

The Comfort of Cotton

Not quite sunny, not quite overcast, the day was a typical New England autumn day. The trees covered the full spectrum of colors, many shades of greens, oranges, yellows and oh so vibrant reds. The air was crisp, cool and delicious. How can air be delicious? Well your skin knows, your nose knows, your body's senses take in every tingling experience. I love it. Here I was walking on a carpet of green playing golf with a friend and enjoying the day. As the day progressed the sensations brought on by the weather triggered childhood memories and thoughts of comfort, a comfort known by soft cotton against skin.

As a child growing up, running in the backyard, falling on grass and dirt wearing a pair of blue dungarees and a heavy, gray, cotton sweatshirt on an autumn day was one of those delightful experiences that all New England kids share I suspect. I thought that my dungarees and sweatshirt were indestructible, protection from the mud, rocks and weeds of my yard and flexible for climbing trees and riding bikes. I was especially near to those feelings now. I was wearing all cotton; tan Dockers slacks and polo shirt covered by a thick cotton sweater with an American flag on the chest. I was not going to jump into the next sand trap or roll on the fairway, but I was comfortable. I was enjoying this outdoor experience and had a confidence, which partially resulted from the reassuring fabric I was wearing. But there were more thoughts of comfort.

Dressing in cotton on this day also reminded me of late fall and winter evenings and childhood nighttimes. "Time for bed" mom called. My brother and I responded by sliding into PJs (the early years with feet of course) and then crawling under heavy covers. The goodnight ritual of mom's kisses and "tucking in" accompanied by the whistling and hissing of the heat rising from the basement and passing through the large silver radiator next to the door kept us safe and comfortable for the night.

Hitting another shot next to the clubhouse alameda of maples, we walked forward; more thoughts of comfort came to me. I thought about my wife. I thought about her flannel "PJs". I did not have thoughts of lingerie but thoughts of cotton flannels. I felt the cold of the autumn evening. I heard the rustling of leaves outdoors as the wind brushed by our house and the trees outside. Sliding into bed and nestling up close to my wife, I in my boxer shorts, she in her cotton jammies, under layers of blankets, cotton and fleece, she on her side and me molding to her back, spooning they call it, covers up to our necks - this was comfort on an autumn New England evening.

"Good shot! Your swing is so smooth." Bob says.

"Thanks" I replied and we move down the fairway towards our balls. A slight breeze passes by, but I am comfortable, my cotton patriotic sweater protecting me from natural elements.