

Annual Charity Gin Classic

by Paul Voykin


March 29 a large group of kind-hearted golf course superintendents and their friends raised over \$1,000 for charity. This year again, the money was donated to the Maryville Academy for abused and drug-addicted children.

In 13 years, we have raised over \$20,00 for charity. I wish all of you could have heard Father John Smyth's poignant, heart-rendering speech about damaged children who are brought to his academy suffering from neglect, abuse and drugs. We were immensely honored and impressed by this towering 6'6" priest (once an all-star basketball player for Notre Dame) who stooped before us extolling many years of involvement with this terrible crisis. The Maryville Academy is not funded by the Catholic Archdiocese. It's strictly self supported by donations only. Father John Smyth does a herculean job for his wounded kids. Truly this wonderful man is the "Father Flanagan of Chicagoland". It's not too late to send your \$40 to "Johnny The Bear" (who as chairman did a marvelous job of organizing the tournament, along with co-chairman Peter, "The Voik"). It's tax deductible; please do it for the little ones.

Here now is what happened at the gin tournament. Mr. Bob "The Splicer" Spicer won the gin tournament, beating young handsome Trent (son-in-law of "Golly, I think-I-made-a-mistake Wally.") "Handsome" Trent was last year's champ and almost won again this spring, but "The Splicer" Spicer got him in a very close gin game. Carl "Bypass" Hoppfan had three "open heart" games and "P.V." and "Golly Wally" had a double "open heart", which to my knowledge has never occurred before. The phrase "open heart" is used when a player states that he is calling, say on a seven and then, much to his embarrassment, is told by his opponent that the call card is five. Or say he makes the right call, but then as he lays his hand down, his opponent tells him that he still has 40 points in his hand that aren't in a run. One feels extremely stupid when this occurs and I hold the all-time record for "open hearts". Now when this misjudgement happens, the red-faced player has to turn all his cards face up so his opponent can clearly see his cards. It is very hard to win this way. Yet "Bypass Hoppfan" laid down his "open heart" cards three times and unbelievable, won all three games against his stunned opponents who thought the games were a sure thing for them. Carl showed an awesome exhibition of skill (and mostly luck). "Bypass" has now truly become a legend as a gin player and will receive the Purple Heart award from the Clinton Administration.

Some of my dear friends have wondered why I, the founder of this annual gin event, am no longer the charming chairman. The truth is I have been demoted by my former trusted committee of Johnny, Mikey, and Petey and have been reduced to the depressing position of lining up on the tables little pencils along with score pads and playing cards. Then after the game, it is my duty to pick them off the beer-stained floor and clean up. Their jealous decision to get rid of me was based on the alleged assumption that during my three years of tenure as devoted gin chairman, the recipients of our generous donations sent thank you cards from Acapulco, Bahamas and Palm Springs.

Respectfully and humbly submitted, Paul Voykin



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