

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Who would I be for a week?

By Stephen Somerville

One of my favourite pastimes is golf. I love playing the sport and also watching it, either in person at the Canadian Open or on television.

Some of you may think viewing golf on television is akin to watching paint dry, but hey, I also like watching CPAC and the provincial political channel. Yes, I don't get out much!

Other than watching the Masters tournament in early April and the U.S. Open in June, my other favourite golfing event is the Sony Open, played in Hawaii in early January.

The weather up here is usually rotten; cold, lots of snow and the sun goes down around five p.m. every day.

This is in stark contrast to the scenery that unfolds on your television; lush palm trees, beautiful mountains, deep blue oceans and green fairways.

Last year I wrote about who I would want to have in my dream foursome.

The column was a result of a discussion in the dressing room with my 'Old Timer' hockey teammates.

The other day in the change room before going out on the ice someone casually asked, if I could be any person for a short time, who would it be?

Great question, I thought.

Although I am perfectly happy with my life today, there are some potential folks who I would like to have been for a week.

I would have loved to have been Neil Armstrong during late July 1969 when he and Buzz Aldrin landed on the moon. Reading about the complexity of that touchdown and about Neil and Buzz racing against an almost empty fuel tank to find the right place to land is truly fascinating.

I would also have loved to have been golfer Lee Trevino competing against Jack Nicklaus in one of their memorable encounters ? maybe the 1971 U.S. Open at the Merion County Club in Philadelphia. Trevino defeated Nicklaus in an 18-hole playoff.

But if I had to pick one person to be for a week, it would be Walt Disney.

The reason is simple. His creations made children happy and allowed for them and their parents to have fun together, whether it was at a movie or one of his Theme parks.

Mr. Disney was an entrepreneur, a great salesman, and a true visionary. He had all the talents and abilities that, sadly, I lack.

He is also responsible for one of my fondest memories.

We were with our family-in-law at the Magic Kingdom back in 2007. My son Ryan was three at the time and my nephews were seven and ten years old, respectively.

We were in the Fantasy Land area and walking through this long hall when we turned the corner and guess who we saw? It was Mickey Mouse. I stared at my son, for what seemed an eternity, but was in reality probably a second, in order to judge his reaction. As I looked at Ryan it was as though I could see his mind working its way through what he was seeing, but was having trouble believing.

The thought progression he was going through seemed to be something like this: I think I have seen this creature before. Naw, it can't be him. Well, maybe it is him. Holy cow, it is him ? it's Mickey Mouse! Oh My God!

The look on Ryan's face was priceless.

Ryan let out a primordial scream and ran and jumped into Mickey's arms, as did my nephews.

I was able to get a great photo of the three of them with Mickey; it is one of my favourite pictures and every time I see it in my house, I smile.

Through Walt Disney's gift to children and families, this type of memory is repeated over and over, every day.

I wish that I had met Mr. Disney; he passed away in December 1966 from lung cancer. I would like to talk to him about Disney World and whether he is happy or not, with the direction of the company today.

Who would you like to be?

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