

Cardinal Athlete of the Month



Evan Maxwell
Senior

Selected as First-Team All District. Invited to play in River Battle Bowl all-star game at UNI Dome on 11/26.

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Master Gardener Training

Since 1979, more than 15,000 people have received Master Gardener Training from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. The hybrid training program provides research-based information about tree planting, plant diseases, growing vegetables, houseplants, integrated pest management, composting, pollinator gardening, and more. Madison County and Warren County Extension Offices have partnered to offer a winter Master Gardener training course.

Class runs February 20 to April 28, 2023. Pre-registration is required; and will be open January 9 to

27. Registration can be completed via QR code or by stopping at ISU's Madison County Extension office (117 N. John Wayne Dr., Winterset). For more information contact Lisa at 515-462-1001 or lisachen@iastate.edu.

More information about the Master Gardener program is available on the webpage <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/madison/master-gardener-program>.



Tales From the Golf Course

by Todd Weber

My dad played a lot of golf. When he and my mom retired and moved to Arkansas, he could play year 'round without any problem. But as avid a player as he was, he did have his limits. He told me once that 48 degrees was his temperature threshold. Any lower than that and he'd just stay home and do something else.

I was a little surprised by that. Forty-eight doesn't sound all that cold—until one day when I was playing 18 holes around that temp, in the wind. It wasn't miserable, but it was close, and I couldn't finish fast enough. My dad—as usual—was right. So I adopted 48 as my own minimum golf temperature.

I like to play at least once in each month of the year. In Iowa, that isn't easy. Especially if you're not going to play when it's below 48. This past February, for instance, golf didn't happen for me. It may have gotten above 48 at some point—I don't remember—but there was still too much snow on the ground. Quinn and I did get in a January round, so I had played in 9 of 10 months in 2022. November looked like it was slipping away, but I made it 10 of 11 when I played a solo round last week. Then I played with Kyle and Quinn last Friday. Before we left, we decided that we would play for 'the trophy.'

Kyle and I came up with the trophy idea when we played a cold weather round a few years ago. I told him the story about my dad—and it was below 50 the day we were playing—so we decided we were playing in his honor. Not only that, but it would also be a competition, and we

could do it every year. Multiple times a year, even, on no specific schedule. Whenever the temperature was in the neighborhood of 48. It could be like a boxing title belt. The winner could defend the trophy at any time, against anyone—keeping it in the family. Quinn wasn't there that first day, but he would certainly play for the trophy at some point. The rules were loose—but those are the best kind of rules.

I won that day against Kyle. That's unusual, so I felt like I needed an actual physical trophy to mark the occasion and to display. So I made one. I'm not too crafty or artistic, so the best I could do was to slap together two small pieces of wood leftover from some project, paint it, drill a hole in the top, put a tee in it, and glue a ball to the tee. Voila. My trophy.

Well, it didn't stay mine for long. The next time we played, Kyle won it, and he has defended his title ever since. Sometimes against just me, and other times it was all three of us.

Given whatever time of the year we're playing, we tend to give ourselves and each other various liberties on the course. March golf? Plenty of foot wedges and re-putts. July? Not so much. Even with so much on the line last Friday, we were all in generous moods early on. It took a while to get warmed up, and it was November golf, after all. Kyle and I took our breakfast mulligans on the first hole, which is standard for any time of year. We all hit balls in the water—or on top of the ice—on the second hole, but we decided everybody got a do-over. Or two.

While looking for our

bad shots at the edge of the pond, we struck the motherlode. Because of the low water level, a ton of balls were exposed. We spent about 10 minutes fishing some of them out. That was satisfying, but we were now on pace to play one of the slowest rounds in history. It was the middle of the afternoon, but the sun was already low. We'd have to pick up the pace.

I thought I would have an advantage because the boys were a little distracted, spending a lot of time checking their phones, following a couple of sports bets they had going. (I had forgotten my phone, or I probably would have been doing the same thing.) But I couldn't take advantage. Kyle was hot. After the first 5 or 6 holes, he was around par. Quinn and I weren't. I was playing decent, and Quinn wasn't playing too badly, either, but after a couple of bad shots, he had vowed to give up the game. He does that just about every time we play, though, so I didn't take him seriously.

Given Kyle's big lead, everybody relaxed a bit. I've mentioned previously in this column that matches involving all of us can get tense, but that wasn't happening. It seemed like Kyle was destined to win again, so instead

of thinking too much about the next shot, we spent time between swings reciting lines from movies and TV shows, searching for and finding more golf balls, and making jokes at each other's expense.

With the sun and the temperature getting lower, we pushed the pace so we could get 18 holes in. That's when the golf started to turn. Kyle ran into trouble—a lot of it. I had a few transgressions, too. Quinn, despite his retirement declaration (or, perhaps, because of it) was playing well. We all usually know where we stand to par as we're going

along, but everyone seemed to have lost track this time around. We finished just as darkness was starting to shroud the course. For the last few holes, we had violated my dad's rule. The temperature had dropped to 46 and the wind was whipping, so we didn't do any scorecard math until we got back to the car. Quinn did the honors and said, "You aren't going to believe this. It's a three-way tie."

I suppose my dad would have approved—although he might have been annoyed that I missed a short bogey putt on the final hole.



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