

SHOOTER CUP II: JUDGMENT DAY

March 12-13, 2011



VS.



March 12, 2011 – Longleaf Golf & Country Club

March 13, 2011 – Whispering Woods Golf Club

Godfather II. George W. Bush. Left-overs. Alien Ant Farm's version of "Smooth Criminal". Sometimes it is tough to pull off a second edition of something that was so great. Such was the daunting task facing the organizers of The Shooter Cup II. In what was the most popular international golfing event of 2010 (there was a Ryder Cup in Wales that year? Doesn't ring a bell ...), the 1st Annual Shooter McGavin Golf Classic could go down as the event that started it all. The first step for The Shooter Cup II was to find participants and the interest levels were overwhelming. The following 20 were given the opportunity to leave their imprint on the golf landscape ...



Team USA



Team Europe

THE PLAYERS:



Mike "Tippy Toes" Shay



Nick "The Hammer" Edwards



Jason "Boom Boom" Petty



Dave "Scoreboard" Hedrick



"Silky Smooth" Scott Butner



Grey "Off Balance" Davis



Bryan "Humpy" Humphrey



Alan "Ultrasound" Vandiford
(congrats, by the way ...)



Jeff "Horrible Pants" Casterline



Jamie "My driver is bigger than me" Casterline



Brian "Yellow" Ledbetter
(sorry for the random Pearl Jam reference ...)



Dan "Asia-Pacific" Ferrell



Andy "Star Wars" Stallworth



Mike "Upright" Cleaver



"The Nattily Clad" Brandon Smith



Jason "Malt Vinegar" Casterline



Chris "Get Legs!" Boyd



Notice the ball still in view.
Boyd was the only one to go
with a wedge off the tee ...



Steve "Sweet Swingin'" Habicht



Will "Lefty" Stewart



Rob "Reigning Jacket Winner" Schabinger

DAY 1 – Modified Points System:

Day 1 scoring mirrored last year with the following points awarded for each score:

Eagle: 9 (we increased this from 7 last year ... might as well make it 9 million ...)

Birdie: 5

Par: 3

Bogey: 1

Double Bogey: 0

Triple Bogey (highest score allowed): -1

Each player would play the entire round and at the end, add up his “points” based on the above scoring system. Each member of the team would then add their “points” together to get a cumulative team score. The team with the highest score would be the Day 1 winner.

Day 1 was held at the picturesque Longleaf Golf & Country Club in Southern Pines, NC.

This round began with the ceremonial tee shot from the previous year’s Golden Jacket winner, Rob Schabinger. His tee shot would ring in the beginning of the event and is a tradition as old as time. It would also serve as one of the last times you would get to see a guy who is 6’5” wearing a sport coat designed for someone with arms that are 10 inches shorter.



In an effort to make sure that nobody used the term “classy” during the weekend, it was started off right ... with the ol’ exploding golf ball trick. Gets ‘em every time. An added benefit was that every other person had to hit through a puddle of white powder on the 1st tee box for the rest of the day. Upon hearing this report, Charlie Sheen was visibly upset that he missed the event.



The Shooter Cup is all about ... WINNING!

The first group out was Nick Edwards & Mike Shay for the Americans and Jason Petty & Dave Hedrick for the Euros. This foursome was set because 2 months ago, Mike Shay made a HUGE deal about finishing early so he could watch NC State play in the ACC Tournament. Ouch. Mikey could have shot 150 and still not been as off as that request was.

The second group out was Scott Butner & Alan Vandiford for the Americans and Grey Davis & Bryan “Humpy” Humphrey for the Euros. The Davis/Humphrey pairing was expected to contribute some solid scoring – especially since they were a combined 45 years older than their playing partners.

The third group to tee off was Jeff Casterline & Brian Ledbetter for the Americans and Brandon Smith & Andy Stallworth for the Euros. Brandon really stepped up the competition when he came out in full traditional (goofy) Euro attire.



FYI ... this is not a picture of Brandon. But this conveys the commitment to the look that he had.

The penultimate grouping was Jason Casterline & Jamie Casterline for the Americans (and, yes, there were tons of Casterlines in this event. It was filthy with them) and Mike Cleaver & Dan Ferrell for the Euros. Dan was participating this year after spending last year in “observer” status, representing Asia-Pacific. Upon being asked about his experience last year, Dan replied, “it was like Chinese food. It was great but I was hungry for more as soon as I finished.”

The final group to tee off (probably 45 minutes after the exploding ball shot) was Will Stewart & Steve Habicht for the Americans and Rob Schabinger & Chris Boyd for the Euros. Chris has been referred to as the “Jackie Robinson” of the The Shooter Cup, but that was deemed too offensive. Jackie Robinson was actually good at his sport.

After the round, the scores stood as follows:

<u>USA</u>	Score	Points	<u>Europe</u>	Score	Points
Butner	99	10	Boyd	108	0
Jam. Casterline	92	20	Cleaver	100	10
Jas. Casterline	91	19	Davis	97	11
Je. Casterline	104	4	Ferrell	118	-11
Edwards	112	-3	Humphrey	99	11
Habicht	93	19	Hedrick	89	24
Ledbetter	104	4	Petty	91	23
Shay	99	11	Schabinger	102	6
Stewart	103	5	Smith	105	4
Vandiford	105	4	Stallworth	98	10
		93			88

And the Americans take the lead with a Day 1 victory!

There was a lot of discussion about the day's events; here they are in rapid fashion:

- Rob Schabinger looked like David Duval in the late 2000's – never has a champion fallen so far from one year to the next. It must have sucked to have been him.
- Mike Shay chipped in from approximately 40 yards for birdie on #18. Observers speculate that if the ball hadn't gone in, it would have raced by – not leaving a guaranteed par or bogey. Birdies were worth 5 points. Team USA won by 5 points.
- The Petty/Hedrick pairing got 47 points for the Euros (or 53% of their points). Since they were the first group to finish, the Euros had a 47-8 lead after one foursome. Their confidence and excitement was shattered as the rest of the team proceeded to lose the lead over the next 4 groups. To see the transformation in Dave: from the 18th green, waving his scorecard and professing the Euros winners to the suite at the Comfort Inn, in the corner, sobbing uncontrollably after hearing the final results. It was truly a tear-jerker. (Editor's note: all that stuff about crying may or may-not have happened ...)
- Will and Steve's cart started to die around the 15th hole. That's what you get when you buy American. (Boom, roasted!)



- During the round, Mike Shay called for a ruling. He was trying to get relief for a man-made hazard. The hazard? Freshly cut grass. This is why I usually avoid doing anything fun with lawyers.

DAY 1 – Evening:

The accommodations for The Shooter Cup II were the same as last year – the Comfort Inn in Pinehurst, NC. Once all the participants were assembled (and drinking heavily), the time had come to determine the handicapped matches for Day 2. The rules stated that whoever won Day 1 would nominate a player. The loser of Day 1 would pick their opponent and then nominate a player for the second match-up and so on. Here were the match-ups for Day 2 (with the shots being given by the favorite):

	USA		Europe
Match #1	Ledbetter (-1)	vs.	Smith
Match #2	Stewart	vs.	Hedrick (-14)
Match #3	Butner (-9)	vs.	Boyd
Match #4	Shay	vs.	Davis (-2)
Match #5	Edwards (-6)	vs.	Ferrell
Match #6	Jeff Casterline	vs.	Cleaver (-4)
Match #7	Vandiford	vs.	Petty (-14)
Match #8	Habicht (-6)	vs.	Humphrey
Match #9	Jason Casterline (-11)	vs.	Schabinger
Match #10	Jamie Casterline (-6)	vs.	Stallworth

While there weren't many fireworks during the nomination process, we did get some match-ups with some intensity. Shay requested a match-up with Davis (who barely respected the "call out" enough to look up from the poker table), Jeff Casterline called out Cleaver and finally Rob Schabinger completed the match-up of "Captain vs. Captain" by choosing to play against Jason Casterline.

Dinner this year was at Dugan's Pub – a charming little restaurant in the Village Shops area of Pinehurst. Getting 20 people seated in the same area is always difficult but we were able to cram everyone into 2 tables and get the drinks flowing. Our first casualty of the night was Brandon as he headed back to the hotel right after ordering his food and beer but before it arrived. Brandon had been channeling his inner-Euro all day – first by wearing the traditional garb and second by drinking scotch all day.

At dinner, there was one significant incident that left us with our quote of the weekend. One table wanted to play a practical joke on the other by pouring a shot of malt vinegar and trying to pass it off as Jagermeister (I know, where could this plan ever go wrong??). So someone poured the shot, passed it around and somehow it ended up in front of Jason Casterline. Upon seeing it and hearing something about "Jager", he grabs the shot glass and pounds the liquid. Almost as immediately he spits it out into his water glass and downs someone else's beer. When asked later how he could ever confuse the smell of malt vinegar for Jagermeister, Jason replied, ***"I could taste it as soon as it was in my mouth"***. That's what she said.

The night continued on for quite a while with Jeff Casterline passing out sitting up in the cab, Chris Boyd eating Brandon's dinner after Nick had the restaurant box it up for him, late night poker, people making malt vinegar jokes and general debauchery.

DAY 2 – Match Play:

There were a lot of rough looking golfers on Sunday morning (everyone blamed the hour of sleep lost to Daylight Savings Time – not too many blamed the alcohol) but the first tee time went off at 9:00 am.

Despite conditions that could be described either as “difficult” or “the course being somewhat crappy”, there was a lot of excitement during the matches. A good combination of blowouts and nail-biters lead us to uncharted territory for The Shooter Cup ... the chip-off.

Match #1: Ledbetter won the 18th hole to secure a half point in his match with Smith. (USA ½ - EURO ½)

Match #2: Stewart used a combination of good play and 14 shots to take down the Day 1 leader, Dave Hedrick 4 & 2. (USA 1 ½ - EURO ½)

Match #3: Despite a shaky back nine, Butner dispatched Boyd. Boyd was on fire on par 3's all weekend hitting his “magic hybrid” – it's magic because he hits it on holes that are 150 yards and holes that are 190 yards and it seems to work for both ... (USA 2 ½ - EURO ½)

Match #4: Grey Davis finished off Mike Shay who could not repeat his heroics from Day 1. Shay has been dubbed a Shooter Cup legend for that chip-in at #18 yesterday. (USA 2 ½ - EURO 1 ½)

Match #5: Dan Ferrell fought back from a huge hole early to rally back to defeat Edwards. (USA 2 ½ - EURO 2 ½)

Match # 6: Jeff Casterline beat the bejeezus out of Cleaver – even texting his brother on the 11th hole to tell him that the match was over. (USA 3 ½ - EURO 2 ½)

--- NOTE: The Americans needed only 5 points in the match play portion to halve the day and guarantee retaining The Cup for another year. They stood at 3 ½ with 4 matches to play. Someone cue whatever the European version of the *Rocky* theme is ... ---

Match #7: Jason Petty overcame a 14 shot handicap to finish off Vandiford. (USA 3 ½ - EURO 3 ½)

Match #8: Humphrey took down perennial Shooter Cup contender Steve Habicht in a hotly contested match. (USA 3 ½ - EURO 4 ½)

Match #9: Jamie Casterline (affectionately known as “Goose” – not because he looks like Anthony Edwards from *Top Gun* but because he shits all over golf courses) was able to finish off Stallworth 2 up. (USA 4 ½ - EURO 4 ½)

Match # 10: So it all came down to this. Captain Schabinger was prepared to concede defeat to the villain (Captain Casterline) but the inspired play of the Euro team left him in a position to give them the Day 2 victory. With a 1 hole lead heading into their 18th hole (happened to be #9, long story, not the greatest course set-up, not important ...), Casterline needed to win the hole to halve the match to guarantee winning the cup. After Schabinger plays a great tee shot (using the cart path to propel it into the fairway, just as it was designed to do), Casterline sprayed his drive right, up on the side of the hill, leaving him 180+ out. Since Schabinger was getting a stroke on this hole, Casterline felt the need to go for the green with his approach. This proved to be too tough of a shot as it ended up in what should have been water but instead was an area with pipes and straw and mud and rocks (again, not the greatest course ever ...). Schabinger was able to make a 5 (net 4) and win the match and secure the Day 2 victory for the Euros (the first Day anything victory for them in The Shooter Cup history).



You know, yesterday I saw two big fat bikers having sex in the woods off of #17 how am I supposed to **CHIP** with that going on?!

So it was down to the chip-off. The rules were simple: 3 players from each team, matched up in a best of 3 chip off – closest to the hole. The captains went first with Schabinger narrowly beating out Casterline for the lead. Jamie Casterline then defeated Petty as Petty confused the concept of a closest to the hole contest with a long drive contest resulting in a shot that ended 50+ feet away and went 3 times further than anyone else's shot. USA 1 – EURO 1. It all came down to this. Dave Hedrick (Euro) was up next and played a good shot to within 10 feet or so. Scott Butner (USA) took his time and wedged one just inside of Dave's giving the Americans their second consecutive Shooter Cup. Each member of the winning side got \$20 (American) and the Cup will again be prominently displayed at the team captain's house (unless Cary gets mad and makes Jason give it to someone else to display which is exactly what happened – the cup can now be found at Butner's house).

Individual Awards:

The individual awards this year began with the 4 closest to the pin holes throughout the weekend (2 each day). The winners (and recipients of \$20 each)

Brandon Smith, Steve Habicht, Rob Schabinger & Will Stewart

The main individual prize that was up for grabs was the prestigious Gold Jacket. This year's winner played a fabulous 2 days of golf in tough conditions and won the title by more than 5 shots over his closest competitor. In fact, it was such a runaway; people didn't even keep track of the rest of the field. This year's winner Dave Hedrick with a solid 89-91. According to Will Stewart, Dave called winning the gold jacket "his proudest accomplishment as an adult" and "the fulfillment of a lifelong dream" on the way home. Congrats to Dave on the win – you will have 19 people gunning for you next year!

Conclusion:

It was a great Shooter Cup II and Shooter Cup 33 1/3rd is already in the works for this summer/fall. If you are interested in participating just contact Rob Schabinger, Will Stewart or Jason Casterline for more details.