



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Divine Pairings

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps. (Proverbs 16:9)

Sunday, 2016, in Knoxville, TN, on the PGA's Korn Ferry Tour at a Monday qualifier in NY, three guys were paired together. The worst pairing of names for a golfer of any status: Jhared Hack, Adam Schenk, and Ryan Yip. That's right, Hack, Schenk, and Yip are in the same group.

I wonder if spectators heard, "Nice shot, Shanker, good putt, Yipper, or smooth swing, Hacker!" By the way, they finished Schenk -21, Yip -19 and Hack -18. The winner was JJ Spaun at -26, beating this year's PGA Champion Xander Schauffele, who finished -11.

David Cook, author and sports psychologist, writes, "When you forget about yourself and focus on those with whom (God) cross your path, you will live fearlessly, knowing neither failure nor victory has any hold on you. You will be relentlessly competitive yet full of grace, tenacious yet full of peace."

One of my board members, Bobby Hines, asked me to play golf, but he couldn't get a tee time at his course. I called the course where I was a member. The only time they had available was with a twosome, a husband and his wife, who were walking. I said we would take the time and join them.

After the normal cordial greetings and introductions, we hit our tee shots and began walking down the 1st fairway. Since trusting Jesus as our Lord and Savior many years ago, Bobby and I knew God "orders our steps." Who we were paired with that day must have been who He wanted us with.

We desire to see others come to faith in who Jesus is and what He did for us on the cross, not just because I am on staff with Links Players. We are to reflect His light and love to everyone we meet, even in our playing groups. What do people see when they play golf with you? How do you come across to others when you compete? I have to confess that I am very competitive. During a round, I can be pretty focused on my game and minimize conversation.

Last summer in the County Am, I was told some harsh things by a fellow competitor. It made me look in the mirror to see how I could do better in the future. Hopefully, I will continue to improve by considering others more and trusting that who God put in my path is divinely appointed.

I want to be relentlessly competitive yet full of grace, tenacious yet full of peace, and may I add generous, kind, patient, self-controlled, joyful, and oozing out His love.

Back to the round with our new friends. Towards the end of the round, I asked a question that spurred conversation about spiritual things. The couple, new to the area, had no friends nearby and were eager to connect. Perhaps they saw something in us or heard something that sparked an interest in learning more about Christ.

Whatever the reason, they joined me and my wife for a Christmas Eve service, and the rest is history. They began hearing the good news of Jesus in a fresh way and began a journey of faith in Him.

A pairing I wouldn't have set up, but I am so glad it was divinely appointed for us that day. So, how will you allow your golf to be used to build His Kingdom and shine your light on others? Your next pairing might not be what you wanted, but will you allow God to use it for your good and His glory?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, fill us so we can focus on those with whom You have put in our path, reflecting well your light and your love.

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Jose Alvarez

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The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.