

For Bloomberg, a Round to Remember

By MICHAEL BARBARO

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Mayor [Michael R. Bloomberg](#), an avid, even obsessive golfer, has wanted for little as he tries to master the game.

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Steven Senne/Associated Press

President Obama and Vernon Jordan, right, with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg on Martha's Vineyard late last month.

He is known to play up to two rounds a day at the world's most exclusive clubs, has hired former professionals to give him pointers, and bought a digital simulator to measure the speed of his swing and the distance of his shot.

But even Mr. Bloomberg seemed a bit awed by the experience of hitting the links with [President Obama](#) recently on Martha's Vineyard.

"You know, it's a kick to be invited by the president of the United States; I don't care how blasé you are," the mayor said.

During a wide-ranging interview, he compared the president's job performance to a round of golf and revealed how much money he and Mr. Obama had lost on a bet.

The mayor and the president played together on Aug. 27 at Vineyard Golf Club in Edgartown, Mass., teaming up against Vernon Jordan, a former adviser to President Clinton, and Marvin Nicholson, a White House aide.

Despite their varying ages and heights, Team Obama-Bloomberg was well matched.

“We both would play to an 18 or a 20 handicap,” the mayor said.

To raise the stakes, the men placed a wager on the match.

In the end, Mr. Bloomberg and Mr. Obama lost, handing over \$11 apiece to their rivals, “which is not a lot,” the mayor said.

Mr. Bloomberg had kind but hardly flattering words to say about his teammate’s performance. “He did play fine,” the mayor said, with a grin.

As Mr. Bloomberg’s interest in golf has intensified, the sport has begun to creep into his everyday conversations, even when talking about the White House.

Asked to rate Mr. Obama as a leader, Mr. Bloomberg replied that “it’s like a golfer: You never put your ball on the fairway every time.”

Discussing the president’s skills on the course, the mayor, who is 5 feet 7 inches, could not resist a competitive jab.

“He’s young, he’s tall, he’s a good athlete,” Mr. Bloomberg said.

“If he worked at his game, he’d be much better than me.”

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