Sketch of a West Pointer – Don Edmonds

Don was born in North Vancouver and lived there until he moved to Kitsilano in 1975. He has resided in Vancouver ever since, except for brief stints in New Westminster and Richmond, and several extended work assignments in Ottawa. Don's first job was delivering newspapers, like many in our age group. It was the thing to do. Following a stint as a sub-manager for the Province newspaper he landed a summer job in the Province Circulation office after high school graduation. When he reported for duty, the first person he met was Joe Davison, the Assistant Supervisor. Joe is also a member of West Point and has been a friend of Don's for over 50 years. Don's summer employment turned out to be a good part-time job through college and university periods and also while he was sorting out what he really wanted to do with his life. During the long Pacific Press strike in 1978 he landed a temporary entry job with the federal government, dealing with Old Age Security and Canada Pension. Even though he didn't have any government job security at the time, he decided there was a career path there and quit Pacific Press after only a few weeks. Don remained with the federal government for 30 years, dealing with both OAS and CPP in various roles. His headquarters were in the Lower Mainland, but he also did a fair amount of travel in BC and to Ottawa. Following retirement in 2008 he did some part-time work until 2011, representing the government's position at administrative appeal hearings.

Other than several attempts to wield a golf weapon on a range, pitch and putt or executive course, Don began golf in 1978. Originally it was just pitch and putt, after both he and his regular tennis partner got severe tennis elbow and thought golf was a worthy temporary diversion. They really liked the game and after trying to get their spouses interested in pitch and putt, they decided they were ready for the big time! The two of them ventured out to full-size University Golf Club. Don figures they both shot about 130. Don vividly remembers one November day when the rain was coming down as only it can in Vancouver. He and his buddy played in the pouring rain, laughing their heads off and the ball not going anywhere. Turned out it wasn't so funny when they both got bad chest colds that lasted for weeks. Still keen on the game, he asked the starter at University, George Milne, about joining University Men's Club. George knew Don from his Pacific Press days and agreed to sponsor him. Don stayed at UMC for just a couple years after the new regime took over.

Don stopped golf almost entirely from the late 1980's until retirement. The reasons included back issues and his assignments in Ottawa where golf was limited. However, he commenced Golf 2.0 in the spring of 2008, figuring he might play a couple times a month at an executive course. He had never seen or hit a hybrid, so he asked a friend for suggestions. This conversation resulted in the purchase of a full set of Adams clubs. One Friday morning, he was paired with some nice senior fellas at Langara, who turned out to be members of West Point. They encouraged him to apply so he got a BCGA membership, played enough rounds to get a cap and applied. Fortunately, he was ahead of a waiting-list curve and became part of a regular foursome in 2009. Don volunteered to coordinate our Away games at Squamish for several years and the Joe Dwyer competition.

When he became keen on golf in 1978 and played Pitch and Putt courses, a good friend recommended that he read a Nicklaus book, which he proceeded to devour. Standing on the first tee of a truly short hole at Queen Elizabeth Pitch and Putt, Don visualized the shot and landing as Nicklaus would. He landed it almost exactly as he had pictured it and the ball went in the hole! Obviously, Don was ecstatic and figured that this must be a pretty easy game. He proceeded to shank, skull, thin, whatever, over the next

17 holes. He has been within half an inch of a hole-in-one since and hit the pin twice on one shot but that was it. He did manage to eagle the tenth hole at McCleery though in the 1980's, driver and 7 wood. This was a week before they closed the course for the renos, but the hole is basically the same as now, though the tee-box was a bit closer to the left fence.

Don admires professional golfers Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods for their focus.

In 2007, Don remarried. Marilyn had never touched a club until after Don joined WPGC but since has joined a women's Nine and Dine group. They have made many friends through golf and travel, enjoying retirement adventures with a lot of them connected to golf. A favourite vacation was to New Zealand, followed by time visiting Newfoundland. They enjoy going to Maui and Palm Springs as well as San Francisco and northern Washington for quick get-aways.

Don's favourite course was the now-closed Makena North course on Maui for the great views and one spectacular long downhill hole. Another favourite is Pukalani on Maui. It's not fancy, some years it is in poor shape, but Don and his wife just feel local Aloha there. It was also the first course he played on Maui about ten years ago, with Brian Ciccozzi kindly being his guide and playing partner on several courses. Yes, Brian, Don still wishes he had bought that rented driver!

Material submitted by Don to Lorne
May 2020