. Thomas	16/1
Woods	16/1

major championships, characterized his swing thoughts as “Nothin’”. Through 36 holes, Mr. Koepka was tied for the lead with Mr. Molinari and three others (-7). His 66 on Thursday was followed by a rather ugly 71 on Friday that included 5 birdies, 2 bogeys and 1 double bogey.

Par 5s					
ALL ROUNDS					
HOLES	2 nd	8 th	13 th	15 th	TOTAL
Woods	-1	-1	-3	-3	-8
D. Johnson	-2	-3	-4	-3	-12
Schauffele	-4	-3	-4	-1	-12
Koepka	-1	-3	-4	-5	-13
Molinari	-1	-3	-2	-1	-7

When pressed for thoughts about his Friday round, Mr. Koepka said with a stone face, “Nothin’. I got no thoughts. Nothing to think about it.”

His mind-emptying approach worked well for him. His two eagles offset his two double bogeys. He putted well, found 70 per cent of the fairways with his prodigious length, and 74 per cent of the greens in regulation.

He followed his double bogey at the 12th on Sunday with an eagle at the 13th and a birdie at the 15th. The double never held him back. As he said before the tournament began, he tries not to remember what hole he played last.

Distance remains an issue even as Augusta National is stretched to longer lengths. Before this year’s competition, the 5th hole was lengthened by 40 yards to become 495 yards in length. Even so, Mr. Koepka was able to reach the green with an eight iron. Measured by the player’s longest drive at either the 5th or 15th hole, Mr. Johnson led the category with a 395 yard shot. There were three other players [Justin Thomas, Bubba Watson, Mr. Finau] just behind him at 340 yards or more.

So what made the one stroke difference? Was it the par 5s [see accompanying tables] that are usually the fulcrum? Mr. Woods played them 4 or 5 strokes worse than those he beat.

Was it the par 3s? While Mr. Woods played them 3 strokes better than the others, that didn’t quite offset his performance at the par 5s. It was

Player Statistics								
72 HOLES								
	EAGLES	BIRDIES	BOGEYS	DBOGES	GREENS IN REG.	FAIRWAYS IN REG.	DRIVING RD. 4	PUTTS RD.4
Woods	0	22	9	0	81%	63%	285	1.78
D. Johnson	0	17	5	0	71%	61%	307	1.67
Schauffele	0	25	11	1	71%	63%	302	1.56
Koepka	2	19	7	2	74%	70%	312	1.67
Molinari	0	17	2	2	65%	73%	281	1.39

not the putting. Mr. Woods came last in this category; Mr. Molinari first. In driving distance Mr. Woods was last among the contenders again. At the six most difficult holes during the fourth round, Mr. Woods was last again. He played them four over, while no one else was more than two over, and Mr. Johnson was one under. He did, however, lead in Greens in Regulation with 81 per cent. Coupling that with good putting was an advantage.

The principal difference in Mr. Woods’ performance seems to be that he remained mostly level as the others came and went and came again. As the four double bogeys at the 12th on Sunday played out, he viewed it all from the safety of the 11th green, the 12th tee and the 12th green. Having played conservatively to the center

Par 3s					
ALL ROUNDS					
HOLES	4 th	6 th	12 th	16 th	TOTAL
Woods	E	-2	E	-2	-4
D. Johnson	E	+1	E	-2	-1
Schauffele	E	-1	E	E	-1
Koepka	+1	+1	+1	E	+3
Molinari	E	-1	E	E	-1

of that green, his simple par at the 12th moved him two strokes ahead of the four contenders who found the hazard so short of the green. Mr. Woods’ birdies at the 13th and 15th took him to -13 and the solo lead.

Then there was the 16th. His perfectly judged eight iron shot found the slope and rolled back to two feet for a birdie and a two-stroke lead. Minutes later, Mr. Koepka missed his birdie putt at the 18th, just as Mr. Johnson had 30 minutes before. Both were putts that could have forced a playoff. For Mr. Woods it became a matter of simply holding until he was finished. With a two-stroke lead he had one to give back and still win the prize. As Mr. Johnson said after birdieing the 15th, 16th and 17th, and parring the last for a 68, “I played well but I don’t think it will be enough.”

There is irony in the fact that Augusta National controls every detail of the tournament - from the temperature of the azaleas’ roots,

to the prowling Pinkertons in search of garish behavior and mobile phones, to what the people who buy tickets are to be called (if

the Club told CBS that they are to be called “unicorns” rather than “patrons”, they would be unicorns) - cannot control the distance the golf ball flies or the awesome talent that plays with such precision. Nor can they control their champion’s fist pumping and screaming. Imagine Ben Hogan or Sam Snead behaving in such a way; imagine Bobby Jones screaming until he was hoarse with the accomplishment of his latest major championship victory or perhaps the Grand Slam.

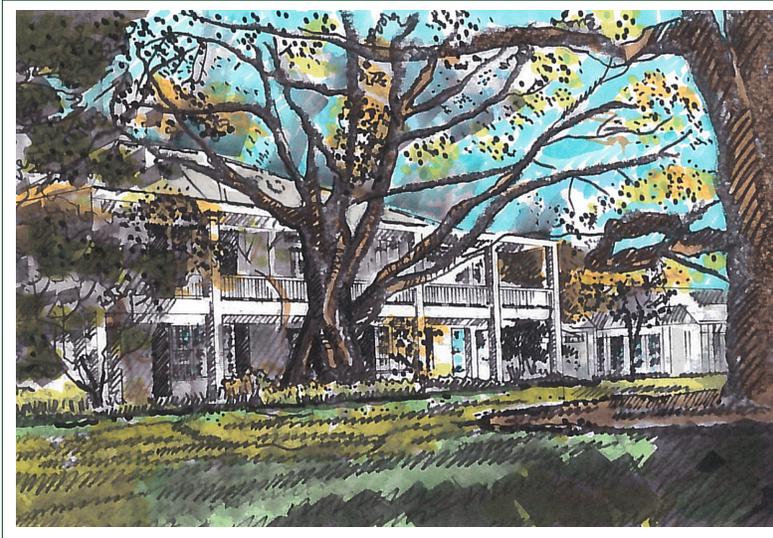
• • •

The Dutch have a word to describe the combination of conviviality, fun, proportion, coziness, comfort, which they strive to create in their homes, in art, at restaurants, farms and on their boats. The word is *gezelligheid*. It encompasses a general and abstract sensation of individual well-being that one typically shares with others. All descriptions involve a positive atmosphere, flow or vibe that colors the individual personal experience in a favorable way. It is pronounced *beh-zell-ick*.

Beginning at 12:44 on Sunday, the 83rd Masters’ *gezelligheid* began, as is usually does, on the back nine. Although only one can win, we all enjoy the demands of the holes we know so well, the condition of the course, the sounds of those watching, the colors, the impending weather, and the historical significance of what might take place.

All of the pieces came together in the tournament’s last 100 minutes to hold us with the drama, conviviality, and excitement of the Masters’ crescendo.

By 12:45 four players, two from each of the final two groups, had played their balls from the 12th tee into the water that fronts the green, then moved to the 13th tee with double bogeys.



A gentle rain begins to fall.

12:50 Cantlay takes the lead at -12 with a birdie at the 13th. The rain stops.

12:56 Schauffele ties Cantlay with a birdie at 14th.

12:57 Woods reaches the 13th green in two. Francesco Molinari follows.

1:03 Cantlay three putts the 16th; goes to -11.

1:05 Woods and Molinari birdie 13th. Woods and Schauffele lead at -12.

1:12 Woods to 15 feet at 14th. Day the leader in the clubhouse at -11.

1:19 Schauffele pars the 15th.

1:27 Johnson birdies 17th to go to -12.

1:29 Koepka birdies 15th. Four players now tied at -12.

1:35 Molinari’s approach to the 15th clips an

overhanging tree branch and drops into the water.

1:40 Molinari double bogeys the 15th to go to -10.

1:41 Woods birdies the 15th; leads alone at -13

1:42 Johnson misses birdie putt at the 18th; finishes -12. Koepka pars the 16th to remain one back -12

1:45 Woods plays an 8 iron two feet from the 16th hole.

1:52 Finau birdies the 16th to go to -11.

1:53 Woods birdies the 16th to go to -14; leads by 2.

2:11 Koepka’s second to eight feet at the 18th.

2:11 Woods pars the 17th.

2:15 Koepka misses birdie at the 18th to finish -12.

2:15 CBS’ audience peaks at 18.3 million viewers.

2:28 Woods bogeys the 18th to win at -13.

Contenders’ Performances at Sunday’s Six Most Difficult Holes

	WOODS	JOHNSON	SCHAUFFELE	KOEPKA	MOLINARI
Hole 12	E	E	E	+2	+2
Hole 5	+1	E	+1	E	E
Hole 10	+1	E	E	E	E
Hole 4	+1	E	E	E	E
Hole 11	E	E	-1	E	E
Hole 18	+1	E	E	E	E
TOTAL	+4	E	E	+2	+2

At 8 a.m. on February 2, 1949, the man whose picture had appeared on the cover of TIME magazine three weeks before pulled his Cadillac Series 62 onto Texas Highway 80 heading east to Ft. Worth with his wife in the passenger seat. It was foggy. After spending the night in Van Horn, Ben and Valerie Hogan were getting an early start on the second day of their two-day drive home from the Phoenix Open in which he had finished second to Jimmy Demeret. An hour before the Hogans left Van Horn, Greyhound Bus 548 left Pecos heading west for El Paso.

At 8:30 the two vehicles collided on a two lane bridge. In the split second before the collision Mr. Hogan released the steering wheel and dove to his right in order to protect Valerie from the destructive force of the 10 ton bus. The move saved both their lives.

First, the Cadillac's steering column was pushed into the driver's seat. On its way, it fractured Mr. Hogan's collarbone at the end of his left arm. Next the car's 500 lb. V-8 engine was pushed through the fire wall. It broke Mr. Hogan's pelvis, snapped his left ankle, mutilated his left leg and snapped his right-side, seventh rib.

Ninety minutes passed before an ambulance arrived; four hours until Mr. Hogan arrived at the hospital in El Paso. A blood clot moved into his right lung. He was slipping away and desperately needed major surgery. An Army Air Corps bomber was sent to New

Orleans to bring Alton Ochsner, the noted vascular surgeon, to El Paso. Dr. Ochsner's transfusion and surgery expertise saved Mr. Hogan's life. Two months later, weighing 120 pounds, Mr. Hogan left the hospital. He was nearly blind in his left eye; the pain in his left shoulder never stopped.

On December 10, he played 18 holes. In January, he tied Sam Snead in the Los Angeles Open; ultimately losing an 18 hole playoff, 72-76. "I use anger to drive away fear," he was quoted as saying.

Later that summer [1950], Mr. Hogan entered the U.S. Open at Merion. Preparation for his competitive rounds began four and a half hours prior to his starting times and included a long soak in a tub and wrapping his legs in order to deal with the pain. The toll on his body nearly forced him to withdrawal. Mentioning that he could not go on to his young caddie, Mr. Hogan was told, "No Mr. Hogan, you can't quit because I don't work for quitters."

At that time the final two rounds of the U.S. Open were both played on Saturday. He shot 72 in the morning and 74 in the afternoon, which was good enough to get him into an 18-hole playoff on Sunday with Lloyd Mangrum and George Fazio.

Mr. Mangrum's playoff score was 73, Mr. Fazio's 75. Mr. Hogan's was 69.

It is the greatest comeback in the history of golf.



For J.P.T:

"Just as Hogan had done since he was nine, he internalized the anger. He took it in and showed nothing. He was far from being unemotional, but the only clue that he was miffed was when he burned an inch of his cigarette in one vacuum-cleaner-like inhalation."

Curt Sampson
HOGAN

Yours vly truly,

Gary A. Galyean
Editor & Publisher

Destinations included in GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER® are chosen at the discretion of the editors. All expenses related to the gathering of this information are paid by the publication. Rates quoted are subject to change without notice. Subscription rate is \$88 US per year (\$98US overseas); renewal rate from \$82US.



Back issues are available to subscribers only at \$10 each. Inquiries: Gary GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER®, 11718 Southeast Federal Highway, No. 210, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455. Tel (772) 559.3382
Copyright 2019 Gary Galyean. Tag Galyean, Art Director.
Quotation, reproduction or transmission is prohibited.