

"I'm going to drag your dismembered torso behind my truck," the email said. That was just the first of many that were still to come.

I was a budding journalist at the time, a sophomore in college at the University of Kansas, writing for the student newspaper. In that morning's paper I had blasted the Kansas State football program in a column that was 100 percent intended to incite. It was published in both KU's *Daily Kansan* as well as K-State's *The Collegian*.

(To my many K-State friends: Don't worry, you'll never be as evil as Missouri in my eyes. I'm especially thankful you guys beat Mizzou twice this season in basketball, helping my Jayhawks win their eighth consecutive Big 12 regular season championship...)

The threat of dismemberment was easily the creepiest email, partly because I enjoy the use of my arms and legs, but mostly because I didn't like that the angry Wildcat didn't tell me what was actually going to happen to my limbs. I only knew that eventually I was going to lose them, before I was to be attached to this guy's truck. Disturbing.

Thankfully I didn't lose any limbs, and even better, I learned a lesson: don't be surprised when people get mad. It's the nature of this business.

Sure, there's a difference between goading on your in-state rival and writing about a bankruptcy, a lawsuit, an accident. Sports rivalries are always fun because the only truth is in the win-loss column. In business, there could be many truths. It's a bigger challenge to tell the whole story and to get it right.

I'll admit I've made a few people mad since I've arrived at *Golfdom*. Sometimes, people would just prefer to have their names left out of the paper, after all. But my job is to report on the industry. When someone's desire to keep their name out of the paper conflicts with my desire to report on what I deem a newsworthy story... well, unfortunately, that's when feelings get hurt.

Trust me, I take no pleasure in publishing stories that someone would prefer to see not published. I like to think I'm a decent person,

## A Story with No Legs (or Arms)

BY SETH JONES



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after all. But sometimes, it happens. *Golfdom* magazine and the industry is bigger than any one person or group's feelings.

I'm sure it's a lot like when something goes wrong at a golf course. Sometimes, you might have to reprimand a crew member, or even fire someone. No one enjoys doing that, but at the end of the day you have to do what's right for the golf course.

The key for me, and I'm sure for you, is to be fair.

I ask myself: Did I report the truth? Did I try to sway the news one way or the other? Did I have a personal agenda?

If the answer to all three is "no," then I can go to sleep at night knowing I've done my job. And that's what I always plan on doing.

*Golfdom* has always prided itself on being up-front and honest. That was a hallmark of this magazine long before I arrived, and I plan on keeping that tradition for my entire career here. One thing I want readers to know about this magazine is, though I might occasionally make a bad joke (read the last paragraph of the Florida Golf Day story for a clear example) I take reporting facts and the truth very seriously.

If you ever feel we've done a poor job of reporting the truth, call us out on it. Our door is open. Let us know. We want to hear both sides of every story, all the time.

Some stories may make you momentarily lose your head — and conversely, make you hope for me to lose my arms and legs — but after the dust settles, the course will still need to be maintained the next day. I'll still need to meet another deadline for the next issue.

No matter the story, life goes on.

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*Email Jones at [sjones@questex.com](mailto:sjones@questex.com).*