

FEBRUARY 26, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Inverrary, Florida)

POOL REPORT #3

With the President at the Jackie Gleason Inverrary Golf Classic

The President played in a fivesome made up of Jackie Gleason, Bob Hope, Jack Nicklaus and Elliott Kahn. Kahn contributed \$10,000 for the privilege of playing with the President. He is President of Todd Leasing Company of Mamaroneck, N.Y., a firm which leases medical equipment, general equipment, and "about everything else". The President was wearing gray and red plaid slacks, a white short-sleeved shirt, worn open at the neck with an Inverrary Club insignia, a white golf cap with the same insignia, and black patent tipped golf shoes. He played wearing dark glasses, steel rimmed. Jackie Gleason was wearing a red golf sweater with red patent leather golf shoes and blue slacks. Hope was in kind of airplane printed pants and in one of the same Inverrary Tournament golf shirts, with red, white and blue shoes.

Before teeing off at the first hole he spent about 10 minutes at the practice area mainly practicing iron shots. The club pro, Gene Stout, was giving him advice, and accompanied him the whole way. Then he used a right-handed grip even though he's left-handed. He was very relaxed, the crowd didn't seem to bother him at all. The crowd was estimated from 500 to 3,000, depending on the hole. His first drive was about 220 yards. It made further than Nicklaus' first drive, however, Nicklaus teed off further back.

He was playing with Walter Hagen Boyd, his caddy. His clubs were in a white bag with the Presidential seal, and they had blue mittens. Among the people walking alongside the first hole was one Bebe Rebozo -- who is the director of this outfit -- just for the first hole. He was keeping a very low profile.

On the first hole he took a six. All along the way the spectators were shouting at him. He gave no autographs but lots of pictures. Lots of encouragement from the spectators. The third shot put him on the edge of the trap. It was a 4-par, and he shot a chip-shot to get out of the trap. He missed one by a few inches, but he got a lot of support from the gallery. There were six golfcarts, Ford walked the whole distance except between the 8th and 9th fairway, where they were beginning to worry about time.

I'm not going to go shot by shot -- I will say that his long shots were good, but he falls apart when he gets close to the green. Hope said at one point, "Please don't applaud while the President is shooting. Or else he will raise my taxes". Then when his ball went in the trap someone shouted "Don't feel bad Jerry, we all have our days". At one point Ford came up behind Helen Thomas and me and said "Well you have to admit that with this President you get some exercise".

(MORE)

Then we said "Well, how are you doing?" He kind of shrugged and groaned a little, and then some reporter -- me -- asked him, "How's about the things that brew in the Congress?" and he said, "I'm going to be better to fight".

The ninth hole was his best -- I think the hole was 400 yards long. He had a long putt -- it was at a bad angle. It was a long iron shot onto the green. He had a five yard shot and missed it by three inches. The spectators sort of groaned and then he tapped it in. I think it was a 4-par and he parred it and his score was 55 for nine holes. After shooting par on the ninth hole, he turned to photographers and said, "I did that just for you".

There is a discrepancy in the President's score: PGA gives him 56 on the first nine. The Tournament gives him 52. (I had said 55 earlier, but apparently missed one penalty on 8th hole).

The President's handicap is 18.

--- Bonnie Angelo

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