Dillon enjoys unforgettable experience caddying for Tom Watson



Louisburg High School graduate Calvin Dillon got the chance to caddy for PGA legend Tom Watson during the Watson Challenge last month.

Calvin Dillon got the phone call he never expected.

The result left him shaking and speechless. He couldn’t believe who he was talking to.

On the other end of the line, was none other than golf legend Tom Watson.

Watson needed a caddy for the Watson Challenge and was recommended Dillon, who is a young golfer himself and plays on the Central Missouri State University team.

“I’m a pretty even keeled guy and I usually don’t get too excited or too down about a given situation, but when I learned I was going to caddy for Mr. Watson I was shaking from head to toe and couldn’t speak too well,” Dillon said. “The whole thing was pretty crazy. When I woke up that day, I didn’t think in a million years I would be talking with Tom Watson over the phone about carrying his bag for the week. That’s all that I could think about for the rest of the day and that night. I was filled with so much excitement and nervousness that I could barely sleep.”

Watson’s son was supposed to caddy for him, but went down with an injury and left the PGA legend scrambling for caddy help at the last minute.

Dillon was scheduled to play in a tournament that week as well, but Watson made him an offer he couldn’t refuse.

“I’m just a lucky kid I guess,” Dillon said. “Mr. Watson contacted Doug Habel who is a tournament director for Central Links, which is the organization that runs the tournament, and asked him if he had any candidates. So Doug contacted me and asked if I would like the job. I was supposed to play in a tournament in Manhattan that same weekend, but it’s not every day that you get to carry an 8-time major winner’s bag, so I withdrew.”



Dillon, who won multiple state medals at Louisburg High School, had the chance to walk with Watson in the 3-day tournament and learn from one of the best to play the game.

“The experience was awesome,” Dillon said. “Mr. Watson was super cool and made me feel comfortable. He had me carry his range finder and yardage book in my caddy bib as well as a wet towel over my shoulder to keep his ball and clubs clean.”

The Watson Challenge, which is played at The National Golf Course of Kansas City, ended on June 5 and the three days flew by for Dillon. He even picked up a few things along the way.

“As far as golf goes, the biggest thing that I noticed about his game was that he didn’t short side himself one time,” he said. “In 54 holes of golf, he never once had to hit an uncomfortable chip with no green to work with. He always made sure that if he missed the green, it was always to the fat part, so that he had plenty of room to hit a much more manageable bump and run rather than a difficult flop shot’



Calvin Dillon hands Tom Watson his choice of club during the Watson Challenge last month.

Dillon, who will be a redshirt freshman for CMSU this fall, is playing in his fair share of tournaments this summer to improve his game. However, his three days with Watson were the highlight of his year.

He realized as good as he is at golf, Watson is an even better

person.

“Something that stuck out to me, and that I will always remember, is that Mr. Watson went out of his way to talk to young kids that were following our group and watching him play,” Dillon said. “After everyone in the group would tee off and start walking, there would maybe be a spot where the players and the gallery would come close together for 100 yards or so. Multiple times throughout each round, Mr. Watson would walk with a kid during that time and talk with them. Being a young kid and getting an interaction like that with a golfing legend is unforgettable. That to me was the coolest thing I saw all week.”