

# Montreal Estonian Society - 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Golf Tournament

Friday, September 4, 2015

*Raimundas Filipavicius*

Karl Raudsepp should be awarded a blue jacket for his accomplishments, as a master organizer. Blue as in Estonian blue, and blue as in the bright skies that have shined, fortunately, over the Oasis Golf Club for most of the 10 years that the annual MES golf tournament has gone the distance with its durability and bad jokes about balls.

I don't remember its exact beginnings. (I'll blame this on the Saku brew that Karl had offered this token Lithuanian, one morning at his cottage, following my request for water.) As I now recall, in a much more sober senior moment, Karl, Enn Raudsepp, Mart Leetmaa, and myself had been sitting on the terrace at Oasis, full of warm cheer and cold beer after another one of our laughable rounds of golf. The merriment had somehow subsided into a serious discussion about sharing our state of exultation with more people. Out of that initial mirth around the potato chip bowl, a festive tradition was born.

Each year, I would come home jubilant, bearing medals. And so it didn't take much persuasion to convince my Filipino wife, Delia, to come and celebrate her birthday this year, on the same day as the tournament. The event turned out to be a bigger bang than she had expected. Using a Big Bertha driver, she hit the fairway on the par-3 thirteenth hole. Her ball then plunged into a bunker, surfaced again, and stopped closest to the hole for a lady golfer. (You is the woman!) Furthermore, during the award ceremonies, everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to her, as fervently as a national anthem. Now, I suspect, more smiling Filipino family faces will show up for the next Estonian bash.

Everyone leaves a winner in some way: the women who can smash a 3-iron as fiercely as Tiger Woods' ex-wife, or the men who can rip a Top-Flite from here to Tallinn (or hyperbole aside, let's say the opposite fairway.) So here are some of the favourite memories from the Baltic and non-Baltic participants at this year's 10th-anniversary celebration:

*Paul Lemay:* "Winning the MES tournament for the first time."

*Greg Halpin:* "The first MES tournament when Alex McCooeye sunk a double-breaking 30-foot putt for an eagle."

*Enn Raudsepp:* "Two memorable moments - Winning closest-to-the-hole after my daughter won it on an earlier occasion, and winning the most honest team award - which for an ethics professor is a confirmation that I chose the right career."

*Heiki Tamm:* "I'm too old to remember but I know it was all good since I keep coming back."

*Judy Tamm:* "Having Anne and Peter's grandchildren give us popsicles on the 13<sup>th</sup> hole. It is wonderful to carry on the tradition started with Heiki's father, Harald, who was awarded the oldest golfer award in his late 80's at the first MES golf tournament"

*Sonia Dorda:* "Hole 17, when everyone's balls ended up in the water. As a new player, it was nice to be on an even playing field."

*Mark Altosaar:* "Made my best drive on hole 9 when it really needed to count. Made par on hole 15 because of my drive and putt."

*Vello Taal:* "The best was winning the trophy, going home and drinking Esto Beer for the first time in my life."

*Anne & Peeter Altosaar:* "When our 2 grandchildren were here for the whole day. They had to burrow their way under our judge's table due to a heavy downpour. Then, we had them (Kalev 10 and Suvi 6) drive the golf cart. Poor Suvi's legs were too short for the accelerator pedal and she ended up in a ditch, as she wasn't concentrating on where she was driving!"

*Toomas Marley:* "I'm a rookie at the MES tourney. Last time at Lättemäe was about 40 years ago. The whole day is my favourite memory. Couple of years ago, I came to play golf with a member of the St. Lawrence Eesti Selts from Cornwall. We spent the last 6 holes in a thunderstorm, and the rest of the afternoon sitting in the sun drinking beer."

*Roy Tom:* "It was a great day with perfect weather for golf. The birdie put on the 10<sup>th</sup> hole was icing on the cake."

*Tom Ventser:* "It was a great day with my golf mates, Roy and Tonu. Perfect weather, and we golfed pretty good considering we were only three in our group."

By unanimous consent, the MES Golf Tournament has become a towel-twirling triumph. In the past, it has attracted the likes of the Estonian Chargés d'Affaires in Ottawa, Rasmus Lumi and then Riho Kruuv. And in 2015, lending his support for the second year in a row, John Halpin, the Director General of John Abbott College, the boss with the big stick, showed up to add his drives to the best-ball format.

The PGA has its Fed Ex Cup; the European Tour has its Race to Dubai; and we, on the Canadian ethnic cartball circuit, regardless of origin, now have the race to Oasis! Those who can walk and talk, sing and dance, swing and keep our eyes on the ball, will continue to stand or sit and toast: Teie terviseks! I sveikata! Chin chin! Hip hip hooray! Oogy wawa! Mabuhay hi hi! Or as Bing Crosby would have said: ba-ba-ba-boom!

For its continuing generous support of the event, the MES wishes to express its sincere gratitude to Eesti Sihtkapital Kanadas (Estonian Foundation of Canada), along with Maurice Forget, C.M., Golf & Auberge Oasis, KJR & Assoc. Inc., Andres Pedriks, Anu Nerska & David Sheridan, Vello Taal, Blue Riband Uniforms Inc. and many others whose contributions are too many to name.

And finally, a big thank you to the volunteers on the course: Anne & Peeter Altosaar, Karen Must-Lutzko and Dawn Cady (Raudsepp).

This year's winners were:

Best Overall Team - Greg Halpin, John Halpin, Paul Lemay & Karl J. Raudsepp

2<sup>nd</sup> Lowest Team Score - Geraldine Mickie, Geoff Saunders, Marie-Claire Saunders & Bill Williamson

3<sup>rd</sup> Lowest Team Score - Tõnu Onu, Roy Tom & Tom Ventser

Most Honest Team Score - Delia Filip, Ray Filip, Mart Leetmaa & Jaan Raudsepp

Closest-to-the-Hole (Pedriks Prize) - Tiit Romet

Most Accurate Drive (Female) - Dana Hearne

Most Accurate Drive (Male) - Geoff Saunders

The Putting Prize - Maria Francis Pak

Most Fashionable Attire - Toomas Marley

Woodsman Trophy - Jaan Raudsepp (Special 10th anniversary prize for spending the most time looking for balls in the woods - 10 year aggregate score)

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