

One Giant Leap for Golf

By Lane Osborne

With the recent passing of astronaut, Neil Armstrong, the world was reminded once again of the short list of other privileged men who walked on the moon after him:

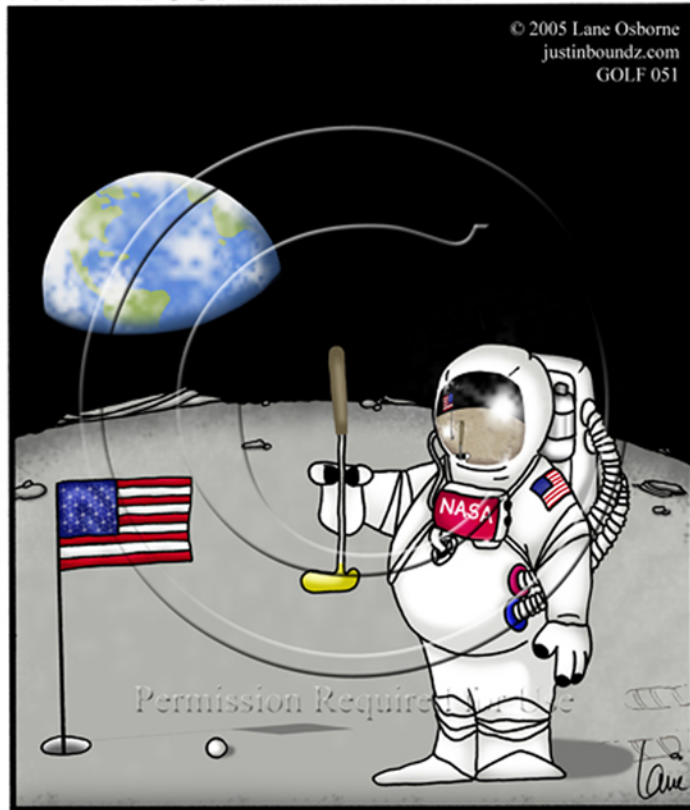
Buzz Aldrin
Pete Conrad
Alan Bean
Alan Shepard
Edgar Mitchell
David Scott
Jim Irwin
John Young
Charlie Duke
Eugene Cernan
Harrison Schmitt

But of the dozen astronauts who've set foot on the lunar surface, only one introduced a sport while there. On February 6, 1971, Alan Shepard made golf the first (and only) interplanetary sport.

Before Shepard boarded the lunar module on earth, he snuck a makeshift club he crafted from a Wilson 6-iron head and a shaft made from a lunar sample scoop handle, hiding the unassembled pieces in a side pocket of his space suit. After landing on the moon, Shepard assembled his golf club, and though limited in his range of motion due to his pressurized space suit, hit two shots one-handed that he said went, "for miles and miles and miles," making them the unofficial record for the longest drives in human history.

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