



Kyle Stanley is an unlikely lean champion—he probably doesn't know that he is an extraordinary example of applying lessons learned to construction or manufacturing processes. But he is clearly an example of one who got stronger from failure, who put the mantra of "continuous improvement" to work on a very large stage. Many of you probably didn't watch the Waste Management Open (golf, actually) from Scottsdale yesterday as a precursor to the Super Bowl. Some people think watching golf on TV is like watching paint dry; I don't mean to disrespect those in our community whose job it is to watch paint dry. But yesterday had a bit more drama than layering latex.

Kyle Stanley had a 5 shot lead last week at Torrey Pines. He had a three shot lead going to the 18th hole, a tricky par 5 with a famous little pond called Devlin's Billabong because Bruce Devlin took five shots to hit it out of 2 inches of water in the pond for an 11 on the hole in 1975. Stanley, in one of the great collapses of all time, hit the green in three but spun his golf ball back into the water, eventually taking an 8 on the hole, tying himself with Brandt Snedeker who won the tournament on the second playoff hole. Kyle Stanley, a tear falling from his eye, could not explain the collapse in the post tournament press conference but promised to play again next week.

Fast forward to next week—Scottsdale. Spencer Levin enters the final day with a six shot lead on the field. Stanley is actually 7 shots behind. But Stanley must have learned that one doesn't win golf tournaments without taking worthwhile risks—where the rewards are greater than the ignominy that may follow a "meltdown." Funny that losing a golf collapse is equivalent to a China syndrome event at Three Mile Island? Stanley kept pressing however and so did Levin, but in a different way. Levin is one of the few golfers on tour that allow the TV to capture him smoking cigarettes. He reportedly has no cell phone, no email and his father handles his business. But press he did as he lost the lead early on the back nine and started chain smoking to calm his nerves. At the end of the day, he lost by two shots to Kyle Stanley who had been in his position the week before.

What does this drama tell us about what we do every day in the field, in the office and in life? One golf [pundit](#) described the lesson: "That nothing is predictable, that you prepare for everything except the thing, the oversight, the accident, that ultimately proves your undoing."* The New York Times reported Stanley's reaction: "I think playing from behind was quite a bit easier," said Stanley, who was in tears after last week's collapse. "I think when you have a big lead, it's human nature to want to protect it. I think it's a little easier kind of being on the chasing side. It certainly was today."

From my perspective, it is wonderfully instructive. Last week Stanley finished second in a significant PGA event—that may not compensate for not finishing first but it shows he has enormous talent (he made \$648,000 by the way). He knew what he was doing; he just wasn't prepared for the event that ultimately proved his undoing—his own nerves. The next week, learning from his mistakes, he kept his nerves under control on the last three holes (when he was in the lead) and "finished" this time. (Note how "finish" was the mantra of the New York Football Giants all year—they also had a pretty good day).

In our community, it reminds me how we can get conservative and complacent on jobs. "We hit the schedule, what's wrong with that?" "We were under budget—that's good right?" Even the jobs that are going well deserve our continuous attention. When we drive to a schedule, we just do what we're expected to do. That's why push scheduling includes lots of contingencies to make sure we make it.



When we pull from the event, we challenge ourselves—to drive contingency out, to identify and eliminate waste, to be safer, better and more productive. We should consider every job that we're on as the "waste management open." And we need to learn from that "thing, the oversight, the accident, that ultimately proves [our] undoing." Continuous improvement, constant learning (what John Shook at the Lean Enterprise Institute calls "willful learning"), curiosity, consciousness and conscientiousness—the Five "C"s of our business. Even in the best jobs, we will fail. We need to tightly couple what we learned from that failure to the actions necessary to mitigate or avoid it next time. And more importantly, never get complacent. Never let "good enough" be the driver of our behavior. Thanks Kyle Stanley (and congratulations) for a lesson well learned and well taught.

You still have time to register for the upcoming Lean Design Forum. You should have received more information about it Monday in a blast to our members. This is an extraordinary opportunity to help us move the lean design conversation forward so please plan on attending or sending your emissaries. The conversation we begin in Berkeley with our partners P2SL and the AIA will continue into the joint meeting we're having with the Construction Users Roundtable in St. Louis in June. Owners are asking us how we integrate the design team into the programming and project with all other participants at the earliest moment. The singularity and duality of design will be the undercurrent of our discussions next week and those will inevitably lead to more robust and more productive conversations and projects within the lean community.

As the AGC rolls out its first classes in lean, we're hearing good reports from the field. Thanks to Mike Stark and Stephanie Mullins for making that a reality. Please feel free to share your comments directly with them or with Greg Howell and me. We'll be continuing to roll out modules in cooperation with AGC and we want to make sure they are as helpful.

Lots of our people were in Houston last week attending the Consensus Docs workshop held there. Thanks to Will Lichtig and Joe Cleves who co-chair the C-300 IPDA Revision Committee efforts. Kurt Dettman of the New England chapter is heading up the insurance component and Steve Knapp of Lean Project Consulting (heading up the Lean Tools Working Group). Kevin Delorey is working on the joining agreements/subcontract form. Bill Seed is representing Owner's interests in the commercial terms discussions. The upshot of the Houston conference was to actually move proposals to the Committee of the whole for comments and the working groups are now redrafting final documents. Will and Joe reported to the ABA Project Delivery Method Group at breakfast on Friday and Joe reports great support from that group.

One last thing. Many of you have been getting renewal notices as our Salesforce efforts have borne fruit. If you have an issue with your renewal date, feel free to send Shannyn a note (sheyer@leanconstruction.org) and we'll agree on renewals, etc. We've been informed by one of our sustaining sponsors, Newforma that they will continue their sponsorship. I'd like to thank Ian Howell and Jane Peel for their continued support. I'm hopeful (confident?) Ryan Suydam and the clientfeedbacktool team will make the same decision to continue their support.

Thanks for all you do out there, be safe and learn a bunch this week.