

Larry Sullivan's

SPORT SIDE

The Way To Enjoy Peak Weekend

Touching All The Bases: Those in the know, more than likely fourth-generation mountain men ready to unload one of their finest batches of home-made bubbling brew but perhaps a few well-educated folk whose job it is to be versed on such high-altitude matters, released information early last week that this past Friday through Sunday would be the season's ideal time to catch fall's panoramic color show produced, directed and, more importantly, featured in by North Carolina's picturesque mountains.

With that in mind, I was fortunate 'though the wife prefers another word entirely 'to be included among a Mooresville group 15-members strong that ventured right into the thick of the leave-changing scene Saturday and Sunday, the two days that fell right in the middle of those four picked as the best time to watch.

To be honest, the reason behind the trip was golf, 45 holes of it, to be exact, within a 48-hour span. In between our two complete 18-hole rounds, we sandwiched a nine-hole captains choice affair, which was more or less used to make sure everybody in the group was familiar with everybody else.

The setting for our outing was none other than Mt. Mitchell Golf Club, a public course situated right at the base of the famous mountain for which it is named. None of us were even sure if the multitude of breath-taking scenes we personally witnessed under clear made-to-order blue skies came courtesy of the state's tallest hill, but we were deeply thankful regardless of the mountain's response.

The leaves lived up to their pre-trip billing. They seemed to brighten their pictures right before our eyes, sprinkling the appealing hillside with shades of yellows, oranges, a few reds, some browns, and even some greens that stubbornly held their ground before fading away until spring.

And speaking of those greens, it was the ones located on flat ground, or so we thought, that managed, from time to time at least, to steal our attentions away from nature's color slide presentation. "Slippery When Wet" signs would have been more than appropriate for most of the greens, as speed upon them was of utmost importance. I really don't know whether they were bent grass or what, but I called them speed greens. A putt caressed at just the right tempo would seem to find the hole, while those not tapped just so either cruised on by or, worse yet, kissed around one of the edges before rolling past.

It was as much a test of nerves as it was of skill. To my knowledge, two clubs met their demise during the weekend. One was a driver snapped across the leg of Scott Oliphant, the only left-hander in the group. The other was my very own putter, but not in the manner you are thinking. The club head was already loose from the shaft, and during Sunday's round, the two finally parted when I leaned on the weapon while marking my ball.

We scoured the course via four groups, three foursomes and a threesome. Ringmaster Lee Sullivan grouped us accordingly, hoping to put players of the same caliber together as well as mixing the groups so that everybody played with different partners on the two days.

Okay, so it was golf, and, with that, we made a few wagers here and there to make it all interesting. Teams played teams, twosomes played twosomes, and some of the brave individuals

also made their share of contacts.

As a big group, we held competition in 36-hole individual scoring, which didn't count the captain's choice event. Closest-to-the-pin contests on a pair of different par threes Saturday and Sunday, respectively, as well as a long-driving contest, using a different hole each day for that, were participated in by those who so desired.

To his credit, Scott Edwards, who used his name and, bravely, his credit card, to secure our tee times and round house room reservations, fashioned the weekend's steadiest performance, as he was one of two players to shoot an even 80 Saturday and then captured the medalist honors with an 84 Sunday. We toasted his success, and paid him accordingly.

Saturday, Tim Brotherton, perhaps one of the youngest in the field, dominated the par three competition, slapping tee shots on both holes that nobody would beat. On Sunday, the honors were split by a pair of veteran players, as Keith Beaver and myself picked up the pin markers.

In the long-distance driving contest, Ronnie Broome picked up the accolades during Sunday's round, while I unloaded my personal best drive of the season to cradle those honors during play Saturday.

A select few of us were also in on play for birdies and scats. In that former, more of them were made during play Sunday than on Saturday, among them the group's only eagle that was worth a pair of tweets. I must mention that because it was yours truly who made a really rotten round worthwhile with an eagle-three on the par-five fifth hole.

Even before we teed off Saturday, as we were the first ones to christen the course's weekend of play after patiently waiting for the frost to disappear, it became obvious that where we were playing was more noteworthy than what we were playing.

It was mentioned prior to the first round that one look at the surroundings would provide more than enough pleasure to allow a player to shake off the effects of a bad shot. There were a lot of heads cocked upward, but not that many bad shots, proving that perhaps the scenery, as well as a constant aroma that, if bottled, would be a bargain at any price, was even nicer than a good shot.

Without a doubt, it was the way to enjoy the mountain's peak weekend.

A Flash From The Past: You may recall a few weeks back, I predicted here that the Minnesota Twins and San Francisco Giants would square off in the World Series. Well, I was half right, and considering my fortunes in the past, that's a plus in my favor. I also went on to say that the Giants would prevail because of their pitching. Hey, how was I to know they would go more than 18 innings without a run and allow the St. Louis Cardinals to win the National League pennant?

It would be easy now, to say that the Twins will win this series, as they took a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series into last night's (Tuesday's) game, so that's what I'm doing. I say the Cards might win a game, maybe two. Let's call it the Twins in six. And let's knock off all that talk about their record. They're there now, and that's what counts. And in a week, they'll be world champions. Count on it.

Life After The Strike: Okay, so will somebody out there tell me what the NFLPA's strike settled?

All it told me is that those guys can't go a month without a paycheck.

It delighted me to no end to hear that some of the owners refused to allow the players back to camp after they reported a day late last week in order to receive their money.

In fact, I'd let them ride out the season, and continue to play the game with the Raiders, those who don't deserve the name scab. Make those big-namers get regular jobs and see how the rest of the real world lives. Odds are, next season, strike talk will remain where it should, when conversing on baseball.

When The Midgets And Pee-Wees Come Marching Home: Mark Saturday on your calendar. Now circle it, and underline it. Know it.

Saturday will indeed be a red-letter day for Mooresville, as it will become home for the Southland Football League's final day of regular-season play.

Not only will all of the league's Midget and Pee-Wee teams play in the stadium facility here, but the highlight of the afternoon will be in that play from 4:30 on, when our own four teams will be featured.

This is the town's first year of participation in the youth football league, and we have two teams, more than any other member, at each level. Saturday, the teams within the age divisions will square off against one another, with the Trazer Terminators meeting the Mavericks in Pee-Wee action at 4:30, followed by the Midget confrontation featuring the Civitans against the Black Knights at 5:45.

Be there. See it. Know it.

Southland's Finales Set Here Sat.

It's your basic good-news, bad-news story for the Mooresville teams preparing for this weekend's final regular-season Southland Football League games.

The good news is that two of Mooresville's four teams, two each in the Midget and Pee-Wee age divisions, are assured of winning.

The bad news is that two of Mooresville's four teams, two each in the Midget and Pee-Wee age divisions, are just as assured of losing.

That's the case as the teams within the respective age groups, the Trazer Terminators and Burlington Mavericks among the Pee-Wees and the Black Knights and Civitans among the Midgets, will slug it out against one another in the final two games during a day of finales.

Saturday's results will then enable the league to finalize the two division standings and set the seedings for the following Saturday's Bowl Day match-ups.

All four teams were involved in league play this past weekend on the North Gaston High School stadium field, where two of them squared off against current league-leading squads, and only one local entry clocked in with a win.

But it was a biggie, as the Black Knights pocketed their first win of the campaign with a 2-0 edging of the host High Shoals Raiders.

The win was assured when Gene Clark tackled a Raider ball carrier in the end zone for a safety. It was fitting of the defensive battle that a defensive player came up with the winning points, as Mooresville limited the Raiders to only three first downs for the game.

Others pitching in to assure the win were, defensively, Charron Walker, Chad Greene, Chris Hager, Charlie Diamond, and Billy Falters, while offensively, head coach Talmadge Connor recognized the play of Damon McKee and Morrison Brandon.

In the other Midget level game, the Civitans were defeated, 36-8, by the first-place Lincolnton Rams.

The Civitan score came on a two-yard run by quarterback Peter Scire, and Scire's pass to tight end Joe Wilson provided the conversion.

In addition to Scire and Wilson, Shon Vanderburg was singled out for his offensive team contributions by head coach Tommy Messick, while the defensive standouts included Jason Bravley, Scott Hager, Dwan Lytle, Blake Crymes, and Craig Benfield.

At the Pee-Wee level, the Mavericks cornered the lead at the half only to watch as the High Shoals Raiders posted a come-from-behind, 14-12 victory.

After the Raiders took the initial lead, Maverick Laron Shipp returned the ensuing kickoff 55 yards for the locals first tally. Mooresville then grabbed the 12-8 lead at the half thanks to a 35-yard touchdown scamper by Gregory Kennerly.

High Shoals then scored the only points of the second half to secure the win.

Travers Sloan pitched in alongside Kennerly and Shipp defensively, as each of the latter tucked an interception, while on offense, head coach Roger Lambert pointed to the play of Shipp, Kennerly, Luke Ray, and Brian Martin.

The Pee-Wee Terminators were matched up against the other first-place team, also the Rams from Lincolnton, and it was the latter who was forced into overtime before recording the 6-0 win.

With the Mooresville teams competing in the final two games of the day Saturday, they will also be observing Parent's Day during this time.

Parents of all players competing on, and cheerleaders rooting for, the Mooresville teams, which will be wrapping up their first regular-season of play as Southland League

members, are encouraged to follow the play of their teams.

Following play Saturday, seeds will be decided upon and all 16 teams in the league will then participate in Bowl Day action the following Saturday at Bandys High School.

Tie Keeps '77 Rowdies Undefeated

The main thing is that it wasn't a loss.

And that's the bottom line. The 1977 Fredell Select Soccer Association Rowdies kept their undefeated season intact by fighting to a 3-3 stand-off with the '77 Charlotte Sting Saturday.

The Rowdies had to fight from behind on three different occasions to keep from suffering their first setback of the season.

Each time the Sting took the lead, the Rowdies stormed right back to match it.

The first Rowdie score came off a corner kick served by Brooke Satterfield and finished off by Jeff Case. That goal knotted matters at 1-1 entering intermission.

Scoring in the second half was left to Robby Cummings, who scored his first goal to tie the game at two apiece. The last Cummings score came with less than a minute to go and evened the score again.

Both second-half goals were set up by solid wing play from Case.

The '77 Rowdies return home this weekend for a pair of games. The '77's will take to the turf Saturday first at 10:30 a.m. and then again at 4 p.m. on the Mooresville Senior High field.

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