

2008 GRIFFITH HARRIS EARLY-BIRD BACK-NINE CHAMPIONSHIP

May 24, 2008	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	FINAL
Ray - Phil	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	even
Pete - Matt	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	even

The group was notified by a late Friday e-mail of a 6:37 starting time for Saturday on the famed Griffith Harris South course, the challenging but infrequently played track sometimes known as the "front nine". Phil, Matt and Pete showed their enthusiasm as they arrived early and proceeded to the practice range to get loose, while Ray casually strolled to the first tee at 6:30, underneath his teal hat and puffing on his usual cigar, plenty of time to spare. The ceremonial ball toss put Phil with Ray against Pete and Matt. The first hole is a challenging dogleg left, with a fairway trap strategically placed at the elbow of the corner, forcing all players to stay to the right. Phil and Ray approached short of the green while Pete hit a beautiful hybrid pin high, about 15 feet to the left. When neither Phil nor Ray was able to get up and down, Pete's par won the hole and put his team one up. Ray's tee shot on the second hole left him 150 yards to the pin, while Matt's tee shot rolled down the backside of the hill, stopping 100 yards away. But Ray's seven iron settled within a foot of the cup (*) for a gimme birdie, and even though Matt hit his new wedge to about six feet, he was not able to make the tying birdie putt so the match was even. All the second shots on the third hole were down the fairway except for Matt, who was in the tree line on the right side, from where he tried to split the trees only to bounce a punch shot sideways off the wood and nearly take out two players. Ray shook off the near-miss accident and calmly put his approach shot six feet from the cup, then stroked his putt into the bottom of the hole for his second straight birdie and put his team one up. Pete was in the trees on the next hole, but hit his hybrid up the hill and onto the green, two putting for par and the win, evening the match. The par three was halved so the match remained even. On the long par four sixth hole, both Matt and Pete were very far right on their tee shots, while Phil split the fairway. Phil then rolled off the back side of the green with his approach, but chipped back to about a foot to par and win the hole. Only Pete found the green on the par three seventh hole, and par was enough to win the hole and square the match again. The eighth hole was interesting with tee shots down the middle, but Pete hit his second shot into the trees on the right while Matt hooked a "safe" hybrid out of bounds on the left, and Ray put his second shot in the fairway toward the pond. Matt and Pete both hit their next shots toward the pond, and found the green with approach shots....Matt made his putt, but the OB penalty made his score 6, and Pete lipped out a downhill par putt. Ray needed two putts for par to win the hole, and even though his first putt went four feet past the cup he made the comeback, giving his team a one hole lead with one to go. Ray split the middle on 18, while Matt drove to within 80 yards of the green and Pete was on the right side. Matt's gap wedge came up short, and his chip shot was close but he had to settle for par, and Pete could also not chip in for the birdie that would have won the hole. The team was left to watch Ray, who only needed a two-putt for the victory, but he charged his first putt well past the pin and could not salvage par with the second putt, so Pete and Matt won the hole and halved the match. Interesting start to the holiday weekend.

	Ray	Pete	Phil	Matt
04/20/08	0	1	0	1
04/26/08	0	1	0	1
04/27/08	0	0	0	0
05/04/08	0	0	0	0
05/10/08	1	0	0	1
05/24/08	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	2	0	3