

“Ticket” of Ptacek / Coopmans Deliver on Their Promise to “Make Lynx Great Again!”—“Trump” Bronkema and McGuire By NINE “Delegates”

That old cliché about April showers bringing May flowers had more than a kernel of truth for the 2016 Down & Derby. For the first time in history, our opening LMGA “major” wasn’t played entirely during the month of May.

Only the lead group on Saturday managed to finish their April round without having to play any holes in the rain. Everyone else played anywhere from 2-6 holes under a varying level of precipitation.

Despite the weather, the tag team of Rob Ptacek and Tim Coopmans “rained” pars (i.e. net birdies) over the “slate” of the other “candidates” / teams and avoided any “hail damage” in the form of net bogeys on their scorecards for both rounds.

In a post tournament e-mail to the members, LMGA Secretary / Treasurer Bill Ball noted that Ptacek and Coopmans wore matching shirts and that the association was willing to buy them **new** matching shirts, “with a bulls-eye included on the back.” Both players did test negative for steroids in the post match urine test and graciously bought a round of drinks for the rest of the field.

Final Results

1st Rob Ptacek / Tim Coopmans	121	(61 / 60)	\$300
Saturday Bucket Winners @ 2.5:1			
Sunday Bucket Winners @ 1.9:1			
2nd Ken Bronkema / Pat “Magoo” McGuire	130	(67 / 63)	200
3rd Scott Diewald / Bill “Secretariat” Ball	132	(67 / 65)	100
4th Jason Marshall / Mike Cochran	134	(66 / 68)	100

Saturday Skin Winners (5 @ \$18 each)

# 1 Roger Jackson / <i>Scott McClure</i>	(4 / 2)
# 4 Rob Ptacek / Tim Coopmans	(3 / 2)
# 10 Jason Marshall / Mike Cochran	(3 / 2)
# 13 Scott Diewald / <i>Bill Ball</i>	(3 / 2)
# 17 Rob Ptacek / <i>Tim Coopmans</i>	(5 / 4)

Sat. Pin Winners (\$23 each)

3 Tim Coopmans
6 Rob Ptacek
12 John Lambert
14 Dave Talsma

Sunday Skin Winners (5 @ \$18 each)

# 12 Ken Bronkema / <i>Pat McGuire</i>	(2 / 1)
# 13 Barry Harris / <i>David King</i>	(4 / 2)
# 14 Rob Ptacek / <i>Tim Coopmans</i>	(2 / 1)
# 16 Rob Ptacek / <i>Tim Coopmans</i>	(4 / 3)
# 17 Barry Harris / <i>David King</i>	(5 / 4)

Sun. Pin Winners (\$23 each)

3 Rob Ptacek
6 Tim Graves
12 Pat McGuire
14 Tim Coopmans

Red = Actual Birdie

Blue = Actual Par

Italic Font = Person Scoring

Saturday “Jockeying” for Position (AKA the initial 17 person GOP field)

There were a lot of parallels between the GOP nomination battle (*where a starting slate of 17 candidates was finally whittled down to one after the Tuesday May 3rd Indiana primary*) and the first day of the Down & Derby where a field of nine teams entered the “starting gate” with visions of “hope and change” (*i.e. unseating the incumbent champions Rob Ptacek and Tim Coopmans*).

Unfortunately, after the first round of “debates” known as the Saturday 18-hole round, the field had been narrowed considerably.

The “ticket” of Ptacek and Coopmans (*the former an ardent Donald Trump supporter by the way and running on a platform of “Making Lynx great again!”*), **lapped the field en route to a stellar round of 61 (i.e. -11) and took a five shot / “delegate” lead into the Sunday “convention” at Lynx Bar & Grill hoping to avoid a “floor fight” with the remaining contenders / “candidates.”**

Unlike some of the raucous radical protesters seen at several recent Trump speeches / rallies, the genteel links sport didn’t lead to any Allegan county sheriff officers having to don riot gear and use tear gas to quell any “protests” by irate golfers—unless expletives uttered after bad shots or missed putts can be considered a form of dissent.

Ray Rowe once said, “You can’t win a tournament on the first day but you can definitely lose it there!”

The political equivalent to Rowe’s Theory is McGuire’s Corollary: Winning the Hawkeye Cauci and/or the NH primary doesn’t guarantee you the nomination but getting shellacked there can dry up your fundraising and end your presidential ambitions immediately.

After Saturday’s round, there were only two teams who faced longer odds of winning than Buster Douglas against Mike Tyson after finishing over par (74 & 77). Two other teams scored 71 (*-1 or ten strokes behind*) making their odds of victory extremely slim.

Four teams were separated by two shots but remained 5-7 strokes behind the Ptacek / Coopmans juggernaut (61) after the first day. The four pairs with waning hopes of staging a Lynx version of the “Miracle on Manchester” included Jason Marshall / Mike Cochran (66), Scott Diewald / Bill Ball (67), Ken Bronkema / Pat McGuire (67) and Tim Graves / John Lambert (68).

Sidebar: On May 10th, 1982, the underdog Los Angeles Kings were down 5-0 after two periods in Game 3 of the first round against a young Edmonton Oilers team featuring future Hall of Famers Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier, Paul Coffey, Jarri Kurri, Glenn Anderson and Grant Fuhr. It got so bad that Kings owner Jerry Buss left his box / suite prior to the second intermission.

Coach Don Perry (*who had led the Saginaw Gears of the IHL and after sweeping our Kalamazoo Wings in the 1981 Turner Cup, got promoted less than a year later*) told the team to “try and win the 3rd period” to build momentum for Game 4.

The Kings scored five unanswered goals in the third period including the fifth goal with five seconds remaining in regulation. Less than three minutes into overtime, the Kings (*with an all rookie line of LW Steve Bozek, C Doug Smith and RW Daryl Evans*) had a face-off in the Oiler zone.

Doug Smith won the draw against Mark Messier (*and then used his stick to hold MM's stick while simultaneously screening Grant Fuhr*), flipped it back to right wing Daryl Evans who blasted a laser into the upper left corner past Fuhr and a stunned / elated crowd. The puck was already in the net before he could even raise his (right handed) glove. Game over. It's STILL the greatest comeback ever in a Stanley Cup playoff game.

If you're an avid NHL fan, google "Miracle on Manchester". Evans made a great shot that Fuhr never had a chance on. The Kings won Game # 5 in Edmonton 7-4 to win the series 3-2.

Could the rookie tandem of Marshall and Cochran imitate the Evans blast on Sunday? Could Bill Ball (*AKA "Secretariat"*) and Scott Diewald stage a rally? Could Bronkema and "Magoo" ham and egg their way to a round of -12 and overtake the "Trump train" (i.e. Ptacek / Coopmans)? Stay tuned!

Sunday: Thinning the Herd / Coalescing Around a Nominee

Although the April showers didn't continue into May, the temperatures were still in the low to mid-forties when **Ray Rowe** and **Ned Roethlisberger** teed off at 9:00 AM. Rowe, fresh off the DL from carpal tunnel surgery early in the year, struggled both days. With an eight handicap to play off of, this tandem met their demise on # 8. And then there were eight "candidates"!

The tandem of **Barry Harris** and **David King** were one under par through # 5 but incurred a rash of net bogeys over the remainder of the front nine. Although out of the tournament for all intents and purposes after carding 40 at the turn, King / Harris managed to win two of the five Sunday skins courtesy of two King *pars* (*#'s 13 for a net eagle and # 17 for a net birdie*). Two "candidates" eliminated, seven remain.

Roger "Buddah" Jackson and **Scott McClure** opened at -2 through # 4 but finished the front nine with a 37 (+1). That was the political equivalent of **Jeb Bush** ending his campaign after the SC primary although they did "go the distance" and finished strongly with a 32 on the back nine. The Lynx field gets whittled down to six.

Larry Monique and retired neurosurgeon **Dr. Ben Carson** (*oops, I mean golf "doctor" Dave Talsma who entered the Down & Derby with a handicap of ONE*) were destined to mount a charge after a Saturday round of 71.

The high / low handicap duo finished the front nine at four under and made net birdies on #'s 12 and 13. Unfortunately, this turned out to be their apex as they finished with net pars over the final six holes.

"Ben Carson" withdraws leaving only Jim Gilmore, Marco Rubio, John Kasich, Ted Cruz and Donald Trump left to battle it out for the championship / "nomination."

Tim Graves and **John Lambert** (*traveling "cross country" in JL's Trump style "limo" / golf cart*) shot out of the starting gate with a net birdie and net eagle on the first two holes and were still four under through # 5.

Although seven is considered a “lucky number” most of the time, the Graves / Lambert duo incurred their only net bogey of the day on this hole. It was their only stumble of the round (*they finished two under over the remaining eleven holes*) but the damage had been done.

Jim Gilmore bows out. For those wondering who Jim Gilmore is, he was a former governor of Virginia who ran for the GOP nomination but never polled above 1%. To borrow a boxing cliché when used to describe an unknown opponent, “He isn’t even a household name in his own household.”

On a local level, the late Kalamazoo mogul Jim Gilmore was an avid racing fan who sponsored Indy driver A. J. Foyt. Lambert’s “palace” / cart set he and Graves apart from the remaining “candidates” in the field. Thus the Jim Gilmore designation.

Five teams are out. The Fab Four (*not to be mistaken for the 2016 Final Four of Villanova, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Syracuse*) of Marshall / Cochran, Diewald / Ball, Bronkema / McGuire and Ptacek / Coopmans remain. However, the number of “states” / holes remaining to make up lost ground on Trump (Ptacek / Coopmans) is dwindling.

Jason Marshall and **Mike Cochran** opened with a net birdie on # 1, took a net bogey on # 4, came back with a net eagle on # 5 (*courtesy of a JM birdie*) and a net birdie on # 8 to make the turn at 33 (-3).

However, the “Florida primary” (AKA # 10) wasn’t good to the “young gun” Marshall as both he and Cochran took double bogeys (net bogeys) on the card. Unlike **Marco Rubio**, who withdrew from the GOP race after losing in his home state, JM and MC finished the round and ended up in fourth place (\$100 to split).

Six teams are gone. Only three remain.

Scott Diewald and **Bill “Secretariat” Ball** were still in the hunt when they stumbled badly in the “Texas primary” (AKA # 12) and weren’t muttering “Remember the Alamo” upon the conclusion of this “battle.”

John Kasich has been eliminated from the “battle royal” known as the GOP primary. And then there were two—Ted Cruz and Donald Trump.

“Principled conservatives” **Ken Bronkema** (*inspired by partner “Magoo” showing him a video of the Daryl Evans blast upon his arrival in the Lynx parking lot*) and **Pat “Magoo” McGuire** lit up the “**red** (*i.e. hockey goal / birdie*) **light**” through the first eight holes with net birdies everywhere but # 3 and were seven under.

Unfortunately, yours truly skonked his tee shot on # 9 into the right pines and had to drain a 15 foot putt just to save a double bogey (*net bogey—KB carded an actual bogey but didn’t stroke on the hole*). Despite that miscue, carding 30 (-6) at the turn meant the “Stop Ptacek” / Trump movement was still in play.

Bronkema saved a bogey (net par) on # 10 by holing out a putt from 10-12 feet to prevent any “bloodshed” right off the bat. McGuire then atoned for the debacle on # 9 by getting up and down for par from 4-5 feet on # 11 and then calmly draining a 5-6 foot birdie putt (*which “double dipped” for a “greenie” and “skin” on # 12 to win the above mentioned Texas primary in a rout*) to go to -9 after 12 holes. KB’s par (net birdie) on # 13 to improve the team to -10 turned out to be their zenith.

A PM triple bogey on # 14 (*net bogey since KB didn't stroke*) put a dagger in their “insurgent candidacy” and they staggered their way through the final four holes at even par—nine under for Sunday and -14 for the tournament.

Ted Cruz finished second in the final delegate count and the “tag team” **Ken Bronkema** and **Pat McGuire** took runner-up in the 2016 LMGA Down & Derby

And the tandem that outlasted the entire field / candidates is **Rob Ptacek / Tim Coopmans** (AKA **Donald Trump**).

The conventional wisdom was that a non-politician like Trump couldn't possibly win the GOP nomination against the strongest field ever and that Saturday winners RARELY win the buckets on both days.

However, 2016 is a year in which conventional wisdom has been tossed out the window.

Shooting -11 on Saturday and coming back with -12 on Sunday to finish at -23 is phenomenal! The pair didn't card a net bogey on a single hole and successfully defended their 2015 D & D title in blowout fashion.

Congratulations to the top four finishers of the Down & Derby.

The next LMGA event takes place on Saturday May 14th in a format yet to be determined.

Our next LMGA “major”, the Member / Guest occurs on Saturday June 23rd (9:00 AM) and Sunday June 24th (also 9:00 AM). For guests unfamiliar with the Lynx layout / terrain, there will be an optional practice round on Friday June 22nd with times to be determined later based on how many golfers will be playing.

Hope to see a high turnout for both events!

“Magoo”