



"When Rory McIlroy took the stage to accept his 2012 Male Player of the Year award, Mark turned to me with a shocked look on his face and said, 'I didn't know Rory was actually going to be here!'"

SETH JONES, *Editor-in-Chief*

My worst, best of 2013

I am on a roll. Just when I think I literally lived the best year of my life, the next year gets even better. ¶ I'm on a three-year streak right now. Professionally and personally, things are going great. Job is awesome, my family is doing great. It's often that I look to the stars and think to myself, "thank you." ¶ So here's my three worst and five best moments of 2013. Keep in mind the worst weren't that bad, but the best? They were awesome.

3. Go it alone — Poor me! For a couple months *Golfdom* was operating with a skeleton crew, accelerating the graying of my hair. Thankfully, I'm through the woods on that experience (see story on page 9.)

2. Missed international flight — My flight landed in Philadelphia, but they didn't have a gate for us to pull into. So we sat on the runway for over an hour. My connection to Manchester, England, took off without me. Panicked, I jumped on the day's last flight to London Heathrow, setting off an international game of "Where am I and where is my luggage?"

1. An awkward Palmer meeting — In my mind's eye, my first in-person meeting with Mr. Arnold Palmer was going to be all sorts of awesome. We'd tell stories, laugh,

take a couple photos, maybe get an autograph, maybe have one of those iced tea/lemonade drinks. Instead, I was shown into his office at an inopportune moment — unintentionally interrupting an interview with the Associated Press. Adding to the confusion, Mr. Palmer had just taken out his hearing aid, so I found myself essentially yelling at one of golf's true legends.

And now, the best...

5. Deep-sea fishing — One of the corporate meetings I attended this year (the company shall remain nameless) took a big group of us deep-sea fishing. I was a rookie, but I caught quite a few red grouper, more than most of the

guys fishing on my corner of the boat (truth!)

4. Palm Beach GCSA meeting — The best presentation I made all year combined with grilled steaks for lunch, 18 holes of golf, the fastest beer cart I've ever witnessed and a trip to the 19th hole bar that I can barely recall. (Which makes me even more excited to be asked back to MC their January meeting, when they're having Medinah's Curtis Tyrrell as their keynote speaker.)

3. London calling — My amazing trip to England in July (yeah, I finally got my luggage) included tours of Sunningdale GC, the R.J. National, St. George's Park and

Twickenham Stadium and my first ever cricket match. Best souvenir? An autographed jersey of rugby team Leeds Rhinos.

2. Taking my bro-in-law to the Masters — By taking my brother-in-law Mark along on my trip to the Masters this year, I had a constant reminder of how cool my job is. Mark was walking on air the entire time he was at Augusta National. My favorite moment, though, was at the annual Golf Writers Dinner. When Rory McIlroy took the stage to accept his male player of the year award, Mark turned to me with a shocked look and said, "I didn't know Rory was actually going to be here!" I just gave him a knowing smile. He did another double-take, then said to me, "You're *the man*."

1. Meeting Mr. Palmer — How could this be both my best and worst moment of 2013? Because in hindsight, my awkward meeting made for a memorable story, and was also immortalized in an Associated Press story (remember the guys I interrupted?) that ran in papers across the world. An excerpt from the story: *A staff member came into the room and mentioned two men who were outside the office and wanted to say hello. One was Seth Jones, the editor of Golfdom magazine who recently interviewed Palmer. "Well, bring him in," Palmer said, rising from behind his desk with a broadening smile. Doesn't sound awkward at all when it reads like that, huh?*

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