

Sketch of a West Pointer: Hugh Marshall

Hugh Marshall, the man who golfs in short pants in most weather conditions, not because he wants to exhibit his muscular legs, but because of a circulation issue – wearing shorts is much more comfortable!

When approached to provide a few background notes for this sketch, Hugh began by saying, “The game of golf!! Oh how I wish I had started the game when I was young.” Hugh was born in Nelson, BC, raised in Vancouver in a family of five boys and brought up during the depression and war years – so golf was definitely not in their world. During and after high school and university, Hugh played several sports at a fairly high competitive level. Baseball and basketball paid for part of his university tuition. His baseball teams provided summer jobs and basketball led him to officiating, where he ultimately attained national recognition refereeing senior men’s and women’s Canadian finals.

Hugh’s athletic endeavours led him to education where he enjoyed 36 years as a physical education teacher. In recognition of his dedication to his students and his profession, one of the gyms at John Oliver Secondary has his name on it. Hugh acquired the golf bug when two former students and local golf pros, Al Kennedy and Bob Cox, provided free lessons to every grade 11 student at JO. Hugh, being a good student as well as teacher, parroted their methods. At the time, his family’s summer vacation was spent near a par 3 course in the Chilliwack area, so in his 40s he started the game, which eventually led to “full-time” golf in retirement.

Hugh was fortunate to join one of his sons and his friends who annually (over a nine year span) did a championship tour. They played courses on Vancouver Island, the Okanagan, in the Kootenays, Alberta, Washington, Utah and Idaho – a marvelous experience! He recalls that the most unique course was The Resort Course in Coeur d’Alene, the home of the floating green. Its position is controlled by computer and the distance changes daily and a boat delivers you, hopefully, to your second shot. All ground-work was done at night and there wasn’t a machine or weed in sight. Each foursome has a forecaddie who gives a description of the hole at the tee box, then runs to your ball to explain the best approach to, and the slope of, the green, etc.

The hi-light of Hugh’s golf career occurred during a West Point competition at Langara on July 20, 2007 when he shot his age – a 78. And in 2009, he recorded his first hole-in-one at Fraserview- only 27 years after his wife, Diane, had accomplished the feat at Meadowlands in Chilliwack. In 2010, Hugh’s many contributions to West Point were acknowledged with the presentation of a Life Time Membership. He considered it a great honour and exclaims that he has enjoyed a great WALK! This year he and Ed Bobinski were featured in a story about senior golfers, written by Brad Ziemer, in both the Vancouver Sun and Province newspapers.

Hugh and Di raised three children in the Dunbar community – Cathy, Ross and Doug - supporting their educational and athletic activities, and now live vicariously through their six grand-children. Hugh and Di celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary in August. Following retirement, Hugh joined West Point Golf Club in 1992. He has served on your Board as Secretary 1996-97, President 1998-99 and three years as Past President. Hugh continues to provide leadership within the Club and is one of the most welcoming individuals toward new members.

Prepared by Lorne Lindsay
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