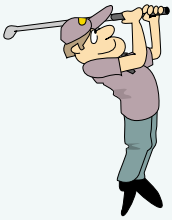


Golf and Life

By Ken Dafoe



It's April, weeping, grab a tissue. I know you would rather be decked out in some Sears tapestry collection with a tiny horse emblazoned over your left tit, and an advice card from Mr. Blackwell suggesting that you never appear in public like that again, but the appeal of golf is in the connotations it evokes. Golf is to life as Lewinsky is to Clinton. A plaything, used and enjoyed, but not worthy of serious consideration. Surely not a focal point in the development of worthwhile character traits. Surely not a comparison to life, but a substitute – Aspartame, where sugar would do the trick nicely.

Don't get me wrong. Everyone has a right to decide what constitutes his own leisure – but to presume that golf suddenly sets you in a league above bottle cap collecting doesn't hold water. Golf is athletics for the unathletic. To find golf silly at best, or a waste of good park space at worst, seems to offend both seasoned players and hopeless whackers alike – those who need to portray golf not only as a game designed by the Gods, but by extension all those who play it as well. Golfers seem to feel that they have the benevolence, charity, good will towards men, iron-clad secret handshake of brotherhood, that would make any ring wearing Freemason turn his head in envy.

And then there is the issue of bias. Of golfers who believe in the almighty character trait of the line drive. But be honest – using sports savvy to judge the character of a person is about as relevant as saying I only like red cars because they run faster. Such a decision-making principle says more about the decider than the decidee because here, golf is the yellow-brick road of the over-achiever.

The geezer market for lost youth. True, other sports have their own entropy problems. Old-timer hockey leagues are in deep do-do because many of their players are stepping onto the ice, only to be carried off the ice a few minutes later on stretchers – apparent victims of their own folly. Golf appears as a blessed alternative to the sunset generation.

Golf allows them to swing a stick and send balls flying off proudly in all directions, all in search of a little hole buried beneath the manicured green, with the ultimate satisfaction being the coveted hole-in-one. Excuse the crude metaphor here, but as I said before, connotation is the draw of golf, admittedly or not. Even the names emblazoned on the balls sound more like advertisements for condoms or Greek god attire. And because of this, the downfall of golf will not come from the best-before expiry date of its players, but from an expensive little blue pill that allows club swinging to be enjoyed as an indoor sport once again. Give it three years. The only gray head you'll see on the fairway will belong to a pigeon.



Ken Dafoe

To those golfers, and you know who you are, that I have offended, so be it. Sorry to, if not burst your bubble, at least throw a dart at it. But don't take me too seriously. In the movie theatre, during a packed run of *Titanic*, I was the guy who clapped out loud and yelled, "Thank God," when the iceberg finally made its appearance. We all find our own religions somewhere. TUG

Ken Dafoe is IT Manager with Polycon Industries in Guelph, Ontario. He has 20 years experience with IBM midrange platforms. His specialty is Desktop Integration, and this encompasses all aspects of PC-AS/400 integration, including Intra/Internet solutions. For the past 6 years, Ken has presented at conferences on topics as diverse as Microsoft Office and the AS/400, and positioning technology with the Internet. He is a freelance contributor to numerous technical publications including *The Experts Journal*, *TUG Magazine*, *News/400*, and has performed commentaries for CBC public radio in Canada.

Ken and his wife Laura have six kids. They also have 10 pets. In his spare time he dreams about quiet, and a night of uninterrupted sleep. Once he got both at a conference in Long Beach – but felt too guilty to enjoy them. Ken can be reached at 519.763.6042 x2176 or by e-mail: kdafoe@polycon.on.ca.



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(letters to the editor, etc.)

From: **David Copping**
<copphouse@daemarinc.com>
Sent: March 13, 2001 9:41PM
To: dragland@tug.on.ca
Subject: **March 2001 issue.**

Your last issue was clearly the MOST informative issue I have ever encountered!

Some background... We are a small company under 75 users, we haven't any "Computer or IS Dept." but from the first time I plugged a 5250 emulator board into a pc and connected to an AS/400 that was over 2000 miles away, I was hooked on the stability of the IBM product. Obviously a lot has changed over the years, however during the past 3 years I was amazed at how little investigation was put into looking at the Linux operating system.

After asking our AS/400 software provider about it and receiving the "Don't know... We'll get back to you," type of answers and finding the same vague statements everywhere, I proceeded to compile a system based on the I486 with 32Mb of ram platform. This was back in 1998. At the time all we wanted was simple network browser capabilities and e-mail conductivity and the Linux box provided all of this PLUS!!!, at a fraction of the cost, (both in learning and hardware).

The Linux article in your recent issue, authored by Thibault Dambrine, was EXCELLENT. His investigation of the Pros/Cons was brief but informative. (Although the references to Glenn Bookers efforts to "kick start" an AS/400 port was limited to one paragraph, and should have shown the effort by some to push the AS/400 forward.)



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