

2011 GRIFFITH HARRIS EARLY-BIRD BACK-NINE CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, April 22, was a bit chilly for this time of year, but considered a bonus day as we were able to play on a weekday due to the holiday weekend observances. Phil and Matt would take on Pete and Ray in a medal match, and when Matt arrived early enough to snag the coveted first time on the front nine, it was decided to move the match to the first hole and change the venue slightly. We ceded the first time to a group of fast players, given that their usual boorish playing partner was absent and the remaining people were all gentlemen. Reasonable tee shots by all four were followed by unsatisfactory second shots as nobody hit the green and everyone needed to chip to try to save par. The problem was that the pin was red, on the downhill side and sloping away, so good chip shots went past the cup and rolled. Matt mishit his chip, but perhaps that was the saving grace as he was able to hole his par putt from off the green while the others could not make their longer putts. Ray was at the top of the hill on the second hole, the best of the group, and had a birdie opportunity after hitting the green in regulation. But Phil saved the day for his team with a nice chip and ten foot putt for four to equal Ray's two putt par and keep his team one shot up. Both Pete and Ray were long down the middle on the third hole, both were just more than a wedge away after two while both Phil and Matt struggled. Pete had the better chance for birdie but left his putt short, but both their fives were a stroke better than Phil and the match was even. The fourth hole was halved with fives, nobody able to save par. Ray had a very long birdie putt that he scuffed and left well short, and Phil had a five footer for par that he left short after choosing to putt before his partner holed out for the bogey. Oh, well. Matt and Ray were left of the green on the par three fifth, Phil short and Pete in the bunker.....so bogeys tied the hole and kept the match even. Phil, Pete and Ray were all long and in the fairway on the difficult sixth hole but it was too far for anyone to get to the green so the short games took over. Pete nailed a long par putt for his four, was not matched and his team took a one stroke lead. Nobody found the green on the short seventh hole, Pete in the bunker, Phil to the right and Matt and Ray to the left. All the chips were good and Pete made the first par with a save from the sand, making Ray's academic. When neither Phil nor Matt could save their pars, they lost another stroke and were two down after seven. Pete was out of the eighth hole, but Ray was up to the task when he hit a delicate downhill chip from behind the hole to save par. Phil's chip shot actually hit Matt's ball that was already on the green so both players putted from about the same spot, fortunate for them since Phil showed the way and Matt followed with a par-saving putt. But it only kept the match at a two shot difference, and Phil and Matt decided to invoke one of the new rules when they conceded the medal play match and chose to start a new (half the points) match for the duration. It looked good for them for a while after Matt's bomb of a tee shot stopped about sixty yards from the green and Phil almost holed a low punch chip under the trees for a gimme four. But Ray would not succumb, hitting his own good approach shot to fifteen feet and draining the birdie putt for another victory. The end result of the day was three points for both Ray and Pete...well done.

April 22, 2011	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	FINAL
total	5	9	14	19	23	27	30	35		35
Pete - Ray	5	4	5	5	4	4	3	5	x	35
Matt - Phil	4	4	6	5	4	5	4	5	x	37
total	4	8	14	19	23	28	32	37		37
April 22, 2011	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	FINAL
total									3	3
Pete - Ray	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	3	3
Matt - Phil	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	4	4
total									4	4