



## **Shock, disbelief -- and pride**

### ***By Suzy Off, Puttlandia captain***

Here are some random thoughts on Puttlandia's recent experience in the EWGA Cup Pacific Regional Qualifier at Red Hawk Golf & Resort outside Reno:

The team could not agree on what was the hardest hole, but did all agree that the Hills Course was more difficult than the rating and yardage showed (67.8/121, 4,980 yds). There were many uphill holes and elevation changes. We arrived at the course for our practice round Thursday to pouring rain and flooded greens and decided it would not be good to try and play. We settled for putting games in the living room of our house. Friday was a better day weather-wise, so we set out for our practice round followed by the Rules Meeting.

Saturday was Four Ball matches, and we had an 8 a.m. shotgun start. The morning was a cool 43 degrees. I remember hitting balls at the driving range to warm up and my hands stinging with each shot. Three matches were won easily and the one match that went all 18 holes ended in a 1-down loss. Jamie had two eagles on the round, including one hole-out from the fairway! We had 3 points on the board and were looking forward to the next day's singles matches.

It rained overnight, but we were ready. The fairways were soaked -- the carts were slipping and sliding as the water sprayed along. Our cart got stuck a few times and we had to get out and push. Kimberly had to give 6 pops, Lindsay had to give 5 pops, so they were both a little worried. We were all ready to conquer the holes that got us the day before.

Jamie got in first with a big win 7 and 6. I arrived next with another strong win 6 and 4, followed by Kimberly 5 and 4, Beth 5 and 4, Lindsay 4 and 3. This was amazing -- could we really be racking up all these points!?

Lisa Becka, who runs tournaments for EWGA Headquarters, had talked about the importance of "quality wins" -- and these were quality wins. Jean came in looking deflated, but it was all good. We are a team and we had 5 wins on the books, still waiting for Sue and Elizabeth to arrive. I knew they would both be out there clawing and scratching. When Sue arrived and gave us the thumbs-up with stories of how she had clawed back from 4 down, we were all beaming. Elizabeth finally arrived and she had split her match to give us another 1/2 point. An amazing 6-1/2 points to add to our 3 points from Day 1.

As we anxiously watched the scores being posted, the realization that we had WON the Pacific Qualifier was sinking in. WOW!! This was my fifth Qualifier and the first time advancing to the Finals, let alone winning. As the congratulations came in I was in shock and disbelief that we had actually done this. Words can't describe the amazing feeling the team had (and stills has even days after winning).

We proudly wore our 1<sup>st</sup>-place medals to the airport for the trip home. As we look ahead to Florida next month. we will reflect on what got us here -- camaraderie, true grit, determination and pride. Puttlandia, I'm so proud of you!

Even more amazing was the fact that we fielded three teams from the Portland Chapter and all three teams are advancing. Way to go Portland -- so proud to be part of this amazing Match Play adventure.