



In this Corner: Sharman, Ennis inspire golf tournament

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I cannot recall the first time I met Graham Sharman, other than it being sometime in 1990. Nor do I remember the specifics of our initial encounter. It's probably because I felt like I knew him my whole life. That was Papper's way.

No feeling-out process. No awkward silence. None of that discomfort sometimes involved with making new friends. Rather, a big smile, strong handshake and friendly conversation — and maybe some golf and a beer or two, if you happened to cross paths with him at his beloved Big Oak Public Golf Course.

Nearly three years have passed since cancer conquered the man who was still playing competitive golf and hockey not long before he died at age 75. A year later, Big Oak introduced the "Fight Against Cancer" golf tournament in honor of Sharman and Linda Ennis. Ennis, whose husband, Bob, is a longtime golfing fixture at Big Oak, died a few years earlier, also because of cancer.

The third edition of the "Fight Against Cancer" tournament is scheduled for tomorrow at the Packwood Road layout. Twenty-six foursomes have signed up. There is room for up to four more teams. If interested, call the Big Oak pro shop today at [\(315\) 789-9419](tel:3157899419). The entry fee is \$75 a person. Registration begins at 9 a.m., followed by a shotgun start at 10.

Linda Ennis' son, Jim, had tossed around the idea of a golf tournament to raise money for the American Cancer Society. When Sharman died in late July 2008, Ennis worked closely with Maureen Sharman, Graham's daughter-in-law, to make it a reality.

Dave Sharman, Maureen's husband, said it's pure coincidence the third Monday in June — the day after Father's Day — was chosen, but it's made this weekend more special than it already was.

"My brother Norm said it best: When we're having the most fun is when we're thinking about him the most and missing him the most," Dave said. "There are certain days I expect him to walk right through the door. A lot of people say the same thing. Norm gets a lot of that at Silver Creek (Golf Club) too."

During warm-weather months, Graham spent most of his waking hours at the golf course. Father's Day was not one of those days, as picnics and spending time with his kids trumped the links, Dave said.

Admittedly, the first couple of Father's Days without him have been difficult. "You kind of reflect on all the times you had with him," Dave said, "and I think that goes for everybody in my family."

Those who tee it up tomorrow morning at Big Oak will honor a pair of cancer victims' memories by raising money to fight one of the most insidious diseases known to man. It's a fine tribute to two people whose names are so closely associated with Big Oak.

Graham's name certainly didn't need to be attached with a golf tournament. Anyone lucky enough to know him will never forget Papper.

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