

RealClear Politics

Calif. Backlog; Global Vaccinations; Quote of the Week

Carl M. Cannon

June 11, 2021

Good morning, it's Friday, June 11, 2021, the day of the week when I reprise quotations intended to be uplifting or educational. Today's is a succinct observation about success that's tied to a tournament won on this date in 1950 by professional golfer Ben Hogan.

First, though, I'd point you to RCP's [front page](#), which presents our poll averages, videos, breaking news stories, and aggregated opinion pieces spanning the political spectrum. This morning's lineup includes Paul Krugman writing about the need for infrastructure legislation (New York Times); Connie Schultz on the dangers of COVID misinformation (USA Today); and Doug Bandow on the Biden-era relationship between the U.S. and Europe (American Spectator).

California Unemployment Fraud, Backlog Dog Gavin Newsom. Susan Crabtree has the [story](#).

How -- and How Not -- to Vaccinate the Entire World. At RealClearHealth, Peter Pitts [warns](#) that some ideas for global inoculation are better than others.

Wyoming Doesn't Need Medicaid Expansion to Help the Needy. At RealClearPolicy, Scott Centorino [argues](#) that the state is spending its allocated dollars efficiently and effectively.

GOP Obsession With Big Tech Hands Dems an Antitrust Club. Also at RCPolicy, Daniel Savickas [spotlights](#) a bill in New York that would label companies with at least 40% of the market share as "dominant" and subject to lawsuits to protect competitors.

Marine Biofuels Can Help Shipping Grow. Also at RCE, Jane Marsh [cites](#) algae-generated clean energy and other alternative fossil-fuel sources.

Energy Resiliency Must Be Central to Biden's Strategy. Also at RCE, Raghu Belur [advocates](#) policies that would help turn individual homes into self-reliant "microgrids."

Vince Lombardi was born on this day in 1913, in Brooklyn N.Y. The great football coach is remembered for, among other things, popularizing the aphorism "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."

Lombardi didn't coin the slogan, which first appeared publicly in an obscure 1953 sports movie starring John Wayne. (The phrase apparently originated with UCLA football coach Red Sanders.)

It's an impossible idea anyway, as Lombardi acknowledged in a 1962 Esquire interview by toning it down to "Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is!"

That's a healthier sentiment, one epitomized on this day in 1950 by Ben Hogan at the U.S. Open. William Ben Hogan was born 10 months earlier than Vince Lombardi near the central Texas town of Dublin. He never grew to be bigger than 5 foot 7 inches and 135 pounds, so he was too small for football. Hogan wouldn't have had time for it anyway. His father's suicide when Ben was 9 years old plunged his wife and children into poverty. Ben's exposure to golf came when he caddied to make money for his family. The boy took to the game, dropped out of high school to pursue it professionally, and quickly found himself vying with fellow Texan Byron Nelson for junior championships.

Today, Ben Hogan's classic swing is still studied by golf instructors, but its explosive power was acquired by hard work more than natural athleticism. Hogan practiced until his hands were cracked and blistered, and he didn't win his first major tournament until he was 28. Then he didn't stop winning.

In 1948, at a time when players on the tour ferried themselves from event to event, Hogan won 10 tournaments. Then, in February 1949, on a foggy stretch of road in West Texas, he was driving with his wife, Valerie, when a Greyhound bus passed a slow-moving truck and plowed into Hogan's car head-on. In an instant -- as his vehicle's engine was shoved into the passengers' compartment -- Hogan threw himself across his wife's lap in an effort to protect her. This split-second gambit probably saved both their lives: Valerie was not seriously injured, and Hogan survived when the steering column punctured the driver's seat, which he had just vacated. But the crash broke Hogan's collarbone, ankle, one of his ribs, and resulted in a double fracture of his pelvis.

In the hospital, blood clots from his mashed legs threatened his life. He was saved by emergency surgery, but doctors tied off surrounding veins to prevent further clots, which atrophied his legs. Hogan was told he might never walk again, let alone play professionally. He handled that the same way he handled his father's suicide: with stoicism -- and golf.

Baby steps in the hospital corridors led to gingerly performed practice swings with a golf club at home. Astoundingly, by January 1950, he was back on the tour, competing in the Los Angeles Open -- on the course where he'd won the U.S. Open in 1948.

Defying predictions, Hogan tied the great Sam Snead after 72 holes -- and four days of walking - - then lost in a playoff. Convinced he could compete at his former level, Hogan entered the U.S. Open that June, which was held in Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa.

Heading into the final round, Hogan trailed only 1946 U.S. Open champ Lloyd Mangrum. Rooting for a miracle -- the crowds were now definitely with Hogan -- some 15,000 fans followed him on the tournament's last day. They were not disappointed. His legs wrapped in bandages in the blistering heat, Hogan arrived at the 72nd hole needing par to tie for the lead, which would put him in a playoff with Mangrum and a hard-charging Philadelphia native named George Fazio. Hogan was up to the challenge, hitting a 2-iron to the green, and making his par. In the ensuing 18-hole playoff, held on June 11, 1950, he buried them both, shooting a 69, winning the second of his four Open titles. The taciturn Texan had become a fan favorite. A year

after his win at Merion, a movie celebrating his comeback appeared, with Glenn Ford playing Hogan.

Acclaim didn't change him much, because Hogan never forgot the secret of his success. "I always outworked everybody," he explained. "Work never bothered me like it bothers some people."

And that's our quote of the week