

The Messenger is published each Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings, and The Messenger/The

Bonus is published every Wednesday morning by Trey Publications Inc., 918 S. Burridge St., Troy, Ala. 36081.

Periodicals postage paid at Troy, Ala.

Postmaster:

Send address changes to Post Office Box 727, Troy, AL 36081

Reader services

Main switchboard (334) 566-4270
Back issues 566-4270
Photo reprints 670-6325
Missing paper 670-6325
To subscribe 670-6325
To send a fax 566-4281
To place an obituary 566-4270

Management team

Call the following members of the management team for help or to make comments:

Publisher

Bobby Rice 670-6308
bobbyrice@troymessenger.com

Classified/Legal advertising

Legals (205) 280-5667
publicnotices@troymessenger.com

Newsroom

Call the following editorial staff members with story ideas, news tips or comments about coverage:

Features Editor

Jaine Treadwell 670-6302
jainetreadwell@troymessenger.com

Sports Reporter

Josh Bouthwell 670-6316
joshbouthwell@troymessenger.com

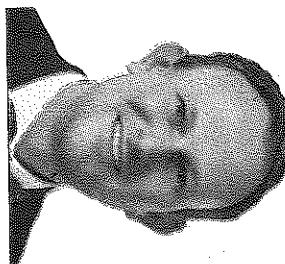
Golf is like life, focus on your next shot

I love golf. It exemplifies ideal sportsmanship by demanding integrity, etiquette, self-discipline, and respect for the game and opponents, making it not just mentally challenging but also a true test of character.

Known for manners and professionalism, golf is considered the most cognitively taxing sport because it requires patience, practice, time-management, and tenacity, hence its title "the gentleman's game."

Clever golfers often beat more skilled opponents because course management and solid ball striking, sound decisions and athleticism, workable strategies and the physical prowess to execute them are necessary to score well. Golf, like chess, involves strategic plotting and deliberation, unlike fast-paced sports that rely principally on quick reactions to sudden maneuvers.

Golf prioritizes dignity and personal responsibility. Players must be considerate of their competitors, learn and follow rules, and maintain pace of play. They must not walk in another player's line or speak during another player's swing. They must be good stewards,



Allen Mendenhall

not financial gain. Jones could have been the highest-earning golfer professional, but he opted to play for other reasons.

Of the expectations for spectators at The Masters, the tournament he founded in 1934, Jones wrote, "In golf, customs of etiquette and decorum are just as important as rules governing play. It is appropriate for spectators to applaud successful strokes in proportion to difficulty, but excessive demonstrations by a player or his partisans are not proper because of the possible effect on other competitors."

Spectators should never, he believed, celebrate a golfer's adversity: "Most distressing to those who love the game of golf is the applauding or cheering of misplays or misfortunes of a player."

An incident during the opening round of the 1925 U.S. Open cemented his reputation for honor and honesty. As he took his stance to hit from the rough, his iron caused his ball to move slightly, unnoticed by others. Jones called a penalty on himself. Commended for his self-imposed ruling, Jones demurred, "You might as well

praise me for not robbing banks."

Golf fans recall this story even if they cannot remember the name of Willie Macfarlane, the competitor who won the tournament.

In short, golf builds character and cultivates politeness, fairness, and ethical behavior. Nobody, no matter how good, consistently plays great rounds. Life is like that, too: sometimes you have tough days, but you play through them, set goals, and learn from mistakes.

This week's "Word to the Wise" is attributed to—you guessed it—Jones: "Golf is the closet game to the game we call life. You get bad breaks from good shots; you get good breaks from bad shots—but you have to play the ball where it lies."

Focus, dear reader, on your next shot.

Allen Mendenhall is Associate Dean and Grady Rosier Professor in the Somers College of Business at Troy University and Executive Director of the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy. Visit his website at AllenMendenhall.com.