

# Dishing on dad for Father's Day

My dad has always gotten the short end of the stick when it comes to celebrations. His birthday is June 13, which usually falls within one week of Father's Day. So the two days which would usually consist of celebrations of the man my friends have come to call "Don Juan" (because his name is Don and he works in Mexico) usually get condensed into one.

But since it's his birthday Wednesday, when many (I hope) will be reading this, I figured I'd tell two stories about the only person who calls me little — little Jefe (Spanish for "boss") to be exact.

My dad is an avid sports fan. It probably has something to do with me being a sports fan. The correlation has to be more than just a coincidence. He's also a collector of sports memorabilia, something I've helped with on my adventures to Tennessee games he wasn't



able to attend.

The games he misses are few and far between though, even if he has to walk to the game on a broken ankle.

In 2000, we were going to watch Tennessee play Louisiana Monroe. It was going to be me, my younger brother, my dad, step mom and one of my friends. Before we left, a raging debate of who could win a game of two-on-two on our hoop outside needed to be settled.

Me and Ross Marlowe took on my dad and brother Brett, with the score bouncing back and forth the whole way. At the time I had

grown to be a couple inches taller than my dad, so he had to get separation to fire off a silky smooth jumper, especially from the corner.

The short corner in our driveway just happened to have a pretty steep drop off just a couple feet behind the asphalt, as my dad would find out on game point. He got a pass in the corner and, as I closed in to challenge, rose to fire a jumper before taking a step back.

Was there a nudge? It's never been determined, but he went barrel-rolling into the yard.

Papa wasn't a very good rolling stone.

He swears he made the shot. He also may have sworn when he realized his ankle was pretty mangled. He soldiered on to the game, walking the many steps at Neyland Stadium to see a 70-3 shellacking.

A couple of days later, he found out he had torn several ligaments in his ankle

and chipped the bone. But to this day, he says he made the shot (and I believe him).

The second story came from a post-game slip as he tried to give a pep talk to the McMinnville Mariners, our travel team. He was trying to motivate us after a loss, asking us to dig deep and show some guts. Only as he completed his talk, he spouted "you gotta have butt."

When you say butt in front of a group of 10-year-old boys, you've lost the crowd. His motivational speech turned into a comedy routine for years for his players and our family.

So yeah, maybe he's been the butt of my jokes a lot, and he probably still has side effects from a fall that I may have sent him to. But he's a great dad — one who has inspired my love for sports and helped me become the man I am today.

Happy birthday and Happy Father's Day Pops.



Don Simmons, back row, presided over the Sonic dynasty in the late 1990s. His pupils included me, bottom right, and my brother Adam, bottom left.

# Jockeying for position in junior league

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS  
Sports Editor for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Highlights weren't hard to come by at the Sam Martin Field Monday night. On a night featuring two 9-11 baseball games, along with the completion of a rain delay, spectators were treated to a one-inning romp, the completion of a perfect season and a walk-off homer.

Juicy's Wellness started the night with a 15-3 blowout of Custom Collision. The game never got out of the first frame, as Juicy's started a carousel of walks to rack up the runs.

Following a lead-off double from Daylen Holsum, Juicy's relied on free passes and speedy base running to score. The home team used the same formula over and over, with batters drawing walks, stealing second and third and then waiting on a passed ball to cross home.

It worked 13 times,

with Holsum proving to be the only player to put the ball in play. Along with his lead-off double, Holsum added an RBI groundout as Juicy's cruised to its fourth victory.

Custom Collision, which fell to 0-7 with the loss, took an early 3-0 lead courtesy of Adrian Harris' two-run single. Harris would come around to score on a bases-loaded walk later in the frame.

In the second game, Brent's Computers took the field looking for a final victory in its quest for perfection. The regular-season league champion didn't find much resistance en route to its 10th straight victory, winning 14-1 over World Finance.

Corban Felton and Hayven Jones had two hits each for the champs, while Sam Rivers and Connor Williams added one hit apiece.

World Finance (1-7) was held hitless through two innings by Williams. The team's lone run came



Josiah Laxson slides in safely to steal home during Juicy's 15-3 victory over Custom Collision Monday.

when Hunter Egerton came in to score on a wild pitch after reaching on a free pass.

Juicy's and Custom Collision took the field

again for the nightcap, resuming a game which had been delayed May 15. Kaden Jones proved to be the hero, breaking an 11-11 tie in the bottom of

the second with a game-winning, inside-the-park home run for Custom Collision.

Paige Sweeton also had an inside-the-park home

run while helping Custom Collision snap a seven-game losing streak.

The 9-11 league is scheduled to wrap up the regular season Friday.

## Swim team

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Mitchell also was part of the 100 freestyle relay, where he, Emery Stefanick, Jarrod Smart and J.P. Toney won the 11-12 division with a time of 1:11.93.

The fourth relay victory was turned in by MacDonald, Olivia Stefanick, Ava Franson and Zoey Hayes in the

100 freestyle in 8U. The quartet lapped the competition with a blazing time of 2:01.85.

Other victors from McMinnville included Macdonald (8U, 25 butterfly — 33.08 seconds) J.J. Brown (13-14 boys, 50 freestyle — 31.74 seconds), Kaylee Evans (8U, 25 breaststroke — 36.72 seconds), first-time swim team member Kylie

Morton (6U 25 backstroke — 35.64 seconds), Keenan Hayes (6U, 25 backstroke — 36.80 seconds), Bailey Connor (11-12 50 backstroke — 49.45 seconds) and Jayln Mart (15+ 50 butterfly — 30.22 seconds).

The swim team was scheduled to compete at home Tuesday against Winchester. Results were unavailable at press time.

## Mickelson eyes U.S. Open course

**SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y. (AP)** — Phil Mickelson believes Shinnecock Hills is one of the best setups he's ever seen for a U.S. Open.

At least for 17 of the holes.

The course where Mickelson twice contended on Sunday has been lengthened by some 450 yards. That doesn't bother Lefty, especially the 14th hole, which has been stretched by an additional 76 yards from 2004. It now is 519 yards, the longest of the par 4s.

Mickelson, who also has a golf course design company, likes it when the hard holes are harder and the easy holes are easier.

"So when they take 14, which is a very hard par 4, and they make it harder and move the tee back, I actually like that a lot because it allows for the players that are playing well to make up strokes on the field by making pars," he said.

He also noted that the front of the green is open, al-

lowing shots to bounce onto the green, which makes it fair for everyone.

"It's a hard par," he said. "But if you make a par there, you'll make half a shot up on the field."

One other hole was lengthened by 76 yards — the par-5 16th, which now is 619 yards. With a prevailing wind into the players, and the deep bunkers around the green, it's likely a three-shot hole for everyone in the field.

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