

## Sketch of a West Pointer – Mike Carter



Mike Carter has made many contributions to the West Point Golf Club since becoming a member in 2006. He has coordinated several events and served on the Executive as Vice-Captain Draw in 2011 and was Club Captain for two years, 2012 and 2013 (while he was having a knee surgically repaired). Mike has won numerous competitions, including the 2010 Stroke Play Championship, and has been on two winning Palcutta teams.

Mike qualifies as one of our younger members, having been born in 1945 in India. After the Brits were kicked out in 1948, the Carter family returned to the UK where his father served in the British army for the remainder of his career. His dad was awarded the OBE (Order of the British Empire) for his service to the crown and got to meet the Queen. He jokingly referred to his prestigious award as “other buggers’ efforts”. Mike recalls being packed off to boarding school and maintaining his sanity by participating in a wide variety of sports. He represented his school, Peter Symonds Winchester, in cricket, rugby, soccer and tennis. While studying

Economics at university, he also played a lot of bridge and was a good enough soccer player to be on the university’s first eleven.

Mike’s father loved golf and Mike caddied for him on many occasions. Mike is left-handed and his father right-handed so trying to learn with his father’s clubs was a dismal failure; the purchase of left-handed clubs was never an option.

In September 1970, Mike and his wife of six months, Pauline, boarded the Empress of Canada destined for Montreal. Neither of them had a job waiting for them in Canada but at the time, it seemed like a fun idea to emigrate! Timing wasn’t great as they arrived in Montreal during the October crisis – armed soldiers were on the streets and the province of Quebec was in turmoil. Pauline and Mike both quickly found jobs, Mike in marketing with Gillette. The company encouraged him to play golf with his new-found acquaintances, so he bought a half set of clubs from Canadian Tire and hence his love-hate relationship with the game began. However, his passion in those early years in Canada was cross country skiing. After three years of practice, he completed the 2-day 169-kilometre Canadian Ski Marathon from Lachute, Quebec to Ottawa. Mike joined a squash club in Montreal and played competitively until he turned 60 and his knees gave out.

When his parents visited from the UK, Mike borrowed a set of clubs for his father and journeyed up into the Laurentians to play Grey Rocks, a very beautiful course made even more spectacular by the lovely fall colours. He remembers that, unfortunately, their golf was less than spectacular and they had to abandon the round when they ran out of golf balls!

In the mid-1970s, the French tire company Michelin was expanding to North America and “head-hunted” Mike away from Gillette. He spent the bulk of his career with Michelin, in both marketing and sales. When the company transferred him to Vancouver they encouraged him to play more business golf with Kal Tire, whose management at the time were all golf fanatics. Mike graduated to a full set of clubs and eventually improved his game; he feels fortunate that he had the opportunity to play most of the beautiful golf courses in Western Canada.

In April 2011, Mike scored a hole-in-one on McCleery’s 3<sup>rd</sup> hole, using a four hybrid and at one time achieved a low handicap index of 9. These two events occurred before having both arthritic knees replaced. His favourite courses are Kananaskis, near Canmore, Alberta; Morningstar on Vancouver Island near Parksville; and Predator Ridge in Vernon. He also favours McCleery, especially from the forward tees!

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Mike and Pauline have been married for 48 years, have 3 sons and a daughter and enjoy 8 grandchildren, aged from 6 months to 11 years. Miraculously, all four children live in Vancouver so they get to do plenty of grand-parenting. While the children were growing up, golf was very much a secondary activity but Mike managed to play several very early Sunday morning rounds at UBC with Richard Martin. They started in the dark and hoped for a straight drive on number one so they didn't lose a ball. Their goal was to get home by 9 am. As the family got older, the boys started to play golf and Musqueam became the family's favourite venue.

When the children were young, the family's main summer activity was to explore our beautiful province. They had marvellous canoe and kayaking experiences, including two trips to the Bowron Lakes, the Broken Islands, Turner Lakes in Tweedsmuir Park and God's Pocket Marine Park, 10 km northwest of Port Hardy on the island.

Every May for 22 years, Mike would join West Pointers Andrew Hobbs and Richard Martin and another friend for 4 days of competitive and mostly happy golf in the Parksville area. They stayed at Beach Acres Resort and have fantastic memories of the Ryder-cup style golfing holidays (until they all retired) where the comment "is that my friend in the bunker or is he the bastard on the green" was coined.

For all the golf that Mike has played, his favourite golf outing of the year is unquestionably the Father's Day game he plays every year with his three sons. What makes it even better is that they always let him win!

*Material submitted by Mike  
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