

# Christian Golf Club OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

January 2004

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**F**ifteen years! The Christian Golf Club of Central California is in its fifteenth year, and it seems like yesterday when the idea struck, to combine this great and wonderful game with God's **command** for each of us, **to reach out to those that have not yet met our glorious God face to face**. Even though it doesn't come easy for a lot of us to step out of our comfort zones and talk to others about a relationship with our maker, **we are called to do exactly that!**

I don't know about you, but when God passed out the spiritual gift of evangelism, I must have been on a potty break. It has never come easy for me to put the noose around my own neck and become vulnerable. It 's always been easier to hang with the RIGHTEOUS and HOLY and leave the evangelism stuff for those more gifted, (*what a cop out!*) As you recall, Jesus didn't hang out with the righteous and holy, he went where the fishing was good, where the fruit was abundant!

You see, thru the C.G.C.C.C, you no longer have an excuse. No longer do you have to invite that heathen from work to church, knowing he's going to laugh in your face, then tell everybody at the water fountain about the wacko Jesus freak!! Now you can invite the guy to play a round of golf with you, and the next day, those around the water fountain will hear what a great time he had. The beauty of it is, you've been obedient to God's command!! Understand, it's not our responsibility to bring this guy to salvation. That's God's responsibility. **But it is our responsibility to put him in position to be saved!** Begin to look at each of our tournaments not strictly as a day of golf, but as that opportunity for ministry. We have golf related tracs and a periodical called the links letter that is awesome. It covers the Christian side of the P.G.A, L.P.G.A, other tours and college golf. Use these tools. *They are effective!*

Our kickoff tournament each year is held at Riverside G.C. and as usual it was a time for us to be fed, physically and spiritually, and to once again try to beat the snot out of each other on the course! Physically, we feasted on an Atkins suitable breakfast, NOT! It was more like pigs at a trough. It was embarrassing playing with my partners, with gravy and syrup stains all over their shirts. In fact, Ron Nitz could have had another meal with what was left on his.

Spiritually, we were fed the **lasting** nourishment by pastor Pat Callahan, who inspired us to run the race to win, to stay the course and persevere on a path of holiness. The guests

that came, who were invited by members by the way, had to walk away with something to think about if they were non Christians.

On the course, all the spiritual stuff went out the window. It was a bloodbath out there for most of us. I'm still licking my wounds! Then of course there was Mike Gerosa. I yelled over to him as he was walking up the thirteenth fairway and asked him how he was playing. He stated he shot 2 under on the front but it should have been 5. Obviously the pain of his loss in the finals of the club championship last year has inspired him to take it up a notch. With his bald pate, I guess he assumes he can get more rounds in quicker this year with less wind resistance. Look out for him this year Mr. Ragan!!

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### January Tournament Results

**1<sup>st</sup> Place** Ron Gonzales, Christian Gonzales, Randy Davis & Jerry Dyer

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** (By luck of the draw) Ron Gonzales, Ron Hickok, Curt Hamett & George Wortley

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** Doug Nelson, Stan Cox, Manuel Dominguez & Roger Tarpin

**Gross** Mike Gerosa 77

**Net** Ray Garcia 66

**Closest to the Hole** #8 Ron Hickok #11 Pat Callahan

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### Worth the Wait

**W**HY DO they come? Why do they hang around to watch the slowest high school cross-country runner in America? Why do they want to see a kid finish the 3.1 miles in 51 minutes when the winner did it in 16?

Why do they cry? Why do they nearly break their wrists applauding a junior who falls flat on his face almost every race? Why do they hug a teenager who could be beaten by any other kid running backward?

Why do they do it? Why do all of his teammates go back out on the course and run the last 10 minutes of every race with him? Why do other teams do it too? And the girls' teams? Why run all the way back out there to pace a kid running like a tortoise with bunions?

Why? Because Ben Comen never quits.

See, Ben has a heart just slightly larger than the Chicago Hyatt. He also has cerebral palsy. The disease doesn't mess with his intellect—he gets A's and B's—but it seizes his muscles and contorts his body and gives him the balance of a Times Square drunk. Yet there he is, competing for the Hanna High cross-country team in Anderson, S.C.,

dragging that wracked body over rocks and fallen branches and ditches. And people ask, Why?

“Because I feel like I’ve been put here to set an example,” says Ben, 16. “Anybody can find something they can do—and do it well. I like to show people that you can either stop trying or you can pick yourself up and keep going. It’s just more fun to keep going.” It must be, because faced with what Ben faces, most of us would quit.

Imagine what it feels like for Ben to watch his perfectly healthy twin, Alex, or his younger brother, Chris, run like rabbits for Hanna High, while Ben runs like a man whacking through an Amazon thicket. Imagine never beating anybody to the finish line. Imagine dragging along that stubborn left side, pulling that unbending tire iron of a leg around to the front and pogo-sticking off it to get back to his right.

Worse, he lifts his feet so little that he trips on anything—a Twinkie-sized rock, a licorice-thick branch, the cracks between linoleum tiles. But he won’t let anybody help him up. “It messes up my flow,” he says. He’s not embarrassed, just mad.

Worst, he falls hard. His brain can’t send signals fast enough for his arms to cushion his fall, so he often smacks his head or his face or his shoulder. Sometimes his mom, Joan, can’t watch.

“I’ve been coaching cross-country for 31 years,” says Hanna’s Chuck Parker, “and I’ve never met anyone with the drive that Ben has. I don’t think there’s an inch of that kid I haven’t had to bandage up.”

But never before Ben finishes the race, Like Rocky Marciano, Ben finishes bloody and bruised, but never beaten. Oh, he always loses—Ben barely finishes ahead of the sunset, forget other runners. But he hasn’t quit once. Through rain, wind or wet, he always crosses the finish line.

Lord, it’s some sight when he gets there: Ben clunking his way home, shepherded by all those kids, while the cheerleaders screech and parents try to holler encouragement, only to find nothing coming out of their voice boxes.

The other day Ben was coming in with his huge army, Ben’s Friends, his face stoptight red and tortured, that laborious gait eating up the earth inch by inch, when he fell not 10 yard from the line. There was a gasp from the parents and a second of silence from the kids. But then Ben went through the 15-second process of getting his bloody knees under him, his balance back and his forward motion going again—and he finished. From the roar you’d have thought he just won Boston.

“Words can’t describe that moment,” says his mom. “I saw grown men just stand there and cry.”

Ben can get to you that way. This is a kid who builds wheelchair ramps for Easter Seals, spends nights helping at an assisted-living home, mans a drill for Habitat for Humanity,

devotes hours to holding the hand of a disabled neighbor, Miss Jessie, and plans to run a marathon and become a doctor. Boy, the youth of today, huh?

Oh, one aside: Hanna High is also the home of a mentally challenged man known as Radio, who has been the football team's assistant for more than 30 years. Radio gained national attention in a 1996 SPORTS ILLUSTRATED story by Gary Smith and is the hero of a major movie that opens nationwide on Oct. 24.

Feel like you could use a little dose of humanity? Get yourself to Hanna. And while you're there, go out and join Ben's Friends.

You'll be amazed what a little jog can do for your heart.

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### **Common Sense**

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend by the name of Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valued lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge).

His health began to rapidly deteriorate when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place.

Reports of a six-year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but not could inform parents when students became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Finally, Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, spilled it in her lap, and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility, and his son, Reason. He is survived by two stepbrothers, My Rights and Ima Whiner. Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

If you still know him pas this on. If not you can give him a second death.