

ROGER BIEHN

“I would not be where I am today, were it not for golf!” That’s quite a statement. His mother and wife might take exception or beg to differ, but taken in the context of where his career has taken him from its inception into today’s retirement, it is truly accurate. How does one get to be the western representative of a major American corporation? All things being equal in the qualifications to enter the corporate pool what is it that separates these men in their quest to reach the peak of the company ladder? College degrees, connections, nepotism, experience, training, personality, what is it that makes one of these diamonds in the rough shine just a little brighter?

In addition to having the pleasant personal qualities that attracts attention, the ability to get things done and degree accomplishment as resume attributes, an athletic background turned out to be an invaluable career asset. Being a high school quarterback is an indication of leadership skills. College scouts were paying attention to his football accomplishments and but for a career-ending injury, his future may have gone in another direction. Football may not be an addiction, but once it is ingrained, the male persona must keep pursuing the aura of its attraction, thus enabling number one son to achieve a college degree via scholarship and number one grandson having an attractive high school experience. His father Charlie was an accomplished baseball player pursuing aspirations through the minor league system, but eventually giving in to the realities of supporting a family instead of the dream.

SO! The company is having a golf tournament. Who can play? Those who can’t are relegated to the non- entity file in the corporate scheme of this is how we schmooze! Those who can play get paired with those executives who will later make decisions as to who gets called up to those corner suites. It could be a great deal of consideration for promotion is probably based on who they know or remember from the ranks. A golf outing is a pleasant experience and the people or peers met there are retained in the fun folder of the executive’s mind. Making a good impression during these opportunities can be an incredible advantage. OH! And getting invited to the member’s only country club can’t hurt! Is corporate membership and free tee times a perk one should overlook? I think not!

As the career progresses and the neophyte moves up the corporate pyramid the meetings with prospective customers, contractors and existing customers can often be held at golf courses and charged to the company expense account. The golfing customer enjoys these experiences and the opportunity of it happening again is more likely to occur if they have a binding relationship, like a contract. If everything else is equal with the competition the lounge at the country club is a bit more attractive than the opposition’s motel suite.

The point being is that Roger used golf as a tool throughout his career and lends a great deal of weight to just how successful it became. The career, the perks, the memberships, and the retirement package are nice, but ask him about all the courses he had the opportunity to play over those years. Those are memories no one can take from him. Don’t hesitate to include golf in your resume.