

not deter a nice line of golfers from waiting their turn at the first tee. My wife and daughter were taking their usual amount of time getting ready so I decided to walk down between the pool/volleyball area that was flooded and the practice green to look at the lake. Mil Lacs was like an angry sea this morning, sending three-foot waves crashing upon the beach due to a very stiff north wind. Having gazed upon its' aggressive beauty for about five minutes, I walked back to the room taking me straight over the practice green.

As I got there, I noticed there was a worker pulling up on a triplex mower to mow the green. I also noticed some small branches and twigs on the green in front of me. Naturally I started policing the green for him. He made his first pass and motioned that I did not have to do that at which point I replied that I was used to it and introduced myself. The guy on the mower was Steve Schumaker, Superintendent of Izaty's Resort.

I had never met Steve before, but we did have some common acquaintances as it turned out, and he relayed to me the story of how he was the superintendent when the courses were built, and what he was dealing with now just to keep the course running on a bare-bones budget. It was a nice conversation until it was interrupted by my wife. She said she was stuck on the second floor with my daughter as the elevator had stopped running due to the storm. When Steve heard this he instantly ran over to the pool area, talked to one guy who told him the guy he was looking for was next door. The two of them then dropped what they were doing and literally ran over to the building to help us. Ten minutes later the doors were opening and we were able to get Susan down to floor level.

As we left Izatys and headed east, back to my friend's cabin for another day of fun, a few general observations popped into my head from the morning's experience. The most obvious was

how great the guys were in helping us out. They did not just pass the buck, or slowly get to the issue. They bolted to help us, and made sure we were taken care of when they obviously had a lot of other urgent things they had to take care of. My thanks to Steve and the staff at Izatys.

The next thing I mused upon was how frustrating it must be to be Steve and any of his staff that at one time was allowed to maintain the course at the highest of levels, but now must make do and find a way to keep the place a notch below. I think everybody in the business can understand the feeling of not being able to bring the course to where they want it to be on a daily, weekly, monthly level due to lack of funding, lack or personnel, etc. If that is you, hang in there and keep plugging.

Ultimately though, I started putting the pieces together and decided that strange fate had worked in my favor again. Had I not taken the time to stare at the lake, I would not have picked up twigs off the putting green. Had I not picked the twigs, I would not have met Steve. If I had not met Steve, not only would I have not made a very nice new friend in the industry, but we most definitely would have been trapped on the second floor for a lot longer than we would have otherwise. It was kind of like the DirecTV commercials only in reverse. I am a firm believer in if you do good things, good things will happen to you and as I age, the concept of fate, and every action will have either a positive or negative reaction seems to come into play more and more.

At the end of the DirecTV ads, the announcer proudly proclaims "Don't sell your hair to a wig shop," or "Don't wind up in a roadside ditch." I am here to say: "Always stop to pick up twigs on a neighbor's putting green."