

The Foursome bond in latest play at Blackhorse Theatre

By Anne Ritchie

Blackhorse Village Players tees off to success with their current production of Norm Foster's *The Foursome*.

Stories told by four talented men at their university reunion play out in a golf game that reflects their lives. In the midst of slices and sand traps, fairways and feints, they revisit the peaks and valleys that have bonded them together for life.

Male bonding is as easy as belonging to a golf club it seems, but playing the game is different for everyone. Donnie, played by Braden Wright, brings his wife, his kids, pottery and piercings and tales of baby Herbert into the picture so consistently that they build on one another, escalating the audience's smiles to all out laughter. Wright has become the family man to a tee, his timing is exact, expressive stories delightful with refreshing honesty and Wright does it all very well.

However, contrary to his expectations, his golf partner Rick is not at all what he seems. Making his acting debut in a role that calls for quick changes of character can be a challenge, but for Douglas Dwyer, the newest star on course, it turns into a smooth landing. Dwyer has us suspecting there's something amiss in the first scenes, and as the foursome play through, the wannabe hustler who once charged \$5 for a free dance tickets to unsuspecting students must now pay up with an honest appraisal of his life. The golf game may have cost him his swing, but you'll have to see the play to find out how.

Ted, played by the ever loving Morris Durante, has his own hidden stories that unfold like ripples in a water trap. Despite being a good golfer, Ted does not have a firm handle on past or future. As the stakes are raised in the game, Durante reveals a whole new facet of Ted, the entertaining and highly engaging executive who's often hooked into being cautious and fearful. What makes him that way? See the play to find out.

Vincent Ursini is as outstanding as the golf duds that Cam, the fourth golfer, sports on the course. The man who delighted us as an angel in a previous Blackhorse production is now in a not so pleasant situation, yet his versatile talent serves him well. Ursini believably characterizes Cam: worried, harried, anxious to the point of concern over whether Ted's beers will affect not only his membership but Ted as well. It turns out his concern is well founded, but not for the reasons we would expect.

The Foursome is well worth the visit to Blackhorse, a highly entertaining enjoyable venture into the world of male bonding via the golf course told by the players who enjoy the tale as much as the audience. Many thanks are due to the excellent skills of director Cheryl Phillips, assisted by Jane Bolton.

Reserve your space on the course of this excellent comedy on stage until Jan. 28 by calling 905-880-5002.

Blackhorse Theatre is at 17272 Mount Wolfe Rd. at Highway 9.



Braden Wright, Vincent Ursini, Morris Durante and Douglas Dwyer hit the links with laughter in the current Blackhorse production *The Foursome*, a comedy by Norm Foster. Photo by Brent Mills