



13th Annual Texas Shotgun

So I am standing on the tee box of some godforsaken hole on this course in Keller, Texas called Sky Creek Ranch. Jared Hatfield, fellow Texas Shotgun Golf Chair, was adamant that I play it that day and I should have known something was up.

The whole reason that we were on the links was because of the unanimous decision of our highly esteemed Golf Committee who knew we needed to act fast! They were worried, and with good reason, that we were getting an even later start than usual and we desperately needed to kick start our planning for the 13th year of hosting the Texas Shotgun Golf Tournament benefitting the Children's Medical Center. Having just donated \$15,000 last year at the generosity of our sponsors and attendees we definitely had our work cut out for us and they thought this was just what the doctor ordered.

From the moment I arrived at Jared's home course I knew I was in serious trouble but by then it was too late. It was dreadfully obvious that he had selected this course because of the ridiculously tight fairways that not one of my shots could ever hit. His first golfing victory would finally come...or so he thought.

I subtly counted the 13 balls in my bag and came to the obvious conclusion that it wouldn't be enough. At the same time I tried to psych myself up that "Sky Creek Ranch" sounded more like a Spa rather than the 4 hour walk through one of the circles of hell where merely achieving doubles and triples would have been outstanding.

The fact that it was 103 degrees with at least 120 percent humidity and was conveniently cart path only almost seemed fitting. I continually wiped the sweat from my brow with the motion of a set of windshield wipers that were stuck in the fast position. It was then that I noticed I was surrounded by nothing but trees and water interrupted only by this unexplained sizzling noise which seemed to be coming from my arms and face following a very liberal application of some unlabeled sunscreen which mysteriously appeared on my side of the cart.

Looking down the first fairway I began praying that somewhere between hole 2-18 there would be significant evidence of either a beaver or termite infestation which would help to open the course up. With the odd smell of cooked bacon in the air we teed off quickly with me blistering one deep into the woods down the left side which had me immediately thinking I should have brought a gallon of bug repellent. Jared blasted one (relatively speaking of course) 120 to 135 yards right down the middle and the game was definitely on.

Having never seen so many trees in one place and with each hole looking exactly the same I began to wonder if it was possible that this wasn't a golf course at all but rather a National Forest Preserve that he had rented for the day and somehow quickly mowed these ratty fairways and greens. Of course it was also possible that I was on the hallowed ground of the mythical "Lumberyard" that Ty Webb of Caddyshack owned.

Despite the intentions of our Texas Shotgun Golf Committee, that day was anything but peaceful and buying two dozen over priced Pro V1's at the turn surely didn't help. Our scores were beyond horrific yet I was painfully aware that if we stopped right then Jared who showed no evidence of mosquito bites or sunburn would have beaten me for sure.

I needed to change it up bad and while I had no idea where Jared disappeared to, Tiffany the cart girl pulled up.

I filled the cooler, cracked open a Lite beer for myself and ordered him a triple. There was an odd calm for the next 2 holes as I reflected on all of the fun this yearly Charity Golf Event has given us with so many people from all over the aviation community and country attending year after year. The more I thought about it the more my natural instincts seemed to take over.

In response to Jared asking for a beer I cracked one open and secretly mixed in a healthy amount of Vodka as all good friends would do. He came back grabbed at least 4 clubs, 2 balls and left in disgust heading back across the fairway into the rough where he continued to swing like a lumberjack for some time.

I sat in the cart listening to music laughing as I remembered last year's event when a good friend, we shall call Brian, announced to everyone that he had designed a product he named the Hoss-Lock 2.0 which would guarantee your bag would not drop at any aviation golfing event specifically the Texas Shotgun. How unfortunate for him that within 4 minutes of making that very foolish proclamation and wrapping his bag tightly to his cart with heavy duty bicycle cable, four highly trained aviation Professionals with Cable Cutters arrived to prove his product was ever so slightly flawed to laughter heard around the course!

Finally with the inspiration our golf committee had hoped for, I confidently stood up with Shotgun sponsorship ideas and contests flying through my head. I grabbed my club and a sleeve of balls and like a professional walked by Jared's side of the cart and with a smirk unstrapped his bag and headed off to the woods. I then heard a beautiful sound as Jared's clubs went flying as I turned to see a tube of Bahamas Joe's Accelerator Cream which read "burns faster than Crisco" which I didn't appreciate.

What followed was definitely not so much golf but rather each of us trying to mess with the other a little bit more, trying to obtain some kind of score advantage. As you can imagine our bags were dropping like flies, drinks were being spiked without warning and with the possible onset of West Nile Virus we got in the beverage cart where our bags had been anchored with duct tape. Tiffany then drove us to our approach shot on 18 when my cell phone rang.

It was our golf committee on a conference call which temporarily allowed me to escape from a headlock that Jared had unprovoked put on me.

They asked, "How is the golf tournament planning going".

We looked at each other, raised our drink and said, "We are having a tournament this year!"

And YOU are invited!

Marc Hossack, Texas Shotgun Chairman

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