



# Golf Camp Leads to Lifelong Friendship



Summer  
Camp 2014



Twin Lakes  
2020



There's something reassuring about childhood friendships, especially those that are formed in summer camp. Just ask Liam Nowlin and Ryan Mychalus. The Westfield High School seniors developed a brotherly bond in the second grade after they signed up for golf camp together. Liam had so much fun taking the camp the year before, he encouraged Ryan to try it, too.

"I already had ties to baseball and thought swinging was fun, so I was already drawn to it [golf]," Ryan recalled. "I thought, 'why not try it?'"

He tried it, he liked it, and year after year, the budding golfers registered for Fairfax County Park Authority golf camps together. Summer after summer, the boys looked forward to the challenges that made learning the game fun.

"I remember the driving range," Ryan recalled fondly. "The instructors would create new games with each club with challenges to see who is more accurate, who could hit further, stuff like that. They always made it fun."

"I really liked going out on the course," Liam said enthusiastically. "You got to experience playing the game, which is a lot different from hitting balls at the range. It felt better."

They both learned the game so well, they made their high school golf team as freshmen, and they both lettered in golf as sophomores. What's more, the now 18-year-olds learned skills that will help guide them throughout the game of life, like courtesy, respect and resilience in the face of adversity.

"You can't get frustrated," Liam said as he reflected on a bad shot or any situation where things don't go your way. "You've just got to go with it. You're still in the game, and you've got to keep playing."

The life lessons will serve them well as they head off to college in the fall. Liam plans to lay the groundwork for a career in computer science. Ryan will shoot for the stars as he pursues a career as a meteorologist. While coursework will limit their time for golf, the best of friends will be forever bonded by golf camp and the successes they've shared along the way.

"Golf is a great, competitive sport, but greater as a sport to have fun and bond with friends," Ryan said. "We'll play together as long as we can."

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To find a golf camp at a Park Authority course near you, turn to the Camps section.