

Pencil of the Week Chronicles 3

1/27/21 Sanctuary



Mary snagged a Sanctuary Golf Club pencil from the box this yellow with gold lettering. Not very appealing IMHO.

Seen here riding one of my old medium size gators with a piece of its tail missing.

Sanctuary is in North Canton just 10 minutes away. The Bob-o-Link golf South course opened in North Canton in 1963, and sometime later the North course opened. There was a large barn that served as the



clubhouse. It was downsized from its 36-hole layout to 18 holes when developers converted the southern side of the property into houses. I could not believe golfers would want to live there on sacred ground. They renamed the remaining 18 holes the Sanctuary Golf Course in 2002.

Later on when Edgewood was closed a few miles away, all the ice golfers moved to here. One of the Edgewood clubhouse ladies also moved here and now runs the place. We are old friends.

It is a very nice layout and the fairways and greens are well maintained. It has its share of hazards but most are out of play for the good golfers among us. Good scores can be had.

The starter is one of those gruff ones that act as he owns the place. You know what i mean. In Buffalo the starters at Sheridan and Brighton and in Batavia come to mind. In the local area it is this guy and the guy that was the starter at Fox Den (not there anymore). A couple of years back he sent one of our guys, Darrell RIP, home because we had 5 (someone unexpected showed up). We threatened to never play there again, so my friend gave me some free passes for Darrell and apologized for the starter.

We play pretty regular here with Denny's Monday group, but Fridays we never know how many so i have avoided it. Always bugs me when our fifth guy doesn't show cause i know i would have scheduled here if i had known.

There are some tough par 4s. #1 is narrow off the tee and tough to reach in 2, #4 is over water on the left and tight on the right. #8 is short but guarded by water. #s 12 and 13 are both long and cross a creek that can snag your ball. #17 and 18 are both long as well. Three of the par 3s are possible aces with 8 iron or less off the tee. I have come close several times. I suppose we should play there more so i can rack up some more. The par 3 ninth over water is interesting. Could be 3 different clubs depending how deep they put the pin. They usually have it on the front tempting you to play a wedge. A mishit puts you in the water.

Looking back at my cards, i had 3 stellar rounds there. In 2014 I was hot scoring 77 in August (birdie on 9 and 14) and 78 in October (birdie on 11 and 14). In August I played with Dick Denny and Clyde (RIP). They all played horrible scoring 106 96 and 99. In October it was just Dick and I. Also had a card with a 77 on it, a shootout with George scoring 79 and John T a score in the 90s which is unusual for him. I had 2 birdies in 12 and 17.

Most notable story there took place on #14, a short par 5 from the senior tees. Think I was playing with Dick Denny and perhaps old Clyde. I always give it my all on the tee shot and one day i really crushed it. Almost out by the slight rise in the fairway is about 210 from the hole but i was on the rise. I pulled out my 3 wood and ripped a nasty slice into the crap on the right. Dropped a ball and hacked it a few more times as i worked my way to a big number. That was it for me. To many times my 3 wood would get me into trouble with a slice trying to get home. When i got to the green, I pulled it out of my bag and gave it a tremendous toss way up into the pines left of the green. As we walked off I was asked if I was going to retrieve it. "Hell no!" So ever since, i have been hitting my 4 iron or 3 hybrid. I can't get to the long par 4s or any par fours over 375, but my scores have improved. No more 3W induced doubles and others for me.

One more for the road. Playing there in 2019 with the Lockheed guys, Otis Vestfal almost cleared the pond on the left side of number 4 but the ball rolled back into the shallows. Darned if he didn't take off his shoes, step in, and save a stroke. Hats off to O! Not bad for an old man.

This is another one of those courses that Ken Houle grumbles about and then takes home our money.

Well, that is it for this week. Another sad reminder that the old courses are biting the dust and there are insensitive people like Mel who don't mind living on sacred ground. Off the top of my head I can think

of no less than 10 of them that are likely to be reported in this forum.

2/3/21 Windmill Lakes



Yet another Pencil of the Week story!

Mary snagged a Windmill Lakes pencil from the box this week. It is a deep blue with gold lettering and a very classy pencil indeed.

Top of the line!

Windmill is up north on I76 just outside of Ravenna and takes me 40 minutes to get to. It is just up the road from Big Dick Lott's home in the wilderness out there. More about him later.

It is a wonderful golf course with great but difficult greens. I do not score well there as it is a long and tough course with very tight fairways. It retains water well and is often soft which makes it so much longer. It is the home course of the Kent State golf team and has a great pro shop. They also have a once a year tent sale with good prices. This one is another hard to schedule as they do not allow fivesomes. When we do play, we have to move up on a couple of tee boxes to shorten up this monster.

Denny isn't a fan due to the length.

It's a good one to schedule when my brother is in town. It is also good for George as it is about halfway between here and there. Sometimes George and i reunite and play with old DST buddy Kirk Murphy.

No scorecards from this course at all means no spectacular rounds here for me. If i am on, I can break 90 by 1 or 2 strokes. Looking back at my scores, i do remember the DST moving to Sugarbush for several years because WIndmill jacked up the prices. Their senior prices are quite reasonable so we have returned. Best i found is an 85 in 2017.

I do have a few good stories on the play there. Chronologically, first is the story of why i never play Top Flite golf balls anymore. I think it was a DST round and George was in the group I played with that particular week. I believe i was playing well and we teed off on number 9 in fair weather. Always a quick player, i got to my tee shot, to the right part of the fairway of course, and smacked a decent shot down to the green. George got to his ball and said calmly " Bob, I think you hit my ball". Well there went 2 strokes added to my score. Geeze. George was playing a Top Flight too. It was the most played golf ball beck in the day. Damn. We continued on and i played what was now shot number 5 which rolled off the back right. I got over to my ball and George said "Uh oh." I looked at the ball I had hit and it was surely George's again. At this point it did not matter so i played the ball from there and chipped on in now what was my 8th shot.

Well, i picked up and took a 10 and walked over to the bench on #11 tee and just emptied out every Top Flite in the bag. To this date I will not play one and never will. I sure hope they don't have any in Heaven. I figure if i don't make it there i will see a plethora of them down below.

The second memory is playing here with ex boss Lou Fulmer, RIP. John T, Mel, and I were always after him to join us for a round and finally it happened. I do not remember much about the round but we sat and emptied 3 pitchers afterwards. Somehow we made it home OK. Speaking of sitting in the clubhouse, we were there one day when Rudy saw Steeler HOFer Jack Lambert at the next table over. Rudy never said anything till Jack left and we chased Rudy out after him to get his autograph. Lambert had played for Kent in college and was from a small town called Mantua nearby.

The final and most amazing story is Big Dick Lott's round there in 2017. He was playing way over his head that day. We had reached the 14th tee, a 150 to 170 yd par 3, Dick had the honors, so i walked to the woods on the left to pee. When I got back they said that Dick holed his tee shot for an incredible Ace and i had missed it all. It was either a 7 or 9 wood which he can get crazy with. On top of his ace, he had tamed the beast. The score card tallied up to 75 on a course where my best had been an 85. Wow! The round of a lifetime! I had often suspected that he sold his soul to the devil for that round but i have to admit that i haven't seen any other evidence of that.

Speaking of Dick and his 9 wood. He had one incredible week down at Pinehurst in 2007 throwing darts at the par 3s all week with that thing, Enough darts to get his name on the trophy. Hmmm, maybe that was when he sold his soul?

Lots of good times and memories there even though the course beats me up all the time. Looking forward to more rounds and great memories to come.

Catch you next week with another exciting pencil of the week.

2/10/21 Good Park



It is time for another (drum roll) Pencil of the Week story!

Mary snagged a JE Good Park golf pencil from the box this week. It is black with white lettering. As this course is owned by the city of Akron it is marked accordingly. They also have a 9 hole course called Mud Run, but i have never seen it or been there.

Good Park is just off the expressway about 35 minutes from here. Sadly, it is one of the few old courses left around here as they are all being disgustingly sold for developments of one sort or another.

From their website:

Designed in 1924 by Bertie Wey, the very same course architect of the famed Firestone South, J.E. Good Park (know simply as “The Park” by the locals) is the ideal place to challenge your golfing skills. The Park’s trademark is the 180 acres of tree-lined fairways and well-placed bunkers, which put a premium on shot accuracy rather than being a drivers’ paradise.

All true! The greens are decent size but can be treacherous if you get above the hole. This is a great course to walk. All the tee boxes are close by the previous green.

My first encounter with this course was as a young engineer back in the 70s when I signed up for the Goodyear Aerospace Golf Association (GAGA) yearly tourney. I was paired with 2 big hitters, one with the name Bob McNair. Funny thing; a couple years back he was one of Wes' patients at AGMC. Anyway, he gets on the first tee of the first round and pounds the crap out of his drive. I am thinking we are both in the same flite so how the hell am i going to beat him? So i swing hard and slice it into the woods. Trying to out drive this guy eventually brought me down and my scoring was very poor. Learned a valuable lesson that day; play your own game. That was a lesson I learned over and over. It is a tough one to golf by for sure.

Many years later, I heard of his dad. A well respected golfer named Angus McNair. He was a local legend and i heard tell he was a starter at Firestone who always told the players " There will be no mulligans today laddies". "Play it as it lies and enjoy your round". Or something of that sort. Can you guess his nationality?

The DST always tried to play there on Saturday but a tee time was hard to come by. I remember the guy in the clubhouse telling us we had to call early on Monday, When we did, he would say there was

nothing available. We can only suppose his buddies or city employees got all the times. Looking back over my scores 6 of 12 were an 86. Only have one scorecard from there in 2020 where I eagled the short #12. Drive and a lob wedge that hit just short, popped onto the green and went in. Denny, Houle, and Dave were chapped.

BTW, they have a restaurant above the clubhouse that was featured on Restaurant Impossible a few years back reinvented by Chef Robert Irvine.

Perhaps my most notable round there was on May 24 2016. We were on the ninth tee waiting to play. We had two groups and i was with Dave Eisner and Ken Houle. Watching the guy halfway to the green preparing for his shot, we saw him suddenly drop to the ground. Dave went up and tried to help and it seems like forever before the EMS got there and wheeled him out. We skipped by and played #10. Ever since I have wondered if his buddies stopped in the clubhouse and got him a rain check for 9 holes. It all showed up in the paper the next day:

<https://www.beaconjournal.com/article/20160524/news/305249068>

Turns out he was a local bigwig. He passed away 2 days later:

David Anthony Meeker David Anthony Meeker, 76,
of Ohio died May 26, 2016 surrounded by his family,
after suffering a heart attack on the golf course earlier in the week.

What a way to go. You can't beat that! Catch you next week!

2/17/2021 Ellsworth Meadows

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT	IN	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TOT	HCP	NET	
BLACK	72.4	130	503	305	469	211	548	411	175	457	209	3288	428	538	193	385	209	464	391	521	414	3543	6831		
GREEN	70.4	125	491	295	443	186	528	351	146	421	183	3044	401	500	172	379	181	433	367	493	397	3323	6367		
WHITE	68.9	121	482	295	420	171	481	333	132	393	157	2864	376	475	137	371	154	418	359	487	362	3139	6003		
PAR	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	4	3	35	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	36	71			
HANDICAP	7	15	3	11	5	9	13	1	17				10	8	18	6	16	2	14	4	12				
TARGET TIME	:16	:30	:44	:56	1:12	1:26	1:38	1:52	2:04				2:18	2:34	2:46	3:00	3:12	3:26	3:40	3:56	4:10				
TAN	69.5	119	393	260	317	114	406	266	107	328	127	2318	320	413	121	303	126	317	296	389	317	2602	4920		



On a roll with another Pencil of the Week story! Bonus pictures of Tam O Shanter as it is today.

Mary snagged an Ellsworth Meadows pencil from the box this week. It is a deep blue with silver lettering for a change of pace..

Ellsworth is up north off of Route 8 just outside of Hudson and takes me 40 minutes to get to. As far as I am concerned, the place is majorly cursed. It is an interesting modernized golf course with really fast and treacherous greens. It is owned by the city of Hudson which is part of the trend i have discussed before. I do not know the history of the course very well having played my first round there a mere 12 years or so ago.

Hiring in at Cisco in 2000, i joined their golf league playing at Chippawa for a few years. When they moved to a new building in Richfield, most thought it was too far a drive from work and would be hard to get in the late fall rounds. They moved to Boston Mills up on route 8. We have not yet found a pencil from either of these yet but i am sure we will eventually. In any event, let me assure you they are both pitiful golf venues. From there it was moved to Valley View, another pitiful excuse for a golf course and then to Ellsworth Meadows when I was with Viasat and nearing retirement. Wow, three more courses with lots of stories for future weeks. These stories could stretch to mid summer, perhaps later.

It is a challenging course opening with a par 5 with a tree just in front of the tee. I hit it many times, leaving you looking at a double. Two thru 4 are straightforward, then #5 is a par 5 with the green just over a creek and a hill behind. That creek catches many shots, Six is a par 4 with a huge pot bunker in front. The it's a par 3 over a lake. Eight is a tough and narrow with OB par 4 and 9 was a tough par 3

next to the clubhouse. They shortened it up and made it a nothing hole a couple of years ago. If you are not on, the hazards on the front can easily add anywhere up to 7 strokes. There are 4 sloped greens that can add another 4 easy. This nine was my supreme embarrassment a few years back but more on that later.

The back nine can be had if your playing well. Once again i believe you could easily add up to 7 to your score with the hazards and another 4 on the green. Number 12, 130ish par 3 has a really sloped green front to back. I recollect league play where i was pin high on the right about 15 feet and took 6. I smoothed the side hill putt and watch it roll down the green 6 ft below the hole. Pounded it up the green 3 foot past, saw my 3d putt roll and roll and roll back down where i started. From there it took me 2 more and i don't remember if someone mercifully gave me the fifth putt or not.

So i believe I played at Ellsworth with the Cisco league for 3 or 4 seasons. I always walked when i played nine and remember the front was an easy walk as it was pretty flat. Most of the back was flat but # 15 was a long par 4 straight up the hill. Walking out to my drive was brutal and then the elevation rise increased. This was before my bypass and every time i pushed up that hill, i wasn't sure i would make it. I played with another guy in his 60s and he was huffing and puffing just as much. Next I began leaving my bag halfway up and grabbing my driver for my next tee shot. Eventually i rented a cart for that nine. Guess that was my advance warning of my blocked arteries circa 2013.

For some damn reason I scheduled this course on a Friday in 2011. They were doing something out there so we had to play it backwards. I do not remember much about the round at all, other than i played very poorly. About half way through the second nine, I realized I was in danger of losing to Bagger Mel. OMG, I thought, I better pick it up. Well, things did not get any better as I went, and Mel was not in collapse mode. He summoned up his best game for the second nine and completed the drubbing. I did find the scorecard. Looks like I had nothing on the back nine played first, scoring a 9 and a 10 on both par 5s. That was before i hurled my 3 wood into oblivion several years later. No wonder. Unfortunately I was physically able to finish, and my worst nightmare, losing to Mel, came true. Oh, unhappy day. It was a very very very long ride home.

Looking back, I am positively sure that if we had played in the proper order, the result would have been much different. I wonder if Mel paid the starter to switch nines?

Denny usually schedules Ellsworth on the day after holidays for the Monday group. It plays much easier from the senior tees a full 1000 yds shorter. I have had some really good rounds there now that i know the course better. Couple of low 80s in 2020. Looking forward to going back this year.

Tam O Shanter Update Pictures



12/24/21 Skyland Pines



Mary snagged an Skyland Pines pencil from the box this week. It is another that is deep blue with silver lettering and is of superb quality.

Skyland is to the south and takes me about 20 minutes to get to. It is great old course. Big Trees, narrow fairways, small greens, and modest length.

Started play there in the mid 70s with the neighbors, so off and on for 45 years. The DST played there on occasion, along with the Denny's Monday group and the Lockheed guys as well. No too often on Fridays, as it is a lengthy ride for some of the crew. It is always a pleasure to walk into a clubhouse and see a friendly face. We do see one here for sure, as one of the Edgewood clubhouse ladies is here going back to our years of ice golf many years ago.

The first hole is short but uphill 320 with a tight fairway. The green is just nuts. If you should be above the hole, figure you are going to putt it off the green unless you hit the hole. Easy to get there in two but your score could easily be 6. Two is a long par 4 followed by a really tight and short par 4. Tee across the pond on #3 then ride across the bridge. They recently brought in the bridge and it was quite a public event.

<https://www.indeonline.com/news/20190309/photos-skyland-pines-converts-old-train-car-into-bridge>

I try to place an iron just over the bridge to keep out of the trees. The green is really tiny and never holds. No regulation pars on this one. Two more tight par 4s and you get to the tight par 5. You picking up on needing straight tee shots yet? This is a gem for Ken Houle. He is short but straight and has a big edge here, Nine is a nasty par 3 185 from the whites and 150 from the senior tees across a valley to pretty flat green. All carry. Short and you have to flip it up 10 feet. Push it and you are in the weeds. Pull it or go long and it gets real ugly. Looks like a 6 from those areas.

The back nine is a bit easier and more forgiving, offering a couple of birdie opportunities. My best score was a 79 there last year in June as i went 43-36 going even on the back nine. Just missed eagling one of the par 5s; the birdie putt was 2 feet but miss it and it is 6 coming back. I sucked it up and drilled it in. Looking back at other scores, they were mostly high 80s.

I believe that my most memorable round there will be with our Monday golfer Clyde Shepard tagging

along with Denny. Clyde played the first scheduled round in 2018 with us in the spring. He was hurting but got around. When we played later in the year in October, he could not muster the strength, so he tagged along in Denny's cart and joined in the banter throughout the round. I had started well and remembered telling him there was no charge for watching my masterful play so far. Things dropped off a bit but I did end up shooting an 84. Remembered laughing with him in the clubhouse after the round. That was the last time I saw him. Cancer claimed him late 2018.

All of us went to calling hours for Clyde. Denny, Dave, Dick, Darrell, Ken and I. Even the Bookledge golf course manager was there; Clyde was a regular there.. He was a popular guy and there were lines out the door. It was a zoo. I left Clyde one of my treasured Mollie golf balls to play in that great course in the sky just in case. A couple of other guys left a dollar, which we always played for on Mondays. The boys conceded this round and that was that.

RIP Clyde, we think of you now and then and will for sure every time we play Skyland Pines.