

A Dangerous Convergence: Golf Thoughts and Driving Within Our Thirteen Miles per Hour Speed Limit

Driving out of the Williamsburg National Golf Club (WNGC) after a round of golf, the mind still has to focus on driving one's car the short distance it takes to return to Patriots Colony. The trip is so short (maybe seven minutes in all) and the road so rural, there is little time to let your mind wander about the round just completed until you're past the front gate back home. Once inside Patriots Colony crawling along at the posted speed limit of 13 mph, there is plenty of time to think about your recent round. Why did I play so poorly today? How on earth did I hit my second shot fat and into the drink on the seventh hole of the Yorktown Course? Perhaps, I need to change putters, my grip, ball position, increase my stretching exercises, etcetera – are all thoughts, which came to mind.

The great amateur golfer Bobby Jones who founded the Augusta National Golf Club and its Masters Tournament once defined the golfer as “the dogged victim of inexorable fate.” Last month, as the latest victim of such a pestilential pastime [as the British author P.G. Wodehouse would put it], I began to ponder the root causes of my fate that day while creeping along in the final few minutes of the drive. Before long I was making a left off the main drag in front of the Cannon Building and driving down what I call “Main Street.” [Actually, all the streets in Patriots Colony are named “Patriots Colony Drive” apparently supporting the wisdom of simplicity.] I must have been picking up speed by the time I reached the intersection at the end of the covered parking area. I took a left at what I call “Pinecrest Avenue” leading to Villa Courtyard 6 where Elaine and I reside. I had barely turned into Pinecrest when a dismounted Virginia State Trooper pulled me over for speeding!

How could this be? What on earth is a State Trooper doing here within the confines of Patriots Colony? Does he even have jurisdiction here? How fast was I going? As I slowed the car down preparing to stop, I figured maybe I was doing 18 mph but no more. A full second after my optic nerve received the message that a State Trooper was pulling me over, my cerebral cortex became engaged to ensure my eyes were not playing tricks. I was sure of it. There was a man wearing a wide brim hat and what looked like the light gray shirt and trousers of our state's law enforcement officials. Moreover, his right arm was fully stretched out pointing to a spot along the road giving me the inaudible message of “PULLL OVER HERE, NOW!” I was not about to argue. Now a full three seconds into this incident after the glare on the windshield receded, my eyes could see him more clearly. It was no State Trooper at all! It was a resident wearing a wide brim straw hat. His right arm was outstretched toward the ground only because his small white dog was tugging on his arm at the end of a taut leash. What a relief! I smiled sheepishly at the would-be-arresting officer, err, I mean resident and proceeded down Pinecrest Avenue well

under 13 mph.

Lessons Learned: Don't mix thinking about golf and driving at or under 13 mph at Patriots Colony. At WNGC, if you can't swing your driver well over 13mph, all is not lost. Consider joining the company of those cheerful Patriots Colony golfers who play for the sheer fun of it every Monday and Thursday.

--- Ted Cummings