

Sketch of a West Pointer – Dave Syme



Dave was born in Falkirk, Scotland, and immigrated to Canada when he was one year old. The family settled in Scarborough, Ontario and Dave completed high school there. Five brothers joined the family but no sisters! Dave's father played soccer for the East End Canadians in the Toronto league (and was the MVP in '54) while working for the Dow Brewery. When it closed, his dad took a job with Molson's to oversee their new high-speed line at Sick's Brewery in Lethbridge. After a summer job at the Toronto Telegram, Dave moved closer to his family and enrolled at Simon Fraser University.

He attended SFU from '67 to '71, taking one year off in '69 to work in a Kelowna plywood plant. In the fall of '68 he met Louise at SFU and married her in '70. Dave was the starting quarterback during the '70 and '71 seasons. SFU was undefeated in 1970, ranked 6th in the NAIA, playing all games against U.S. schools, except for the annual Shrum Bowl contest vs UBC. After graduating from SFU with a BA in sociology, Dave was drafted by the Edmonton Eskimos. He made the team but had a problem; he had been

accepted at UBC Law School in Vancouver. Fortunately, he was able to trade spots with an Edmontonian who wanted to go to UBC ("smart fellow", Dave says). Thus began, to his wife's chagrin, 40 years of living in Edmonton. Dave was able to attend law school while playing for the Eskimos – definitely not something he would recommend. During the '74 season, Edmonton traded him to Hamilton. As he was completing his final year of law, he retired from the CFL rather than report to the Tiger Cats. After he had completed his articling year in 1976 and been admitted to the Alberta bar, Saskatchewan traded Hamilton for his playing rights. Dave played behind the legend Ron Lancaster, going to the Grey Cup before losing to Ottawa, the team that had also defeated Dave's Eskimos in the '73 Grey Cup. He had taken a leave of absence from his firm to go to Saskatchewan but the law firm now wanted a commitment. More importantly, Louise - who hadn't been enamoured with having left Vancouver for Edmonton - was adamant that he would be going back to Saskatchewan by himself! So Dave retired for a second and final time from the CFL.

Louise had worked as a lawyer while their sons were young but when she retired in 2011, she told Dave he could stay in Edmonton practicing law but she was going to Vancouver! Dave wrapped things up and retired in June 2012. The family consists of sons Lucais (Scottish spelling), Jonathan and Aidan, who all live in the Vancouver area, and two grandchildren, Magnus and Uma.

Dave played golf a few times as a teenager with his Dad but was more involved in team sports while going to school (soccer, football, baseball, basketball, volleyball, field lacrosse and pickup hockey). He started playing golf more regularly after establishing his law practice, but never joined a club. He didn't keep an actual handicap prior to joining West Point but figures his best was perhaps 16. Once he got over his frustration of not being very good (regular tantrums and oaths to never play again), he learned to simply enjoy being on the course with beautiful surroundings, accept his inadequacies and take pleasure when the golf gods allowed a good shot! Dave was introduced to the West Point Golf Club by Tony Borghi and has thoroughly enjoyed playing with everyone he has had the pleasure of meeting. He couldn't imagine a better group anywhere.

Dave's most memorable round was an 82 from the blue tees in drizzling rain at Edmonton's Royal Mayfair Course. He was playing with law partners and a client from Toronto, who was suitably impressed. He claims he was lucky to score a hole-in-one at Shuswap Estates while playing with sons Jonathan and Aidan. His tee shot landed on a steep hill adjacent to the green and proceeded to roll down the hill, across almost the entire surface of the green, and dropped into the hole. Needless to say, his sons were excited. Dave simply took pride in the fact his tee shot was pin-high and that the golf gods were smiling, or was that a smirk!

He enjoyed playing a round at Kapalua on Maui with a fellow lawyer from Boston. They had never met and haven't seen each other since, but the companionship, conversation and beautiful vistas on a glorious sunny afternoon remind him of what he enjoys most about golf. "I enjoy almost any course with good friends or with my sons or brothers and fine weather." Dave admires professional golfer Tom Watson for his skill, integrity and love of the game.

Dave and Louise enjoy travelling and have had a lot of great experiences in many countries over the years. Italy and Portugal are two favourite places to visit.

Having reached age 70 and never having broken 80, Dave doubts he will ever shoot his age. But that does not prevent him from thinking, in his heart of hearts, before every game that, "This will be the day I shoot par – yes, for the entire round!"

*Prepared by Lorne Lindsay from Dave's material
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