State of the USGA

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USGA EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

In a locked, glass-lidded cabinet in the USGA office there is a document entitled: “United States Golf Association—Report of the Secretary—1895.” This account of the USGA’s first year of operation, by the late Henry O. Tallmadge, ends on a happy note:

“Sufficient to say that the year 1895 has been a great one for the general development of the Royal and Ancient Game in America and for the United States Golf Association in particular.

“With a handsome balance in our treasury ($612.40), with the most costly set of trophies of any athletic organization in the world (then worth $1,500), and with a membership consisting of the representative clubs of America, I see no reason why the success of the Association for the past year should not be repeated in 1896.”

The first report tells how the Association grew from its charter membership of five clubs to 31 in the first year; today there are nearly 1,300 member clubs. In 1895 there were three Championships, and they attracted a grand total of 56 entrants; for 1949 the Association has scheduled six championships and one international match, with an anticipated total entry exceeding 6,000. The latest Annual Report of the Executive Committee, issued at the 1949 Annual Meeting in New York, reflects concern now, as in the old days, about proper conduct of championships, play by the Rules of Golf, observance of the amateur code, proper handicapping, and, by and large, fair play.

The report of the Committee’s stewardship for 1948 was accepted unanimously by the delegates to the Annual Meeting, which was the best attended in many years. Thereupon, the Executive Committee set forth on some new trails. The 1949 program calls for two major innovations.

Plans for 1949 Competitions

Girls’ Junior Championship: This new event is for girls who will not reach their 18th birthday by midnight of the final day. It is tentatively scheduled for late summer in Philadelphia.

There will be an 18-hole qualifying round to determine 32 qualifiers. They will then play 18-hole matches throughout. Entrants must be members of USGA Regular Member Clubs or must enjoy the privileges of such clubs through membership of their families. Entry fee will be $3.

A perpetual Championship trophy is being donated by Mrs. Edwin H. Vare, Jr., of Philadelphia, the former Miss Glenna Collett, who was USGA Women’s Amateur Champion six times. She and Mrs. Charles Dennehey, USGA Women’s Committee member from Chicago, have taken unusual interest in instituting this sixth USGA Championship.

Women’s Championship: Sectional qualifying has been adopted to determine the

New Officials of USGA

Fabian Bachrach

Charles B. Grace

Richards, Tacoma

Corydon Wagner

They were elected to the Executive Committee at the 1949 Annual Meeting.

Mr. Grace, who lives in Philadelphia, has served as President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Pennsylvania Golf Association; while at Princeton he was Secretary-Treasurer of the Intercollegiate Golf Association of America in 1928.

Mr. Wagner resides in Tacoma, Wash., has been a Director of the Pacific Northwest Golf Association, and currently is Chairman of the PINGA Handicap Committee.
USGA Officers for 1949

At the USGA's 55th Annual Meeting: left to right: Isaac B. Grainger, New York, Secretary; James D. Standish, Jr., Detroit, Vice-President; Fielding Wallace, Augusta, Ga., President; Totton P. Heffelfinger, Minneapolis, Vice-President; Daniel A. Freeman, Jr., New York, Treasurer.

field for the Women's Amateur Championship, and the tournament proper will be entirely at match play.

The sectional tests will be held in about 26 districts, at 36 holes stroke play over two days—18 holes on Tuesday, August 30 and 18 holes on Wednesday, August 31. The handicap limit remains 6. Each Section will be allotted a fixed number of qualifiers' places for the Championship proper, based on quantity and calibre of entries. The Championship field will consist of 128 players, all to be determined by the sectional rounds except for former Champions, former British Champions, and the 1948 Canadian Champion, all of whom will be exempt.

The 128 players will be drawn for match play from the outset of the Championship at the Merion Golf Club, near Philadelphia, in the week of September 12-17.

Polls of women's sectional associations and players revealed overwhelming preference for sectional qualifying. Replies were received from 33 associations; they were unanimous in terming the plan feasible and in their willingness to cooperate. They predicted nearly 400 entrants from their sections; this does not include a few major sections which failed to report. Of players who have competed in the last three USGA Championships, 79 replied; 70 of them considered the plan feasible and said they would file entry if it were adopted.

The Committee Chairman is Miss Frances E. Stebbins, Boston.

OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP: It has become necessary to cut nine places from the usual starting field, reducing it to 162. Slow play by the field in recent years has created a condition which jeopardized the possibility of completing each day's play on schedule, especially when there are delays due to inclement weather.

AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP: Both Walker Cup Teams will be exempt from sectional qualifying this year. So will the 1949 Public Links Champion and the Junior Champion. The remaining Public Links semi-finalists will be invited to play in the sectional rounds, as heretofore has been the case with all semi-finalists.

ENTRY FEES: To help avoid deficits such as the USGA sustained in 1947 and 1948, entry fees for the Open, the Amateur and the Women's Championships have been increased from $5 to $7—the only change since the Championships were started in 1895. The Public Links Championship fee has been increased from $3 to $3.50, of which the USGA will now receive $1 instead of 50 cents; the remaining $2.50 will, as before, be used by sectional chairmen to help defray expenses of Champion-
ship qualifiers within limits which the USGA allows for this particular event. There is no change in the Junior Championship fee of $3.

In Retrospect

The Executive Committee's report for 1948 showed USGA membership at an all-time peak of 1,280 clubs, or 126 above the previous record. Net gain in the last three years was 520. Chairman of the Membership Committee is Daniel A. Freeman, Jr. Other noteworthy points in the report included:

**Rules of Golf:** Isaac B. Grainger, Chairman, said further changes for the purpose of clarity and simplicity would appear in the 1949 Rules. "Fundamentals have changed very little in the long period in which golf has been played. Probably no other game has been given such a complete trial. Therefore, no revisions are contemplated except those which would encourage observance of the Rules in both private and public competition."

**Amateur Status and Conduct:** Pre-amble to the entire report stated: "There were some unusual and unfortunate problems of amateur status. The Association strongly advises players who skate on the thin ice of semi-amateurism to decide whether to be true amateurs or to turn professional and have it over with; if they do not, their disqualification as amateurs by the Association is only a matter of time and concrete evidence."

Edward B. Leisenring, 1948 Chairman, noted a new rule adopted by the Professional Golfers' Association concerning amateurs who want to play for prize money in PGA-sponsored events. The PGA requires such players to apply for permission six months before they are allowed to compete for money. Question then arose as to the status of such players during the six-months waiting period. The USGA, in endeavoring to uphold the spirit of amateurism and to cooperate with the PGA, ruled that such players forfeit amateur status immediately when they file application to the PGA. This follows logically from the Definition of an Amateur Golfer, which provides: "An amateur golfer is one who plays the game solely as a non-remunerative or non-profit-making sport."

**Championship:** Richard S. Tufts, Chairman, pointed to Ben Hogan's record of 276 in the Open Championship, record entries of 1,411 in the Open and 1,220 in the Amateur, and inauguration of the Junior Amateur. "It is perhaps safe to prophesy that this (Junior) Championship can exert greater influence on the game of golf than any of the Association's other events."

**Implements and Ball:** John D. Ames, Chairman, found an "increased number of attempts to short-cut the way to skillful golf by artificial aids," and pointed out that the Association must continue its efforts to keep the game within its traditional limits of skill.

**Green Section:** James D. Standish, Jr., Chairman, said 1948 was one of the most successful years in Green Section history. "It was marked by a steady expansion of research and educational developments, by closer cooperation with groups having common interests, and by keener interest in our activities. Virtually every part of the United States and every golf club have felt the influence of the Green Section and have benefited from its activities."

**Treasurer:** The USGA sustained an operating loss of $14,704 in 1948 (on top of a deficit of $9,391 in 1947). Daniel A. Freeman, Jr., Treasurer, pointed out that international matches abroad in 1948 for the Curtis Cup and in 1947 for the Walker Cup had cost $7,012 and $15,696, respectively. There is no income when matches are played abroad. He reported a sharp rise in USGA administrative costs. At the end of the 1948 fiscal year the Association's surplus was $59,751.

**Sectional Affairs:** Totton P. Hefelfinger, Chairman, noted the essential work of his colleagues in helping to build the Association's membership, launching the USGA Journal, arranging sectional qualifying rounds, making numerous investigations, and general liaison.

**Public Links:** Mr. Hefelfinger, Chairman, said the all-match-play form of the 1948 Public Links Championship had proved popular and would be continued.

**Museum:** C. Pardee Erdman, Chairman, detailed a varied and intriguing list of 26 contributions to the USGA Museum and Library.