

From the Gallery
Australian Golf Digest
Unit 2
160 Bourke Road
Alexandria NSW 2015

24 September 2010

Unrequited Love

Three tin cups buried in my mate's backyard whiled away the hours most Sunday arvos. I knew her name was "Golf" but at seventeen she meant little to me. Even then she was attractive and always seemed to be in most pleasant surroundings. Mates mum "for goodness sake go and meet her" so with some trepidation we ventured to a nearby 3 hole "proper" golf course.

Upon our introduction I found her to be even more attractive than I expected. To me she had an exciting mystique, an intriguing yet strange inner beauty. Despite my awkward ineptitude she showed me kindly tolerance and encouragement. Graduating to a twelve hole course was very special – on the first tee with all those early Saturday morning eyes critically watching – no greater pressure has golf to offer. Start with 3 sevens and a good score is assured.

By now I was deeply in love. No time for boyish romances with Footy or Cricket - just total devotion. What fun we had together. We tested our union on world class courses to little known nine holers sometimes in extreme heat, gale force winds, pouring rain and even black ice. She taught me many things. Concentration, self control, the importance of camaraderie, character building and she comforted me in far away places including Hawaii, Morocco and her real home St Andrews. She always satisfied me and our love affair endured for nigh on forty years.

But then she changed. Perhaps I had become too self assured and complacent. Firstly problems arose in little insignificant ways and went almost unnoticed – an occasional unexpected three putt, a bladed bunker shot or a duffed chip. Sadly it did not stop there and my low handicap started to reflect the change. The harder I tried the worse our relationship became. I was often hurt and angry, shots of pleasure become few and she embarrassed me in the eyes of my friends. I cannot believe it, I cannot accept it.....does she no longer love me after all? How cruel she can be?

What to do? Cast her aside and say "no more, enough's enough." Fall on my putter? Perhaps seek advice of a psychologist? Do old champions also feel the pain of a long lost love?

Alas I am only human and my memory strong. I still see her there more tempting and beautiful than ever. My grief matters not – I cannot let her go. The pain is strong yet I'll love her till I die.

P.S. My wife thinks a psychologist is the way to go!

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