

The VGA Eagle

First Quarter 2023

News from the VGA Board

The Board voted to have **Two-Man Best Ball tournaments for both Wednesday and Saturday** events in **each quarter** for a total of eight per year. The **VGA will sponsor \$200** for each tournament with the payout being as follows; **first place \$100, second place \$60, and third place \$40**. The tournament director will choose pairings either using handicaps or a blind draw. In a related matter, **The Board** voted to **eliminate the Champion-of-Champions and The President's Cup** events.

The Board voted to designate **one board meeting per year** to be known as the **Annual Members Meeting**. It will be scheduled in the **fourth quarter** with the expectation that **all interested members may attend**. The agenda will include; the **nomination of board members**, the **nomination of board officers**, and the **annual awards presentation**. A **social hour will follow** with snacks and drinks provided by the VGA.

The Board voted to make the **\$10 VGA entry mandatory**. Players will no longer be able to pay \$1, \$4, or \$7 to enter VGA tournaments with the **exception of VGA members with 25 or more years** of membership.

Highlights from the Fourth Quarter

Eagles

Fred Baldwin eagled the **274 yard par-four hole number 14** at **Toka Sticks** on **February 1**. He hit his **driver** through the fairway into the trees to left of the green. From about **75 yards**, he **punched a hot five-iron** through the trees that **bounced three times** and then **disappeared into the hole**.

Bob Inman eagled the **441 yard par-five hole number five** at **Francisco Grande** on **February 11**. "I had a **beautiful drive of 220 yards** down the middle. My **second shot was a seven-wood** and it ended up at the bottom of the hill below the green. My **sand wedge** was a nice shot, but I could not see it land as the green and the flag were above my head. One of the foursome said the **shot bounced twice and then rolled into the cup for a great eagle**." **Outstanding hole Bob!**

Steve Richter eagled the **287 yard par-four hole number four** at **Bear Creek** on **February 15**. "I hit **three-wood off the tee** and the ball ended up in the fairway just right of the left hand bunker, however the **ball settled into an old sanded divot**. I had about **95 yards to the pin** and used a **pitching wedge** making sure to hit down on the ball to get it out of the divot. The **ball flew towards the flag**, which was in the front, **hit about eight feet short**, rolled towards the hole and disappeared." **Great shot Steve!**

Dan Campos eagled the 510 yard par-five hole number 16 at Cave Creek on February 18. !Bueno tiro El Presidente!

Rusty Silverman eagled the 488 yard par-five hole number 18 at Pueblo El Mirage on February 25. “There was a strong favoring wind that day. I hit the tee-ball left, but straight towards the mobile homes on my left. I thought it was out-of-bounds. Somehow, the ball cleared the trees and **came to rest 165 yards from the flag**. From there, I hit an **eight-iron** that landed **just short of the green** and began tracking towards the hole. George Kowalchik thought it went in for a two, but it **must have lipped out and ended up on the edge of the cup for an eagle three.**” **That is amazing Rusty!**

Kevin Haskew eagled the 528 yard par-five hole number two at Pueblo El Mirage on March 18. “I hit my driver to the first cut and a four-iron to about 14 feet below the hole. I made the putt.” **Excellent hole, bloke!**

Be sure to send word of your eagle information to Fred Baldwin.

Low net scores for the quarter

Jim Foster – 64 at Pueblo El Mirage on 1/14

John Leopold – 63 at Pueblo El Mirage on 2/25

Gary Vance – 65 at Painted Mountain on 3/08

Bill Heller – 62 Pueblo El Mirage on 3/18

Best individual low gross scores for the quarter

Dan Campos – 71(70) at Union Hills 1/28

Dan Campos – 68(69) at Cave Creek on 2/18

Dan Campos – 70(72) at Dobson Ranch 3/25

Mike Roether – 74(66) at Cave Creek 4/29

Dan Campos – 69(70) at Cave Creek 4/29

Big Dog Bites

Through April 30

Rusty Silverman has increased his total in the Wednesday race to **24 points**. **Jim Cox** is in **second place with 19 points** followed closely by **Gary Vance** with **12 points**. There is a pack of five tied for fourth with 11 points.

Neal Fisel and **William Nelson** are still tied for first in **Saturday's race with 16 points** each.

Brian Dempster has eased into second with **14 points** followed closely by **Warren Meehan**, **Dan Christiansen**, and **Bill Heller** with **12, 11, and ten points** respectively.

Letters to Arnie

Dear Arnie,

While I was walking onto a green, I saw a player in my foursome hitting the ground with a club where there was a divot in the line between his ball in the fairway and the hole on the green. When I asked him what was he doing, he stated that **he was fixing a divot**. I informed him that what he was doing was against the rules and carried **a penalty of two strokes for fixing a divot in the line of play**. He immediately found the USGA rule and graciously accepted the penalty. **Fixin' Freddy**

Dear Freddy,

You were correct on two counts. First the **player had broken a rule** of golf and second, to **point out his mistake**. **USGA Rule 8.1a(3) prohibits improving conditions affecting the stroke** by pressing down, removing or repositioning a divot in a divot hole, which is **treated as part of the ground (and not as a loose impediment)** even if it is not yet attached or growing.

Of course, this rule does not apply to man-made imperfections on the green. A player may **fix ball marks, divots, or other imperfections on the green**.

It is incumbent of all players to be aware of any rule violations that may occur while playing in your foursome. A player must ask for an explanation if he feels another player has applied a rule incorrectly. Also, players must not agree to “forget” a rule violation. It is grossly unfair for one player to apply a penalty correctly while another player ignores a rule.

Dear Arnie,

Recently a player **marked his ball on the green with an acorn**. Another player's putt in our foursome hit the acorn. Who, if any one, should have been penalized? **Annie Oaktree**

Dear Annie,

The **acorn is a loose impediment** and not a ball-marker. The **player who marked the ball with the acorn gets a one-stroke penalty** for picking up a ball in play without marking it with a ball-marker - **USGA Rule 14.1(a)**. The **ball that struck the acorn is to be played as it lies - USGA Rule 11.1(a)**.

USGA Rule 14 establishes that **a ball marked on the green must be marked with a “ball-marker”** and defines a ball-marker as **an artificial object used to mark the spot of a ball to be lifted, such as a tee, a coin, an object made to be a ball-marker or other small piece of equipment**.