

Fore play

Everything you wanted to know about golf but were too uninterested to ask

As a proud sissy, I've never been much of a jock.

On the playground my designated recess role was "timekeeper," mainly because I was one of the few kids with a digital watch synchronized to the school clock. The other qualification was my loud mouth, with which I warned everyone when the bell was about to ring.

Today, the few sports I can tolerate are mostly appealing because the athletes are babes (gymnastics) or because the commercials are entertaining (football), not because of some magical allure of competition. Besides, I'm much too busy competing with myself.

Golf is an even more elusive beast—it's one of those pastimes that seems more like an expensive lifestyle (skiing) than a sport. Sure, I have fond memories of playing miniature golf at early video arcades back in the '80s, and I love the "Hole-in-One" game on *The Price Is Right*, but I've held a grudge against golf ever since my parents moved from Salem to Umatilla in 1993. Yearning to blend in with the conservative locals, my stepdad (a fallen Sierra Club member) suddenly started swilling Scotch, voting Republican and hitting the links.

I couldn't relate on all three counts.

So last year when he invited me and my brother to join him on the driving range, I humored him by encasing myself in a plastic contraption that's supposed to improve your swing. To my surprise, it wasn't so bad. The next day we returned for a full round—with the incentive that I'd get to horse around in the golf cart.

If I can have this much fun with my hetero family, I can only imagine how lesbians must feel every spring during the Kraft Nabisco Championship in Palm Springs, Calif. The corporate-approved tournament is better known in dyke circles as Dinah!

Michele Kort's new book of the same name—subtitled *Three Decades of Sex, Golf and Rock 'n' Roll*—traces the events that led up to the annual Lesbopalooza, starting all the way back in 1567. That's when Mary Queen of Scots supposedly took up the sport, bringing along cadets from the French court to carry her clubs. Yes, Bloody Mary is credited with inventing the caddie.

Kort's breezy book taught me all sorts of other fun factoids, like who the hell is Muffin Spencer-Devlin, what the hell is a mashie niblick, and why the hell Palm Springs? For the record: Muffin was the first pro golfer to come out. A mashie was the precursor to the 7-iron. And P.S. is actually the perfect place for what comedian Kate Clinton calls "a lesbian circuit party," considering it was once home to queer icons Liberace, Marlene Dietrich and J. Edgar Hoover. Today it boasts a gay mayor and more same-sex couples than San Francisco or West Hollywood.

Queers seem to be everywhere in golf lately—despite the sad fact that, to this day, only Patty Sheehan and Rosie Jones have followed Muffin out of the closet. The British Open in July will feature its first transsexual golfer, *Mia* Bagger (not to be confused with Bagger Vance, the subject of that ridiculous Robert Redford film), thanks to new guidelines adopted by the Ladies' Golf Union. The United States Golf Association also recently removed a stipulation that championship competitors be "born female."

Progress...in golf? Not so fast. In Georgia, the House approved legislation in February to prevent Atlanta from fining the appropriately named Druid Hills Golf Club for refusing to



Jim's Closet
by Jim Radosta

THE TOP SHELF



Well, it was worth a try. My alter ego, **Marcia Gay Hardon**, entered the *Sissyboy Idol* karaoke contest April 19 dressed from head to toe in pink...with a little help from my friends: pink padded slippers sold by Spartacus' **Charlie Vazquez** (who's reading at *Queer Fetish* May 20), pink wig provided by Stef "**Madame Bouffant**" **Pinniger** (who's showing off her creations at *Medusalon* May 6) and pink fur coat courtesy of **Thomas Lauderdale** (who's tickling the ivories with *Pink Martini* May 12). I performed, appropriately enough, The *Psychodelic Furs*' "Pretty in Pink," in honor of John Hughes' upcoming sequel about the 20-year reunion of Molly Ringwald, Andrew McCarthy and John Cryer.

I ended up losing to a worthy opponent, **Fellatio Castro**, who performed a Commie version of Prince's "When Doves Cry" and later brought the house down with "Purple Rain." It wasn't exactly a level playing field, though: **Fellatio** is also known as mild-mannered musician **Holcombe Waller** (who's celebrating the release of his new CD along with **Wade McCollum** and **Geoff Stanfield** May 14). I demand a rematch!



"One man. Two women."
—Bumper sticker spotted while biking past a pickup parked outside a mechanic's garage in Southeast Portland.

treat same-sex couples equally. In the eyes of these ancient lawmakers, now that the state constitution bans gay marriage, the city's human rights ordinance is worthless.

Meanwhile, the misguided mayor of Moscow is under the impression that golf will actually deter gays. **Yury Luzhkov** suggested last month that building a course in a picturesque corner of the Russian capital would protect the environment by deterring homosexuals and other undesirables from frequenting the area. "There would be no barbecues, no picnics, no gays—nothing like that, because there would be a structure that would take responsibility for this facility," he said.

I hate to break it to you, Mr. Mayor, but golf wouldn't be the same without queers. Now, if only someone would let us redesign those tacky pants.... [G]

The **TURFGIRLZ** gay women's golf group plays every Saturday morning in Portland. For more information visit www.turfgirlz.com.
The **ABDILL-ELLIS WOMEN'S GOLF CLUB** plays every Tuesday afternoon in Southern Oregon. For more information call **Rhonda Young** at 541-621-5778 or **Sara Majors** at 541-621-3864.

Arts and Culture Editor **JIM RADOSTA** needs your feedback. Write to jim@justout.com.

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