

A Stroke for Honesty

John Feinstein, in *Inside Sports*, relates the story of golfer Davis Love III, who in 1994 called a one-stroke penalty on himself during the second round of the Western Open.

He had moved his marker on a green to get it out of another player's putting line. One or two holes later, he couldn't remember if he had moved his ball back to its original spot. Unsure, Love gave himself an extra stroke.

As it turned out, that one stroke caused him to miss the cut and get knocked out of the tournament. If he had made the cut and then finished dead last, he would have earned \$2,000 for the week. When the year was over, Love was \$590 short of automatically qualifying for the following year's Masters tournament. Love began 1995 needing to win a tournament to get into the event.

When someone asked how much it would bother him if he missed the Masters for calling a penalty on himself, Love's answer was simple: "How would I feel if I won the Masters and wondered for the rest of my life if I cheated to get in?"



The story has a happy ending. The week before the 1995 Masters, Love qualified by winning a tournament in New Orleans. Then in the Masters, he finished second, earning \$237,600.

The only truly satisfying reward is one gained honestly, for a guilty conscience can spoil any gain.

– Beecher Hunter