

Old and Bold Golfing Group Tribute to Neil Dutney

Richard Clark

I am privileged to speak on behalf of the Old and Bold Golfers about our sadly deceased friend Neil Dutney, for whom we all had great affection.

I, myself, am a relative newcomer having joined this marvellous band five years ago... For the past few years, I have had the wonderful experience of sharing a golf cart with Neil two or three times a week as we bumbled our way around what looks an easy course but which always seems to turn into a sort of Hampton Court maze – or a spell in the dungeons of Torquemada.

It was in all these repetitive tests of questionable skill that I really came to know Neil, the grossly unflappable, who was also burdened with telling me where my ball had gone after every shot. This, to the point where jocularly I had asked him to lave me his eyes when he had finished with them. How sadly prescient.

I find it easy to talk about this man because his qualities were so outstanding. He was, in so many ways, head and shoulders above the pack, in his honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, and all round decency. And the inevitable secret and unspoken comparison that we all make of oneself with rare people like Neil almost always results in feelings of unease, a sort of regrettable introspection.

As a golfer Neil would have been unable to put food on the table for his family... But in his chosen profession of the Law, where trust is paramount, I cannot conceive of anyone more suited.

His father and mother must surely have rejoiced that this offspring so completely fulfilled the expectations to be just what every parent hopes for...

And now Neil is gone. He was a truly lovely companion, and we are so very much richer for knowing him and so much poorer for his passing.