

Sketch of a West Pointer – Michael Alms

Dr. Michael Alms has been a member of West Point Golf Club since 1998 and, at age 90, is our eldest statesman. In August 2012, Michael shot 91 at Langara, just missing shooting his age. He began playing golf as a young teenager; his grandmother would send him and his cousin down to the local municipal golf course in Taunton, Somerset, England. The boys carried some old wooden clubs - a few of you will recall these names: brassie, cleek, mashie, niblick and a driver. Michael remembers buying repaints for tuppence apiece. Of course, you're wondering what repaints are. They were old balls lucky enough not to be cut up and were repainted by rolling them in white paint between gloved hands!

Michael was born in Kyoto, Japan, and has travelled the world extensively, living in Japan (few months), England (28 years), Mauritius (3 years), back to England for 8 years, Saskatoon (18 years), Dominican Republic (5 years), Peru (4 years) and Vancouver for 24 years. By the time he went to Mauritius, he was an orthopaedic surgeon. Michael's father was an English army officer who was sent to Japan for three years after WW1 to become a first class interpreter. Michael relates that his father fell in love with the country and also a rebellious young Japanese woman, whom he married! Michael is the eldest of their three children; he has a sister 3 years younger and a brother 8 years his junior.

Michael has enjoyed the experience of a hole-in-one twice. The first time was in the Dominican Republic, 171 yards with a 4 iron. The second was on Langara's 122 yard 8th hole, from the white tees a few years ago. When asked for a favourite golf story, he remembers the time his cousin had set up a practice net on his back lawn and Michael shanked an iron shot, missed the net completely and shattered several panes of his cousin's greenhouse.

Michael's favourite vacation is sailing (although not able to do it anymore because of poor balance). His favourite golf course is the municipal course on Maui, where the front nine borders the sea coast. He has always admired Seve Ballesteros, both as a golfer and as a team player.

Before the days of online booking and eSignup, Michael was the volunteer coordinator for West Point's tee times. Members used to phone for a tee time and then advise Michael. He then did all the work in preparing the tee times for WPGC's play the following week.

With a current handicap of 28, Michael continues to enjoy the camaraderie and friendship with members and has already played 17 games this season.

*Prepared by Lorne Lindsay
September 2012*