

We often wonder why things happen a certain way and how different life would be if that thing hadn't happened in the order they did. The main question being how a random encounter between a "nicely rounded gentlemen" and two recently befriended consultants at Mountain View golf club (located in the rolling hills of Mercer County New Jersey), resulted in the beginnings of the Yuengling Golf Society. We should offer thanks to the unknown starter that paired the three of us together that Sunday afternoon in June 2001. From memory it wasn't a particularly spectacular round of golf. I remember it was warm and sunny and that the "rounded" gentleman was named Eddie who just happened to have 36 perfectly chilled Yuengling lagers in his golf bag. Paul C and I helped Eddie lighten his load before continuing with the lager at Freddy's Tavern, finally rounding a splendid day off back at Eddie's for a taste of his now legendary hospitality.

At that time there was no thought of a golf society, just a commitment to get out again soon, play another round and drink some more beer. The three soon became five. Eddie, Paul C. (*The Cock* as he would become known) and David were joined by David's next door neighbor Clark and Clark's extraordinary colleague Tommie. Tommie was a strange little man with an 80's hairstyle, he possessed a deep confidence in his golf game, we should have guessed from those initial moments that Tommie would define much of what *The Tour* stands for and become a major influence. Tommie swiftly became *The Mullet*. With five members, and Lance as an aging replacement, a regular four-ball developed. We thought it would be a good idea to keep a record of scores and as a bit of fun, cheekily christened ourselves the *Yuengling Golf Society*.

The model was stunningly simple and is based on the age tested ingredients of sport, men behaving badly and alcohol. It is timeless and rarely becomes boring. We all think we have that mythical 78 in our bag (or whatever your dream score is), we all have those days when nothing is working and you question why even try playing this stupid game. Yet you will be back again next week.

The first major casualty of the Yuengling era happened when the legs on Eddie's golf cart finally gave way. The man at Dicks said it was something stress related and that they were never really designed to carry that much beer. Seeing Eddie's broken cart lying by the side of the fairway was like losing an old friend – but again we later realized this happened for a reason. A familiar nod and wink often preceded overly generous gimme's on the 9th at Mercer Oaks Old, allowing the lucky player a quick dash to the car park to refill. A tradition was born.

As the golf season drew to a close, the notion of an Annual General Meeting for the golfers seemed like a good way of getting together for more of the same, only without golf clubs. There were only five at the first AGM; Eddie, Lance, Mullet, Clark and myself. *The Cock* was on one of his frequent absences in Florida. Officials were elected, a Rule Book created and new members recruited - Another tradition.

In 2002 we thought it would be good fun to take our newly formed Society on the road, Williamsburg to be precise, and so began the *Yuengling Masters* that would soon be shaped around the Stouts' weekend. Our desire to travel to play golf has resulted in Yuengling events in Portugal and Scotland, some say Ireland is next. The *Yuengling Open* was first played in 2002, I think we recruited about 20 or so players, most of them related to Clark by birth or employment. *The Open* is now the pinnacle of the YGS calendar of events, and probably was from the first event at Cream Ridge.

Before we knew it, more players made the annual pledge to uphold the rules, play 10 rounds and drink the beer. Paul O' (our *el-Presidente* from 2006-2009), Peter S. (*Pee-tah* - sorted out the Treasury), Marty, E-Lo, Gerritt and Chris, to name but a few... We have had a few casualties as well, mostly due to geography - but where this will go, nobody quite knows for sure.

And so endeth Chapter 1 of the YGS, a brief history indeed, but the message needs little explaining.

The Commissioner