

A Moment of Pause

I just finished watching two of the best hours of the sports calendar – the Sunday back nine at Augusta. It truly is “a tradition unlike any other”.

Some of us will never get to Augusta National Golf Club, but the physical pilgrimage isn't necessary to smell the azaleas or to be transported back to simpler times with pimento cheese sandwiches costing a buck-fifty, with unknown spirits orchestrating the Georgia pines' waltz with heaven's breeze, with daydreams turning our imaginations into our own personal time machines.

It seems we all have our own unique Masters story and own reasons for an emotional attachment that cloaks us like a green jacket of memories. Augusta is a place belonging to all of us who love sports, love family, and love nostalgia.

The Masters is my favorite rite of spring. And there is no more awesome season in sports than springtime. March's madness gives way to Augusta tranquility. In between, Opening Day closes the door on winter and opens a window of celebration like no other in professional sports. The spring is abloom with sentimental moments of pause and remembrances of youth and youthful optimism. Hope springs eternal in the human heart.

The principle characters in my Masters story are my grandparents. The setting is their modest, yet sturdy brick ranch home on 4th street. The back patio is carpeted in flat green textile, as if it were always meant to be a putting green. The windows vent, operated manually by crank handles. Through the screen floats the melody of a robin's song as she splashes around in the ceramic bird bath. The smell of grilling hamburgers follow in the sound. My grandfather sits on his throne, a rocking chair with a front row seat to Amen Corner. Perhaps he misses a few holes, overcome by a nap. Awake again, he settles into a rhythm and sips his tumbler filled with two fingers of Wild Turkey, a flavor of brown water I still don't have enough hair on my chest to swallow. My glass is charged with a virgin Shirley Tem-



ple topped off with a little extra grenadine syrup for Masters Sunday. My grandmother sits at a round table with me, my sister, and cousins, shuffling a deck of cards in preparation for a game of euchre, or gin rummy, or crazy eights.

Like all good dreams, I don't know how I get here, and I don't know how it ends. The moment is enough. And in this moment, I harken back to an age of innocence.

Today as Matt Kuchar aced 16, Sergio Garcia eagled 15, eventually slipping on the green jacket, and the gallery enjoyed an additional overtime hole of free golf, I was somewhere in between the past and present, back on my grandparent's patio, completely unaware of any Syrian civil war, of any children choking to death on sarin gas, of any parliamentary nuclear options, of any churches in Egypt under attack, of any warships rerouted to the Korean Peninsula.

I am without a message to strengthen your team's business in my note to you in this issue. I am without a preview of what's to come on the following pages, although I am extremely proud of the editorial we've put forward. I just thought... well... I just thought that we could all use a break from an incessant negative news flow.

Geopolitical bullshit tried to steal my spring away. But today, Augusta made sure that didn't happen. Before reading the business end of this issue and all the best practices we have aggregated for you, I encourage you to take a moment of pause, sip your Shirley Temple, and remember your Masters story, or any story telling of the purity of past flames flickering on a wick before it melts the wax beneath it. Remember what's good, will always be so, and is “unlike any other.”

Kindly,

Jared Frank
jared@alsd.com
@JChrstophrFrank