



THE THONG ADJUSTER



Vol. 2 No. 12



December 2007

The unofficial online magazine of the Iron Thong Golf Gang



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The 12 Days of a Golf Christmas

A parody by Steve VanWert

On the first day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
A Harvey Pennick CD.

On the second day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the third day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD

On the fourth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD

On the fifth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the sixth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,

Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the seventh day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the eighth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Eight pars on par 4s,
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the ninth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Nine naked drink girls,
Eight pars on par 4s,
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the tenth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me

Ten caddies laughing,
Nine naked drink girls,
Eight pars on par 4s,
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the eleventh day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Eleven golf carts racing,
Ten caddies laughing,
Nine naked drink girls,
Eight pars on par 4s,
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.

On the twelfth day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me
Twelve pre-paid greens fees,
Eleven golf carts racing,
Ten caddies laughing,
Nine naked drink girls,
Eight pars on par 4s,
Seven chipping lessons,
Six graphite hybrids,
Five mulligans,
Four lofted wedges,
Three logo golf balls,
Two center shaft putters
And a Harvey Pennick CD.



The Thong Adjuster is published online monthly for The Iron Thong Golf Group members.

Go to <http://www.IronThongGolf.com> to view the current issue.

Articles, including for sale items, can be submitted at any time. Send them to the editor at stevevanwert@hughes.net.

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Top 10 common golf injuries

What are the most common injuries suffered by golfers? Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Larry Foster is the author of "Dr. Divot's Guide to Golf Injuries," and with his help, here are the conditions most likely to affect golfers.

1. Back pain

The golf swing (not to mention the hunched-over putting stance many of us get into) puts great stress on the golfer's back, so it's no surprise back pain is the most common problem for golfers. Back pain in golfers might be mechanical or disc-related, arthritis-related, or caused by a stress fracture, among other possible causes.

2. Golfer's elbow

Tennis elbow is an inflammation, soreness, or pain on the outside of the upper arm near the elbow. Golfer's elbow is an inflammation, soreness or pain on the inside of the upper arm near the elbow. Tennis elbow is actually more common among golfers than golfer's elbow.

3. Shoulder pain

Shoulder pain in a golfer might be caused by any of several different underlying conditions, including: rotator cuff tendinitis, or a tear or impingement in the rotator cuff; A-C joint arthritis; or instability in the joint.

4. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a repetitive stress disorder that occurs in the nerves of the hands. At its worst, carpal tunnel is extremely painful and sometimes incapacitating.

5. DeQuervain's Tendinitis

DeQuervain's causes pain in the wrist near the base of the thumb, and is caused by an inflammation in the tendons that control the thumb.

6. Knee pain

Knee pain in golfers can be caused by any of numerous underlying issues, among them: a torn meniscus; knee arthritis (osteoarthritis), or kneecap pain (chondromalacia).

7. Trigger finger

Trigger finger can cause a finger or fingers to lock up. The condition is caused when the flexor tendon sheath, through which the finger tendons run, is inhibited.

8. Wrist Impaction Syndrome

Impaction syndromes of the wrist are caused when the bones of the wrist bang into one another due to excess or repetitive movements.

9. ECU Tendon Subluxation

ECU Tendon Subluxation is caused when the sheath holding the wrist tendon begins sliding in and out of its groove.

10. Fracture of Hamate bone

The hamate bone is a small bone on the pinky side of the wrist. The hamate has a small prominence called the hook, which juts into the palm. The way most golfers grip their clubs puts the butt-end of the club right up against the hook of the hamate during the swing.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about Golf

FAQ: Can spike marks in line of putt be repaired?

From Brent Kelley

Is it permissible under the rules to repair spike marks or other similar problems with the green in the line of a putt?

No, you may not repair spike marks or tap down any other sprigs of grass on the green that you fear might affect your putt's roll. You are allowed to repair ballmarks (and should always do so).

It's a common sight with recreational players: A player lines up his or her putt, then walks that line between the ball and the hole using their putter to tamp down blades of grass or other imperfections in the green.

But the fact is, that's illegal under the rules (see Rule 16). As the USGA writes, "One of the fundamental principles imbued in the Rules of Golf is that you play the course as you find it." If there's a huge sprig of grass between your ball and the cup, well, those are the breaks.

It is encouraged that all players, after finishing a hole, tamp down any stray blades of grass that they might encounter as they leave the green.

Under the rules, players who agree to repair spike marks are to be disqualified from any competition for agreeing to waive the rules (Rule 1-3).

FAQ: What qualifies as casual water?

Casual water is any temporary water on the course which is not in a water hazard and that is visible before or after a player takes his stance.

You do not get relief simply because your ball comes to rest on ground that is very wet or spongy. An accumulation of water must be visible above ground.

Dew and frost are not casual water; snow and natural ice (other than frost) can be casual water or loose impediments, at the player's option. Ice cubes or other manufactured ice is considered an obstruction.

See Rule 25 (Abnormal Ground Conditions) for more on casual water.



The six best Christmas golf gifts, and the six worst

By roemverda

It's a fact...golfers hate Christmas. All right, maybe "hate" is a bit too strong a word, but I can guarantee that every golfer in the world will look at his neatly-wrapped presents beneath the Christmas tree this year with some trepidation.

Because for some reason, our loved ones (bless their little cotton socks) think Christmas is the time of year when they can choose the perfect golf present. And they can't.

Believe it not, golfers don't want exploding novelty golf balls. We prefer real ones. And cheap battery-powered score counters are a waste of time. We like using a pencil.

So to make it easy for you to buy the golfer in your family a Christmas gift they'll definitely appreciate - here's a list of the 6 best and 6 worst Christmas golf gifts for men.

The six best golf gifts

1. Golf hypnosis CDs. Every professional golfer has a 'mind guru' who helps strengthen their mental game. Every amateur golfer cannot afford one - but we can have access to all the tricks of the golf mind coach trade through the golf hypnosis CDs at www.golfhypnotherapy.com. 'Become a Deadly Short Putter' and 'Beat First Tee Nerves' give exactly the kind of mind coaching we need.

2. An electronic caddie. What's the next best thing to a real caddie? An electronic caddie. And they come no better than the SkyCaddie SG5 Pro Series. It's a battery-powered GPS rangefinder that tells golfers exactly how far they need to hit the ball. There are 16,000 courses worldwide that can be downloaded to the SG5, which can be bought from www.skycaddiegps.co.uk

3. A round of golf on a great course. Most golfers love playing new courses. Some of the country's best courses are online, so give your golfer a great day out.





Bah humbug, Merry Christmas -- for the golfer

continued from page 4

4. A square driver. Square-shaped golf clubs are all the rage this year, from the RAM Qube3 to the Callaway

FT-i used by Ernie Els. It would make your loved one's year to find one poking out from the tinsel.

5. Balls. Proper ones. Whether it's a sleeve of three Titleist ProV1s (the best ball on the planet) or a dozen cheapies, for some strange reason those tiny round things will bring a smile every time.

6. A new putter. Golfers are obsessed with putting and putters. We treat them like works of art - collecting them at will. The new MacGregor's Face-off version is super hot, along with the Mizuno Bettinardi range.

The six worst golf gifts

1. Novelty golf balls. Some explode, some wobble, some dissolve into powder. And some actually bring a smile to our faces - for a millisecond. Don't do it. Not even as a stocking-filler. Save your money and get us some proper balls.

2. Hip flasks. Are we drunks? No, we can live for four hours without a drop of the hard stuff for heaven's sake. We only need water or energy drinks on the course. And we enjoy a pint afterwards. There is no way, ever, that a quart of whisky or rum will improve our game.

3. Scottish stuff. OK, Scotland is the home of golf, but that's as much as we care to know. A tartan towel, tartan bag, tartan tees, tartan socks, is not what you want if you live in London! And the towels are never big enough.

4. Jumpers. With embroidered pictures of golfers. You might as well buy us a sweater with 'Loser' written on it. Golf has become seriously stylish in recent years and anything that makes us look like a throwback from the 50s is out.

5. Electronic scoring devices. At the golf course we get given a pencil and a scorecard. It's efficiency supreme. So we don't need to fiddle about with a wrist-scorer, or a pocket-scorer, or any other weird and wonderful gadget to help us add up.

6. Ball cleaners. In our world, a towel is enough. Anything else just takes up vital bag or pocket space.

A Luke Samuel Goodyear Mystery by Steve VanWert**MURDER ON THE 13TH GREEN****Chapter 18 -- The big finish**

The gallery reformed around the 10th tee. Hartly and Luke were taking a few practice swings, loosening up again. Luke had stopped at Horace's office while in the clubhouse, just to check with Devlin, and was able to gleefully identify the yellow pads as Putts' gambling logs, the same ones he had discovered at the caddie shack just days before. While he had them in his hand, he looked down the list until he found the name he'd forgotten earlier. He was sorry to see it.

But they had the logs and Luke finally thought the plan might have a shred of a chance to succeed, as long as Hartly came through on his end.

Luke had honors, due to winning number nine with a par. He teed up a new ball in the middle of the tee box and, taking his stance, prepared to swing. However, thanks to the milling around of the ever-growing crowd of thrill-seekers, he had to back off and wait for them to settle down. Horace walked around the tee box motioning for everyone to stand still and shut up until he realized that he was the only one moving. Luke bowed to him, and hit the ball quickly, before some asshole sneezed or something. He hit it okay, about 255 down the middle of the fairway.

Number 10 is that big dogleg par five with a ridge guarding the turn that Hartly drove way left of in Bruce's match. It was playing 569 yards this day. Luke played it safe and kept the ball right of the dogleg. But Hartly cut the corner once again, smashing his driver into the left rough with a mighty swat. The ball, low and hooking, hit about even with Luke's, and

ran another 55 yards. It stopped 310 yards away. The crowd applauded, and the back nine began in earnest.

Obviously, Luke was out. He turned to Nick, who handed him a three-wood without hesitation. "You didn't bring any little blue buckets with you this nine, did you, Nick?" Luke asked, mostly in jest.

"No, just spit on the ball if it's dirty," Nick said.

Luke hit a pretty good, for him, three-wood. It sailed high, but drew just a tad, landing in the fairway 60-some yards short of the green. This time Hartly wasn't taking any chances with the hardpan lie. He hit a three iron right of the maintenance barn and hooked it back toward the green. It stopped rolling about 25 yards short.

Luke tried to hit a half-wedge, but caught it a little more solid than planned, knocking the Slaz to the back of the green, 20 feet past the pin. Hartly, who was supposed to be losing graciously, chipped to within four feet. Luke two-putted for par, but it wasn't good enough, as Hartly rolled his little putt in for birdie. All of a sudden, he was one-up again.

"Hartly," Luke said, under his breath, "you're forgetting again."

"Shit," Hartly replied, banging his three-iron on the ground, "everyone wants to tell me how to fuckin' play."

Personally, Luke wasn't buoyed by his attitude.

Hartly stomped to the par three, second tee, and quickly punched a low runner to the front-to-back sloping green that hit in front,

bounced once and ran to the back. "Stay on the green, you little white son-of-a-whore," yelled Hartly. It did.

Number 11 is the 219 yard par three where Hartly hit through the green and into the hedges bordering number 12 tee box in his match with Bruce. He was relieved not to do it again. Luke wasn't. As a matter of fact, the pressure finally got to him somewhat, because he rolled his right hand over the top and duck-hooked his last Slaz into the water left. "Shit," he said, succinctly. Luke dropped a new Staff where the Slaz had gone diving. He was about 160 from the green and hit a smooth five-iron to the middle for his third shot.

After Hartly ran his putt strongly up the hill to just barely a foot short, Luke conceded the hole. Two holes on the back. Two down.

They played the 12th and 13th quickly, both of them trying to ignore the fact that Bruce died on number 13. Hartly was still two-up.

The next five holes never came into play during the last match. Number 14 is a 427 yard, par four, with water on both sides of a narrow fairway. It's a real tricky driving hole, because the fairway rolls right toward the bigger lake running the entire length of the hole.

Hartly was up first and overpowered a drive directly into the right water. According to the Griffon Lake ground rules, he had to take a stroke and distance penalty, so he hit again from the tee, this time running the ball down the center about 310. It was an awesome drive, but he lay three. Luke convinced himself that he needed to hit left, so he did. Right into the left lake.

"Stupid, stupid, stupid!" Luke yelled at himself, shaking his head in disbelief. "You stupid shit," he repeated.

Luke began to tee up again when Horace came over. "According to the local ground rules," he said, "that lake isn't considered a

stroke-and-distance penalty. It's a lateral hazard. You can drop by the water on a direct line from where it entered, if you wish. Of course, you can hit from here, too."

Luke chose to drop by the water, big surprise.

"Goddamn cheats," mumbled Hartly, his hands on his hips. "It's hell trying to win when it's two-against one, you fuckers."

Luke stood next to him. "You're not supposed to win, remember?"

"Yea, I remember," he said, and headed toward his ball.

Luke dropped another Wilson Staff and hit a three-wood as straight as he could, about 250 yards up the fairway. Hartly took an eight-iron from 117 yards away. Normally, an eight would be plenty of club for him, but he must have hit it heavy, because it stopped just short of the green. The pin was all the way in the back of the green, still 50 feet away. Luke spun a nice half wedge to six feet. After Hartly ran his chip to within five feet or so, Luke stabbed his in and won the hole with a bogey. The match was back to one-up for Hartly.

After hitting a solid three-iron to 20 feet on the par three number 15, Luke made another attempt to pick out the good guys from the bad guys in the gallery. He spotted Cash again, but once again didn't see Cassy. Skipper gave him a smile and a wave, and Ellen blew him a kiss. Luke spied Chief Jack on the road side of the par three green. But he still hadn't identified Roland Adena.

Hartly hit an easy five-iron to about the same spot. They both two-putted for pars. Luke was still one down going to 16.

Number 16 is a another long par four, this time heading up the other side of the lake that bordered number 14. Once again, there's water on both sides, as the hole slightly doglegs right to a raised, smallish green. Luke hit his controlled fade down the left side, and watched it roll over to the middle. Hartly,

having both the nerve and the power, smashed a draw that started well over the water on the right, then broke sharply back to the short grass and ran nearly to the left side of the fairway, 290 yards. It was a great drive.

"Great drive," Luke acknowledged.

"I know," replied a reticent Hartly.

Since he had a pretty good lie, Luke gave his five-wood a shot. The ball landed softly, but just short. Hartly, feeling his Wheaties, smashed a seven-iron from 146 that actually landed over the green by a foot, then spun back like some invisible leprechaun was back there hitting it himself. It ran down the slight hill and stopped only 10 feet above the hole. Hartly can hit more than his share of great shots, but on this day, he wasn't supposed to.

Luke ran the chip up to 10 feet short, chiling it slightly. He gave Hartly a stricken look as the big red head walked by him to his ball. "Watch this," Hartly said.

He stood over the putt for a minute, then hit it. Actually, the club went off in his hand. "Hit a truck," Hartly yelled, as the ball skittered past the hole and finally stopped on Luke's marker. He was still 10 feet away.

Horace strolled nonchalantly over to determine who was out.

"You got the right idea, Hartly," he said, "but can you try to be a little more subtle from now on?" Horace pointed to Luke. "You're out."

After Hartly marked, and then moved his marker, Luke made things difficult for Hartly's choking act by missing the putt on the right. He tapped in for bogey.

"Thanks for the help, ass-wipe," Hartly said as he re-marked and placed his ball. He then rolled his par putt up the hill, leaving it just on the front lip. "Is that better?" he grimaced.

Luke nodded. Hartly was still one-up, though, with only two holes to play.

Number 17 at Griffon Lakes is one of Luke's favorite holes in all the world. It's a short, 358-yard par four that takes a 90-

degree left turn at only 180 yards out. There's a huge lake on the left side that runs all the way to the green. The fairway is elevated far above the right rough, so if you push your tee shot to the right, you have a blind shot to the green. There's out-of-bounds dead ahead, just past the fairway. This is a shot-maker's hole. You can't just rear back and hit it.

Luke played safe, hitting a five-wood to 185 yards down the middle of the fairway, just far enough to have a flat lie for his second. Hartly tried to muscle his drive over the water and through to the fairway on the other side. Bruce could hit that same drive and roll almost to the green. Hartly was probably capable of doing the same thing, but he pulled this one too far left. It landed on a little island in the center of the lake, almost decapitating one of the rat-like nutria who live there. It bounced once, and rolled into the water.

Strangely enough, he didn't yell or scream, just handed his driver to a ducking Putts O'Shea and began walking down to the lake. He dropped a new ball, hit it short of the green and applauded as Luke laid the best five-iron he'd hit in ages to only five feet away. Even though he wasn't yet on the green, Hartly motioned for Luke to putt if he was ready. Trying to make sure he didn't force Hartly to come up with another imaginative miss, Luke rolled the birdie in the center. After 17 up-and-down holes, the match was all even again.

The crowd was buzzing as the twosome stood on number 18 tee.

"You know," Hartly commented, "if you let me work on your take-away, I could add 20 yards to your drives. As good as your short iron play is, you ought to be really giving me a run for my money."

Luke didn't know exactly what to say, he was so surprised at Hartly's kind offer. Finally, he just said, "Thanks."

Number 18 is really a disappointing finishing hole because it's just not challenging

enough. It's a 437 yard, par four, that runs lazily up a slight hill to a large, round green. The only way it can cause any real trouble is if a player hits a drive right into a patch of pampas grass.

Luke hit first, and stroked a driver about 285 down the left side of the fairway. He almost attempted to lengthen his back swing a little, to create more torque like Hartly had suggested, but decided that the last hole of a tied club championship match was no place to experiment. Hartly ran his ball right past Luke's by about 25 yards. Luke was feeling strong, though, and smashed a dandy of a six-iron to the center of the green. The guy hitting first, for a change, had the advantage here.

But Hartly calmly stroked a nine-iron to about four feet outside Luke's. As they trundled up the final fairway, there was a lot of movement in the crowd, everyone trying to get to the green first so they could witness the concluding putts. Nick and Luke stood quietly as Hartly ran his putt right at the hole, with it stopping a foot short.

As Hartly walked by, Luke started to say, "That's good..." but Hartly interrupted him before he could finish. "No," Hartly said, firmly. "I'll mark it."

"Okay," Luke said, and lined up his putt.

Hartly walked over and seemed to be studying Luke's putt, too. "You owe me," he whispered, so quietly that Luke could barely hear him.

Luke nodded. "Okay, I owe you."

"Good. Now pay up. I want you to miss this putt. It's important to me. I want to do this thing my way. Do you understand me?" Hartly looked Luke in the eye. Hartly can be intimidating, but Luke wasn't 100 percent sure he meant to follow through on his promise. If Luke made the putt, the match was over and Luke was club champion. Of course, he and Horace knew that wasn't really true. Still, it was a heady feeling. If he missed it, Hartly

had a chance to tie. Luke looked back at him, trying to decide what to do.

Finally, he nodded. "You got it, big boy," Luke answered quietly, "the stage is all yours."

There is nothing harder than missing a putt on purpose, while trying to make it look like you didn't want to. Luke started once, and stopped. Then, taking a deep breath, stabbed at the ball and rolled it at least two feet short of the cup. And still out. Luke heard the crowd groan. Hartly knocked the putt back to him. "That's good," he said.

Luke blinked in surprise. All Hartly had to do was make a one-footer to tie and send the match to sudden death. What a phrase. Hartly walked to the ball and placed his putter behind it. He began his back stroke, but then stopped and stood up straight. He looked over at the gallery crowding the green. Luke quietly moved over to stand next to Nick, who was standing next to his bag.

"Cash Cassenberg," Hartly yelled. "Where are you?"

There was a slight rustling to Luke's right, as Cash pushed his way through the crowd. Luke looked around and noted that Jack McGarvey was standing a few feet behind Cash and Putts O'Shea was standing across from Luke on the far side of the green.

"What do you want?" asked Cash, holding his canvas bag in front of him.

Hartly smiled. "What happens if I miss this putt, you arrogant bastard?" he said, evenly, with an emphasis on "miss."

Cash glanced down at the ball, only a foot away from the hole. "Don't do this to me," Cash warned. "Don't be stupid. Your future depends on this match, too."

"Nah," the big guy answered, "your future, not mine."

Cash was getting angry, a tide of blood filling the little veins on his face. His head was getting so red next to his green outfit that he looked like a Christmas tree ornament.

Hartly picked up his putter again. Everyone froze. Cash's eyes jumped from Hartly to the ball, and back again. Hartly swung the club, slowly, then stopped again. "This one's for you, Cash," he said, "and for Bruce." His putter passed right over the top of the ball, hesitated and smacked it hard back down the green, toward the fairway. Suddenly, all Luke's and the Irregulars' plans didn't mean shit. Suddenly, all hell broke loose.

"You fool!" screamed Cash, reaching into his bag and pulling out the biggest .44 Luke had ever seen. The barrel looked like a cannon. Hartly began slowly walking toward Cash. "You better shoot me, you son-of-a-bitch, because if I reach you, I'm tearing you apart," warned Hartly.

Cash did, the gunshot exploding, the bullet tearing into Hartly's right shoulder. The gallery screamed, people dove for the ground. Luke saw poor old Mrs. Bruneau grab her 30-year-old son, Butchie, and throw both of them headfirst into the nearest sand trap. Even as big as Hartly was, the impact of the .44 knocked him to his knees. Luke glanced left and finally got to see Roland Adena, as he and two of his goons ended up standing alone in the frog hair, the people around them having evaporated.

The two gorillas took a step each in Cash's direction, but didn't get far. They were tackled by a varied assortment of Summitview, Funiak and Millstone police, and thrown to the ground.

Luke looked back at Cash, who was preparing to squeeze off another round. Just as he pulled the trigger, Jack McGarvey gave him a shoulder block that would have made any NFL linebacker proud. The gun went off as Cash fell, sprawling. The bullet sailed over Hartly's shoulder and hit Roland Adena squarely between the eyes. The gangster stood there for a second with a shocked expression on his mug, and folded to the

ground like he had hinges instead of bones.

"It's all your goddamn fault!" a voice screamed from across the green.

Luke swiveled back front to see Putts O'Shea reaching into Hartly's bag and pulling out a goddamn machete! It looked like it was three feet long.

"You fucked this deal up for everybody, you bastard!" Putts yelled again, and began sprinting across the green at Luke, swinging the giant knife around his head. He let out a scream that could curdle iron. Luke reached around behind him and grabbed a club at random out of his bag, just in time to duck Putts' wild first charge. As Putts stumbled by, driven by the weight of the machete, Luke took a full swing with the golf club, hitting Putts squarely on the outside of his right knee. Luke could feel the bone splinter, and could hear the cartilage rip, and he could see the jagged edges of shattered bone tear out of the inside of Putts' leg, ripping through the canvas of his trousers.

Putts screamed again, this time in pain, and crumpled in a heap.

Nick reached down, grabbed the machete and handed it to one of Chief McGarvey's men, who had materialized behind him. He ran over to where his brother was lying in the frog hair next to the 18th green and knelt, making the sign of the cross, tears starting to escape from his eyes.

Luke looked around, the adrenaline cascading through him. He saw Cash, face down, with Jack McGarvey slapping handcuffs on him. He saw Roland Adena, dead, lying on his side, a thin stream of blood oozing out of the single bullet hole in the center of his forehead, a pool of crimson staining the grass beneath what was left of the back of his head, his brother, Nick, moaning, "Rollie, Rollie, why did it have to end like this? Momma told you it would end like this."

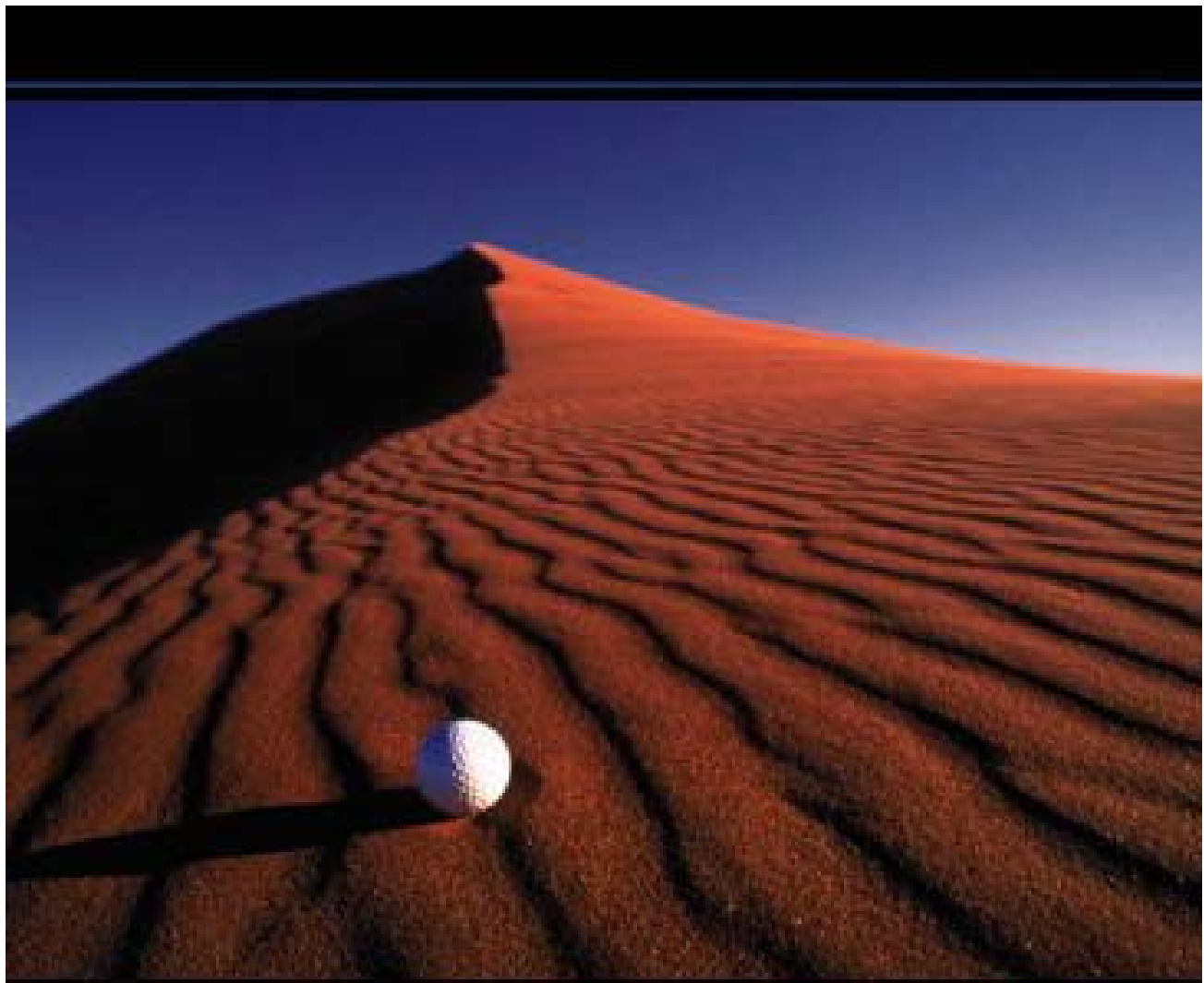
He saw the two Adena henchmen on their

backs, hands on their heads, while the local police held their own guns on them. He saw Putts, grasping what was left of his knee, howling in anguish. He saw Hartly, kneeling, with Doc Cook attending him.

Luke looked down at the club in his hand.

He looked up at the clear, gorgeous afternoon sky. "Look at this, Bruce," he yelled, holding the club over his head, "this is the best damn one-iron I ever hit in my life!"

Next month, Chapter 19, The truth comes out.



FUTILITY

YOU'LL ALWAYS MISS 100% OF THE SHOTS YOU DON'T TAKE,
AND, STATISTICALLY SPEAKING, 99% OF THE SHOTS YOU DO.

Iron Thong member profile



John Knotts

Average Handicap: I think it was 24 when I was seriously playing in 2002...reestablishing it now through ITG.

Nickname: John

Average length of drive: 250 yards

What's in my bag: Taylor Made 320TI Stiff Shaft, Jack Nicholas Strong Three, Cleveland 18 Degree Driving Iron, 3-PW Cleveland TA-7s (+1/2), 51 and 56 Degree Cleveland Wedges, Never Compromise Center Shaft Putter and Nike Karma Balls

My history of playing golf: I started playing in the early 90s when my parents took up the sport. First set was a steel Wilson starter set that hit like two by fours. I played very little over the years. Then in 2000, I started getting serious in the game while stationed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. My dad bought new clubs and gave me his graphite clubs, which were much nicer than what I had (Hurricanes). Went the whole year with only my driving iron and the irons—no woods. The next year, I bought new TA-7s and dropped my score from the high 100s to the 90s. I have yet to hit in the 80s...lowest game was 90 at Biche, France. I'm changing out some clubs...just went from a medium to stiff flex in my driver and I'm looking at Taylor Made R-7 Irons. Since I moved here in late 2002, I haven't played much and most of it has been in 4-person scrambles or with my parents when they visit as they still like to play. I just wish I started playing the game when I was a kid!

Greatest moment playing golf: Every game there is at least one shot that keeps me coming back, but nothing for the record books.

What I like about Iron Thong Golf: Allows me to play a new course every weekend, Serious about the game—honest scoring, Fun group, and Most are about the same skill as me.

The best and worst parts of my game: Well, I really used to have a good mid and short game because I never used woods or a driver when I started. My short game has suffered some as my long game has finally gotten better, so now I'm just ok at everything. My biggest thing is I do well for most of the course, but it's always just a few holes that simply fall apart and bring my score down. I play best when I walk because it gives me time to think about my shot before I walk up to it and I'm not as rushed when shooting.