

The Burglar's Cup

Chris Counter

On Boxing Day 1985, a Golf Skins' competition being broadcast live on television, was being watched in Riverstone by a group of 20 year old lads. Mal (Jnr) Reed, Chris Wells, Gary Case, Gary Godbehere, Jim Whitehead, Paul Miller and Jeff Fauchon, who had all attended Riverstone High School together and lived in the town.

The group often spent Saturday afternoons at the Reed house, 18 Grace Avenue, sharing a carton of twist tops, playing cards and listening to the races, on which phantom bets were placed using matchsticks.

Following one of these Saturday sessions Gary Case, whose folks had moved to Queensland, stayed on for a while at Margaret and Mal (Snr) Reed's house. It was to be a month before the bonding session with the Reed family was over and he finally moved on. He did not move far however, only to Vicki and Mal (Jnr) Reed's house at Schofields. He stayed for a while until he felt that they missed him so much back at Margaret and Mal's, he was obliged to return! And so it went on.

Following the Boxing Day broadcast, Chris Wells and Mal (Jnr) Reed had the idea that the group should play their own Golf Skins Tournament at Rouse Hill Public Golf Course on the first Saturday after Christmas that year and every year thereafter. The Tournament would be known as "The Burglar's Cup". Twenty two years later The Burglar's Cup is still being played - these days at the inaptly named Marsden Park Golf Academy.

The original Burglar's Cup was purchased. It was a small trophy with a golfer on the top and a base surrounded by small shields on which the winning names were engraved. After a few years Mal (Jnr) Reed obtained a shield under dubious circumstances (he had won it at a company golf day and not returned it). Engravings from the previous cup were transferred to the new shield. The original cup is still presented each year for the winner of the closest to the pin on the 4th hole. For the 20th Anniversary game, a new trophy was procured. Previously presented at the Royal Melbourne Show in 1931 for the Best Dog or Bitch in Show, the magnificent cup was mounted on a new base with the engravings from the previous shield.

The Burglar's Cup is a Skins game. Early games were played with each player paying \$2.50 for each hole. The money was pooled and paid to the winning team who were then responsible to pay for the ensuing celebrations. The format is a two man Ambrose competition.

The players in the inaugural 1985 game were: Paul Miller, Gary Case, Athol Underwood, Chris Wells, Jim Whitehead, Mal (Jnr) Reed and Jeff Fauchon.

In the early years, a draw for two member teams took place at the Riverstone Bowling Club on the night before the game. A few beers and a game of pool finished off the evening nicely. In later years, the draw took place on the morning of the game during what has become loosely known as "Breakfast with the Stars". The night before the game becoming known as "A Quiet Night Prior to the Game."

For some years breakfast was held at the Wells residence, 51 Elizabeth Street, Riverstone. The venue then moved to the Whitehead home at 19 George Street, Riverstone. For the last ten years the

breakfast has been at 21 Railway Terrace, Schofields, the home of Mal (Jnr) and Vicki Reed. Following breakfast, the golf gear and drinks are laden into trailers and driven out to the golf course.

An official welcome is made at the course to new players with a designated person previously nominated providing the liquid refreshment for the official toast.

In 1985 there was no post-game food. From 1986 on it became traditional to hold a post game BBQ. That year and for the next eleven or twelve, it was held at 51 Elizabeth Street, Riverstone. Then it moved to 19 George Street, Riverstone. One year it was held at the Riverstone Guide Hall complete with donkey rides for the kids and a blow up jumping castle. Like the breakfast, for the past ten years the BBQ and Presentation have been held at 21 Railway Terrace, Schofields.

Costs for the day included such things as green fees, beer, (it was compulsory to have at least one can every two holes), golf balls, meat, salad, munchies, wine and soft drink. Costs in 1986 were \$27.00 per player, in 1996 they had risen to \$60.00 per player.

In recent years there has been no money collected apart from green fees. Alcohol is now non-compulsory on a BYO basis. Vicki and Mal (Jnr) Reed generously host and fund the breakfast and the after game BBQ. Chris Wells, Mal (Jnr) Reed, Jim Whitehead and Gary Case usually organise the day.

Tradition has it that the “closest to the pin” and “longest drive” markers are always made from cardboard taken from a beer carton.

Apart from winners, listed players over the years include:- Adam Cott, Andrew Counter, Jeff Fauchon, Matt Gilbert, Hazza, Gary Hedger, Jim Hunter, Karl Johnson, Mark Melchoir, Graham White, Mini Me, Nathan Wilkins and Aaron Williams.

Previous winners are as follows:-

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| 1985 M Reed Jnr. and G Case/A Underwood and C Wells. | 1986 G Godbehere and C Wells. |
| 1987 M Reed Snr. and C Wells. | 1988 I Saunders and C Wells. |
| 1989 J Milakovic and M Jarick. | 1990 V Outten and J Milakovic. |
| 1991 M Reed Snr. and M Cobcroft. | 1992 M Reed Snr. and I Jarick. |
| 1993 M Reed Snr. and J Milakovic /M Reed Jnr. and G Case. | 1994 G Case and M Jarick. |
| 1995 S Reed and C Wells. | 1996 M Reed Jnr. and D Nichol. |
| 1997 J Milakovic and I Jarick. | 1998 M Reed Jnr. and J Milakovic. |
| 1999 J Whitehead and I Jarick. | 2000 G Hill and J Whitehead. |
| 2001 C Counter and M Reed Snr./J Milakovic and M Reed Jnr. | 2002 P Miller and M Reed Jnr. |
| 2003 T Counter and C Wells. | 2004 P Miller and A Lawrence. |
| 2005 C Wells and M Counter. | 2006 M Fox and T Norman. |

HOLE DEDICATIONS in memory of departed player friends

The 4th - chosen due to his “closest to the pin” win and dedicated in fond memory of Mark Melchoir.

The 8th - chosen due to his comment at the Marsden Park Golf Academy, “Gee I hit that well, pity it went in the water” and dedicated in fond memory of Victor Outten.

The 13th - chosen due to his “Eagle” on the 1st at Rouse Hill and dedicated in fond memory of Michael Jarick.

The Burglars Cup is about mateship and family. The golf, though important, is secondary.

Most of us do not see each other for twelve months, so the day gives us a chance to catch up on the preceding twelve months in each others lives. We reminisce over the Burglars Cup family members and players who have passed on and the contributions they made in days gone by. Family have been part of the Cup since its inception and is important to all who take part. It is an opportunity for the older players to instil their sporting values on the younger, newer players. It is also an opportunity to meet after the game with new partners, wives and children. We have always encouraged player's children to participate as they become ready and this will hopefully ensure the longevity of the social golf day started in 1985 by the group of ex Riverstone High School students.

Friendship is the core, a fantastic day for all with the quality of the golf always coming second to the laughter and fun.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">LOCAL RULES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A ball shall be out of bounds when played beyond the fences bounding the course.2. A ball lying on any green other than that of the hole being played, must be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole without penalty.3. A ball in ditch on No. 9 Fairway from tee shot only may be lifted and dropped behind the ditch without penalty. Otherwise this ditch is to be treated as a hazard.4. Mud adhering to a ball on a putting green may be removed without penalty.5. If a tee box, fixed seat, water pipe or tap interferes with a player's stroke, the ball may be lifted and dropped clear of the obstruction, but not nearer the hole, without penalty.6. Through the green a ball lying in animal scrapes, or wheel tracks, may be lifted and dropped, not nearer the hole, without penalty.7. Preferred lies on all Fairways. |  <p style="text-align: right;">Rouse Hill Public Golf Course WINDSOR ROAD ROUSE HILL Phone: 629-1101 for bookings</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">CONDITIONS OF PLAY</p> <p>The Rules of Golf and the local Rules govern all play.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No one should stand close to, or directly behind the ball, move or talk when a player is making a stroke.2. No player should play from the tee until the players in front are out of range, nor play to the putting green till the players in front have holed out and moved away.3. Players looking for a lost ball should call the following players through, and should not continue their play until these players are out of range.4. Turf cut or displaced by a player should be at once replaced and pressed down with the foot.5. High heeled and ripple soled shoes are not allowed on the course. | <p style="text-align: center;">SOCIAL GOLF CLUBS WELCOME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Players are requested to familiarise themselves with the Rules and observe the etiquette of the game, in order to preserve harmony on the Course.</i>● <i>Each player must have a set of clubs and a bag.</i>● <i>Slow players losing distance kindly ask the following players to go through.</i>● <i>Non-players and children are not allowed on the Course.</i> |