

Pencil of the Week Chronicles 7

08/11/21 Ravenwood and Willowbrook



Just completed our family tournament this year. We played 2 tracts and one of them is too cheap to have their own pencil so I would never be able to talk about it unless i do it now while i remember it. I checked both carts but neither pencil had a name on them.

45 is Ravenwood This pencil was a really nice black with gold lettering.

#46 is Willowbrook in Lockport NY. One pencil was round and silver while the other cart had a normal green one. My God, how much could it cost to put your name on a pencil? How cheap can you be when you charge \$54 for a weekend round. So crappy there will be no picture.

Ravenwood blue tees were 6190. Even though i should have played from the 5635 Silvers (even that is on the long side for senior tees), i was able to score an 89. The fairways are wide enough to land a small plane on so Jr was unleashing some 300 yds there. I walked off the front nine with a 44, shaking my head cause with any kind of short game i could have shot 39. I was only 2 back of Jr but I went double double on 10 and 11 while he birdied both. Wow 8 back after 11! He played give back from there and i finished with 45 for an 89 while he finished at 88 for a 3 stroke lead. Nada of my putts fell for the day. With the landing strip fairways, those holes are not really photo worthy. Their par 3s, on the other hand, are really pretty and fun to play. George and brother Jim both shot 88 as did Jr. with me at 89. Jim shot an amazing 39 on the back.

Willowbrook was a disaster for me. I believe i put 5 in the ponds and one unplayable look up into the woods for basically 7 penalty strokes. I don't think i had more than 1 penalty in the first 3 rounds but today it was 7. It was all over after posting a 49 for the front. My short game was so so and once again no putts dropped in for the day.

My big problem was my long irons. Not sure what the issue was but they were dismal. The hot humid day with zero air movement was not helpful. The Blue tees at 6100 were too brutal with the thick rough and i found myself at 170 out on most of the par 4s and 5s. Reached one green with a 4 iron all day from there. Love the course, just wasn't on the right tees for my long iron issues. Jr smacked more 300yd drives and had control of his game. No wild rights or wild lefts for him. He shot a stellar 85 to my 94 to drub me by 9 for the day. Jim matched my dismal 94 while George played well at 85.

Looks like the changing of the guard. At 73, it is an uphill battle to compete with Jr. at half my age. He is at the top of his game and has room to be even better. You can bet I will keep trying. Hopefully, i will return to form next year. My handicap is a tell; starting at 13 this year, it now has moved to an 18. Some of that is due to the ankle injury suffered at the Brookledge course (an unsafe menace), and the other half is from an inconsistent short game. Of course improved putting would help. Seriously, I am still waiting to make my first putt for August.

Catch you next week, Perhaps I will have made my August putt by then.

8/18/21 Rosemont



Hey Hey! You will be glad to hear I made 2 putts at Mayfair the other day. Now I am at 2 for the month! Holy Cow.

47 is Rosemont Country Club This pencil is a beat up maroon with white lettering.

This one was in Fairlawn on Cleveland Massillon Rd.

RIP Rosemont. Another one bites the dust.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY0WxgSXdEE>

You know if it is really a CC, i have not played there very often. In fact, i played there twice as part of a Loveofanangel.org fundraiser outing. We have supported that org for many years going back to its foundation by ex coworker Ray Weber from Goodyear Aerospace.

Ray was there when i started there in 1970. I guess he quickly found out that engineering was not for him, so he went back to law school and became a patent attorney. It has served him well.

I remember Ray's big demo where he was going to show everyone how his new circuit design was working back in the lab. As it was, the technician was in cahoots with the older engineers and had rigged up a resistor to smoke when he turned it on. So he turns it on and begins to show everyone and the smoke starts rising. Panic set in and he shut it down as the crowd did not let on (they knew it was rigged). There was a lot of dissing him bout his design skill till he heard the laughter. The story still lives to this day.

I do remember that Rick and Big John Daley Cassidy became Rosemont members and I did see them playing in one of those outings. Maybe Rick has some stories to tell or knows more about the closing.

I believe our group was John T, Bagger Mel, Dick Lott, and I. Although we did OK at 3-4 under, we never got close to the loaded teams coming in at 12 under. Told the guys we could drop on all the greens in regulation and never come close to 12 under.

I remember a few select holes. I remember a long one across the water where the first year we paid the Pro \$5 to put one on the green for us. Also remember we chose to go it alone the second year with no success. Ouch!

Another i remember is a short par 3 over water. I believe Dick put his 9 wood on there for us as the rest of us tanked. Also remember another where we all hit pitiful tee shots and had to pick one in the woods to the left. Played right into one of my strengths as i ripped a 4 iron through a narrow opening to the fringe. One of my best trouble shots ever.

We played in several of their outings which for some reason ended a few years back.

<https://www.beaconjournal.com/news/20200104/century-old-rosemont-country-club-in-fairlawn-closes-doors>

I am not sure where all those doctors and lawyers went. Likely to Fairlawn CC.

08/25/21 Riverview



48 is Riverview. Just played it Friday and they also were too cheap to put their name on the pencils. My goodness.

This is on the Friday tour and we have not played it for perhaps 15 years? We always walked this one back in the day. Bigdik Lott suggested we play there years ago and we

played it most every year for awhile. Not sure why we dropped it off but it is a long drive for most.

I was able to take a few pics there so i attached them in lieu of their generic pencil. The old ball tube brought back the years we played as kids in Buffalo so i had to get that. The covered bridge sign is a classic so i got that too. Missing is the old "You must wear shirts near the clubhouse sign" and the road sign on route 5 that said The Center of the World.

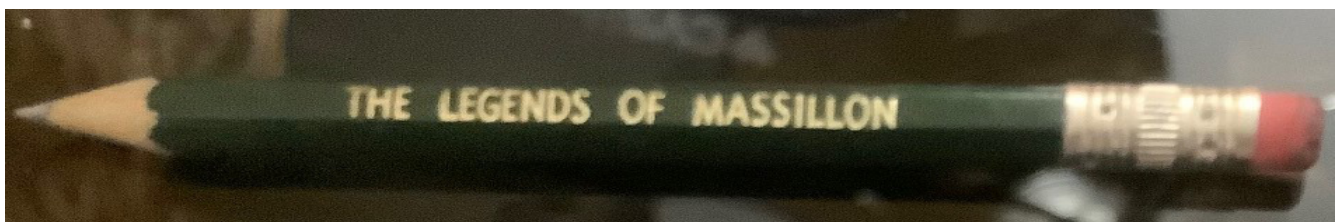
Today we played the day after tropical storm Fred dumped on the course. It was a soggy mess with water everywhere. I hit some good drives and my putting was quite good but i maybe hit 3 crisp irons all day long. Lots of iron yanks to the left. I was low with 85, Denny at 87, John at 88, and the rest of the crew was in the low 90s with Bagger Mel at 103.

Their signature hole is a Z shaped par 5 with the river on the right side all the way down. You have to drive 170 to the corner, hit a solid long iron or 3 wood to the left to get a long iron shot across the river to the green, or hit a short iron layup to the left corner. Playing with John and Bill, they executed the first 2 very well. Then they dumped their 3d trying to cross the river to the river bottom and ended with 7. I was not so lucky. My tee shot hit the tree on the corner. Followed that up with another square hit to a tree, chunked one and looked up to be laying 4 and still not up to Bill and Johns second. Finally hit a good one to the corner, hit a wedge to the fringe and got up and down for an 8. In the group behind, Denny and Dick took 8s and Mel a 9. The hole kicked our asses.

That reminds me of taking brother Jim an Jr there years ago. I was telling them horror stories about this hole and promised to buy dinner to anyone who walked away with an impossible par. Jr executed to perfection and got himself a free dinner. Damn!

We paid \$24 to play. The greens are really nice there and the course is well maintained but the weeds and crabgrass are working there way in. Tis seen better days. I hate to walk away from this course having been decimated by the Z hole yet again, but it is an hr drive and I am not a fan of crabgrass anywhere, especially on the golf course.

09/01/21 Legends



This was a staple on the DST and later found it's way to the Friday tour. Once again we have not played it for perhaps 25 years. It was brand new when we started playing it. They were working on the clubhouse and you paid at this little shack near where they were still building. Lots of stones and mud around from the construction. I believe i took dad and brother Jim there to play back in the day as well.

It was a weird layout. You headed south on a long par 4 that was hard to get to in two. Then it was back north almost to the clubhouse. This was a par 4 with a lake in front of the green. Could be a rough start with a likely bogey and a water hole up next. From there you had to walk across the parking lot to the next tee. Yes, we did walk back in the day. Looking at Google Maps it looks like 750 feet from this green to the next tee box.

It didn't get any easier as this one was a long 550+ par 5. From there it was another 500+ feet walk to a dogleg left around another pond and then to a par 3 with the pond on your right. After those holes I draw a blank. Wow. 550 yards seems nutty as a senior these days. Lucky to hit a drive 200 yds and a hybrid 165. No way to get there in 3 anymore on them kind of monsters.

The course was built by the city of Massillon. I guess an attempt to spur development out in their boonies down near route 62. It was always a long haul from where most of us lived. Several years down the road, they added another 18 holes and chopped up the course so badly we did not want to play there any more. I guess the golf community agreed so they cut it back to 27 a few years later I believe. Not totally sure about that.

The most fond memory was likely during Hall of fame week. We were playing there when all of a sudden the hot air balloons were landing all over the course. Some flying low right over our heads. So low we waited for them to pass buy before we hit our tee shots; worried we might hit one of them. Neighbor Brenda moved to a condo nearby. It is a very nice condo but too far south for us to be comfortable driving to see the grand kids.

09/08/21 The Pit



50 is The Pit Golf Links. It is a very fine pencil; black with gold lettering.

This was Pinehurst Invitational final round to determine the annual champion. The

tournament spanned 25 years, spawned on the DST. For several years we had talked about going south in the very early spring to do this and finally one year either TK or Mike B took the bull by the horn and set it up. I think the first year players were TK, MikeB, Mike Hayes (RIP), Neil, myself, and some of TK's buddies Lenny and Dean. We always needed to fill in with up to 3 non DST-ers to fill the field and get 8 players. Remembering some of the guys I got to tag along were Mel, JohnT, Bill, Dick, and George, Rudy, Brian, and Bill Stimler. TK added several customers and buddies as well like Ken Houle thru the years.

The Pit was a very odd Dan Maples creation carved out of an old sand pit in the Sand Hills area as it was called. The first 6 or 7 were conventional type holes and then you got back to the clubhouse to go out and back to 8 and 9. The first hole usually got me. The par 4 was usually out of my reach in 2 so you had to chip to a nasty green on a hillside which was oh so easy to 3 putt. Had lots of 6s there. Then you hit a very narrow par 5 of over 525 yds guarded by huge bunkers. That one was hard to get to. The 3d was a makeable par if you hit it straight. Left or long was into the dunes.

#4 i believe was a picturesque par 3 from an elevated tee to a green in the dunes. I took a picture and had my dad paint it for me. I cherish that pic. He did a nice job on it. No 8 was a par 5 with sand hills perpendicular to the fairway. Inf you hit it right or left you were in the dunes and had to chip laterally back into the fairway. Very penalizing.

The back was quite a trip as well. #11 went out around the driving range to an elevated green. Easy 4 or 5 there. The you hit 3 water holes. #12 was out and across the lake to a green, #13 was the island green par 3, and #14 was a long drive across the water where you bit off as much as you could risk. Lots of dang balls in that water. Then it was off into the dunes again to finish up.

Most memorable was #13 island green where i always seemed to lose one or two balls for the day. Somewhere around the last few rounds, i said i was gonna hit balls from the tee till i made the green and ignore the drop area if i hit in the water. I scooped up 8-10 balls from my bag and threw them down on the tee, First shot was right at the pin and damned if it didn't go in for an ace. Now i had to scoop up all those balls and get them back into the bag. We were playing greenies, so i left a tee floating in the water in the cup. The second group heard our roars but did not see it. They kind of figured it out when they found the tee in there though.

The second most memorable was almost winning one year. I was down to Bill coming into the last 4 holes but he was leaking major oil. I was only a few back on #17 when he hit a spectacular iron onto the green and pretty much shut me out. He did try his damndest to blow it on #18 but i wanted no part of it, hacking my way down the fairway as well.

On the final 25 th year, TK and his buddies conspired to let me win. I don't know why they just did not agree to put my name on the trophy regardless. I think that would have

saved them all about 10 strokes they had to tank on the last round. It was a nice gesture though.

Thinking back, my slice cost me dearly down south. Also, chipping is completely different down south and i never did adjust to it. I looked back at my scores and found 95 102 102 98 103 and 94. The Pit just chewed me up.

Regardless of my poor play down there, I enjoyed every trip down there, the competition, the breakfasts, lunches, and dinners, the scrambles; all with some of the best buddies any golfer could have, including even the Captain.

09/15/21 Edgewood



51 is Edgewood. It is a very fine pencil; red with gold lettering. This one is very special for many reasons.

The course had a decent layout with 3 long par 5s, challenging par 3s, a mix of long and short par 4s with it's share of sharp dog legs.

When i started at Goodyear, somehow i hooked up with a league run out of Wheel and Brake. I contacted Gerry Betts and joined the league that played there on Thursday night after work. Gerry and I became longtime friends, golf buddies, and drinking buddies. We played in the league for many years till we ran out of players and folded the league. It was quite a long drive from work and back to my Newton St apartment. We stopped for a few after golf at a dive near Wise road on Massillon rd and later at Green Gables, another dump a little closer to home. Neither one is still there. When the league folded, Gerry went to Bob O Link, and I to Seven Hills. We always made it a point to play in the fall at Mayfair till the time changed after our leagues were over. We did that till 2003 until it was too far to get to in time from Cisco after they moved to Richfield. That covered 33 years. I tried to contact him a few years later but Gerry had passed away. I felt awful that I never was aware of his passing and missed my chance to say good bye. RIP good buddy.

I dragged a few friends into that league. Tony Apicella, Neil Adams, and Rudy Dudics. Tony was a disaster as a golfer, but Neil and Rudy were solid golfers. Perhaps my most memorable round there was with Neil. We were coming in and i had him down good and razzing him about it. Unfortunately i tanked and he stepped up holing out for an eagle on #8 and parring #9, It was an awful embarrassing loss.

Neil also cracked us up one time when i chunked one off the tee and took a huge divot. He said something like " My God, i couldn't dig a bigger hole than that with a bloody spade". That #8 haunted me for years. One week, i pulled my drive smack into the tree only to have the ball wedge itself into a crevice between the branch and the trunk way near the top. Every week on the tee box, there it was, staring me in the face and taunting me. It was a butt ugly tree and eventually they cut the dang thing down.

I also remember how dangerous the location was on 43. Cars would barrel down it as it was out in the middle of nowhere. Making a left into the parking lot was pretty scary. Lots of tires squealing as people broke hard to avoid rear ending people there. My partner Harry got smacked there. The other issue in the summer was the crop duster. Right across the street was a farm field. That duster would fly over the course then drop right over the power lines low to the field and spray the field.

Somewhere along the way, I was talking to TK complaining all my buddies put there clubs away to soon. He gave me Ken Houle's number. I called Houle and soon enough i was playing with him and his guys every Saturday there was no snow on the ground. There was Houle, Denny, and Bill King. This is now the guys i play Mondays with now. King has dropped out because of breathing issues on O2. Bill was an awesome golfer and played the middle of the fairway all day plus minus 10 yds, In addition, Bob Muche was in the group! Bob Muche was my neighbor when I first moved to a duplex in Hartville. He eventually helped me move to my house on Oasis Ave. I had lost track of him but here he was again; small world indeed!

Winter golf was a hoot. I remember standing on ice at Racoon Hills chipping onto a green. I only played there a couple of times so i doubt there is a pencil here for it. I remember playing with Mel at Mayfair one year. He hit a ball that ended up on the ice on #3. No one was behind us so we started skipping sticks across the ice trying to knock it to shore. The first time Neil played winter golf with us, he hit an outstanding summer shot into #1 at Edgewood. Not such a good shot in the winter as it bounced 30 ft into the air off the frozen green and ended up 30 yards past the green. I can just hear him exclaiming "Bloody Hell, did you see that?"

As crazy as it might seem i remember teeing off in zero wind chill one round. We figured it would get up to 10 by the time we got thru 9. Absolutely could not get a tee in the ground. Found a piece of discarded candy wrapper, balled it up and set a ball on it.

There were 2 ladies running the clubhouse that would get us some hot coffee after 9. One of them, Sue, would later run the 9 hole course there and then run the clubhouse at Sanctuary. The other one, whose name escapes me went over and ran the clubhouse at Skyland Pines. Not sure where I will see them next, as both of them will close shortly. There is a epidemic of closings around here.

From the media.....Edgewood Golf Course—Ohio's first public course and the third-oldest course in Stark County—lost nine of its 18 holes when its owners sold the 114-acre Plain Township property to Edgewood Development Co. then bought the remaining nine holes of the 93-year-old golf course as part of an 86-acre purchase that surrounds the church. The sale closed in June 2014, and the developers plan to build single-family homes on the site.

Edgewood is gone. RIP my old BFF. Even my daughter is mad. She used to compete at their swim club. If all the Edgewood league players came back to life none would recognize the area anymore. An old golf course surrounded by farm land is now a Mega church and 3 or 4 housing developments. You can be sure I curse the church every time i pass by it and will continue that tradition.