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## Par for the Course

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## Par for the Course ~ Micah Waters

Since the dawn of time, man has been throwing rocks at things for fun. That all changed some time in the 15th century when the Scottish had a world-changing idea. They discovered that by hitting a ball with a bent stick, fun could be had. This fun came to be known as golf. Golf is like a box of chocolates, a person never knows what he or she is going to receive. Although the game of golf has changed over time, the reasons for playing have remained: to relax, to compete, and to avoid expiration.

Now, do not get me wrong, golf can be a frustrating sport, perhaps more aggravating than any. There are infamous professional golfers who have broken clubs after a bad shot, such as Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy (2 Examples). At the same time, however, one falls into a state of tranquility and solitude. Alone, beholding nature's wonders, surrounded by greenery no photo shop can imitate blue skies that make a person gaze involuntarily, it's an uplifting feeling. One's appreciation for life, and everything we're fortunate to have, will be clearly visible in his or her face. After a few holes, nothing is better than relaxing under a tree, drinking a cold pop, and taking in the view.

Unlike America's three main sports, golf is not a team sport. It's one person scrabbling against every other person. That's why golf is so competitive. Not only do players compete against other people but with themselves. A person always has to hit a better shot than before. It becomes addicting. It sure gets the juices flowing. Playing for something, whether it's money, bragging rights, or a giant golden trophy, will cause someone's ability to go into either fight or flight (mode?). That means a person will either rise to the occasion and play like he or she has no weaknesses, or they will plunge into a hole and struggle. Golf reveals true character and competitive nature.

Everyone gets old and feeble. Golf is to middle-aged fat men as middle-aged fat men is to drinking beer. When there's one, there's the other. Playing golf can act as a medicine, though. I see seventy to eighty-year-olds playing golf every week. It helps them stay active while not hurting their bodies. I see old farts walking the course. I don't even do that! It may be an odd way of saying it, but it's true: Golf helps people avoid expiration. Golf is like a refrigerator, and a golfer is like milk. A person can't avoid "expiration," but golf can prolong it, much like milk will get old and chunky unless it's in the fridge.

This all means that golf is a big part of life. "Golf is the most fun you can have without taking your clothes off," says Tiger Woods in Men's Golf Magazine. Golf gives a person the fulfillment he or she needs in his or her life. It is the binding that brings us together. So, play golf. Play golf to relax, play golf to compete, and just play golf for fun, but most of all, play golf to not turn in to chunky milk.

