

THROUGH THE GREEN

Mortality at the First Tee

Last year 5,854 golfers entered the four USGA Championships for males. In the Sectional Qualifying, 719 won championship places.

For the 719 places, there were 718 actual starters.

No. 719 was a lad who arrived two hours late for his match in the Junior Championship. He had sat several hours in an airport a few miles from the Championship course, hoping for a bus which never came—when all he needed to do was telephone the tournament officials.

This low rate of mortality at the first tee—718 starters out of 719 possibilities in four Championships—was produced by several factors, chief being the USGA's system of substitutions.

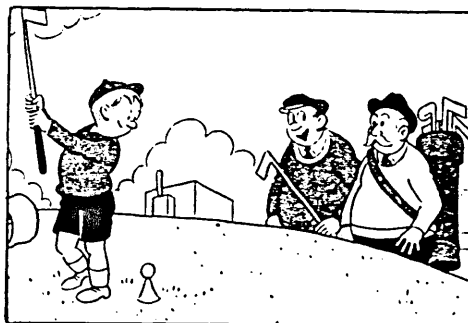
Allotment of qualifiers' places among the Sections is based on size and quality of each Section's field. Besides allotting original qualifiers' places, the USGA compiles a secondary list of Sections to which any eventually unfilled places may be re-allotted; this re-allotment list is, like the original, based upon quantity and quality.

Substitution works like this:

When a qualifier is unable to go to the Championship, the first available alternate from the same Section is substituted, in the order of qualifying scores.

But suppose a Section is unable to fill its quota of qualifiers' places? Suppose there aren't enough entrants from that Section able to go to the Championship? That is where the USGA's secondary list comes in. The vacant place is offered to the Section at the top of the re-allotment list; the Sections in this list have been rated on quantity and quality of original entrants.

For example, Harold McSpaden, an exempt player, withdrew from this year's



"Best time of his life to enjoy golf—before he learns to count."

Ed Reed Cartoon

Courtesy Register and Tribune Syndicate, Des Moines

Open Championship. Rather than have his place go to waste, the USGA re-allotted it to the Washington, D. C., Section, which was first on the re-allotment list. Bill Nary happened to be the first available alternate in the Washington qualifying, so he replaced McSpaden.

Then, one of the qualifiers at Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., was unable to compete. Despite several telephone calls, it was not possible to obtain a willing alternate from the Florida Section. As Chicago was No. 2 on the re-allotment list, Chicago's first available alternate went in—Jock Hutchison, Jr.

All this points up the necessity for qualifiers and alternates to make their intentions known promptly. Any delay is likely to keep someone from playing in a championship. Hundreds of players are eager to compete in every event.

The 1948 low rate of mortality at the first tee is being challenged this year—all 162 places available in the Open were filled. The following statistics may excite "figure filberts":

	Championship	Entries	Qualifiers	Starters
1948:	Open	1,411	171	171
	Amateur	1,220	210	210
	Public Links	2,728	210	210
	Junior	495	128	127
	TOTALS	5,854	719	718
1949:	Open	1,348	162	162

LOSS

Horrified and helpless, I saw her white form disappear over the edge of the cliff.

All day in solitude we had been in complete harmony. And now — this. An idyllic episode had ended in stark tragedy.

And in my heart I knew the blame was wholly mine. I had driven her to it.

But there was still hope. Recklessly I descended the cliff. With crying gulls mocking my loneliness, frenziedly I searched.

There was nothing. Nothing but sand and deep, sinister pools that defied my gropings. I realized that without help my search was futile.

Wearily I reascended the cliff. At length I reached the top and lay panting on the grass.

After what seemed an age, I walked back to the sort of little mound where I had been standing at the time of the accident.

With a sigh I teed up a new ball, and this time it was a winner—right down the middle of the fairway.

ALASTAIR FRAME

Reprinted from NEW ZEALAND GOLF ILLUSTRATED



Who's Afraid of Pine Valley?

What's a good score at Pine Valley?

George Baxter, of St. Albans, Long Island, has been playing the game since 1900 and has been hearing awesome tales about New Jersey's "examination in golf" for most of those fifty years. Last summer he went down to see for himself.

It didn't give him too much trouble, even though he is anything but a long hitter. He went out in 42 and he came home in 42. He never went more than one over par.

There were just two anxious moments in his round. He had to play his second shot safe on the seventh hole, and that left him with a full No. 3 iron shot to the green. He made it. Again on the long 15th, he had to play his second safe and hit a prodigious third to the edge of the green for his 6.

Mr. Baxter's 84 at Pine Valley is a good score, for Mr. Baxter's score in years is 65.

John P. English on USGA Staff



Boston Herald

John P. English

John P. English has joined the staff in the USGA Executive Office in New York as second in command.

Mr. English is a native of Boston, was graduated from Williams College in 1932, and was golf editor of the BOSTON HERALD for several years before volunteering in the Naval Reserve during the war.

He left the service with the rank of lieutenant commander and since then has lived most of the time in New York as an Associate Editor of TRUE magazine. During the last year he has been an editor of the USGA JOURNAL. He is now devoting full time to USGA work.



Simplicity in Local Rules

Local rules often are necessary, but score cards frequently contain verbiage which only complicates or defeats the best interests of the game. We particularly admire, therefore, the score card of a new USGA Regular Member, the United States Military Academy Golf Club at West Point, N.Y., which reads simply: Local Rules—1. White stakes are boundaries.

History from Memory

One of the handiest men in the USGA family is Findlay S. Douglas, Amateur Champion in 1898 and President of the Association in 1929 and 1930.

Mr. Douglas's memory is phenomenal. The other day we had occasion to test it in a quest for facts regarding introduction of the rubber-core ball into Championship play. He was more than equal to the occasion.

"It was in the Amateur Championship of 1901 at the Country Club of Atlantic City," Mr. Douglas responded, with less hesitation than a duffer at the top of his backswing.

"William Holabird, Jr., brought several of the new balls from Chicago and used them in the qualifying round. After he was beaten in the second round, he gave some to Walter Travis. Walter used the rubber-core ball in the last rounds of the Championship, and won it.

"Several leading players started using the ball the following spring. Personally, I never did use it at all in those years."

J. Frederic Byers

Golf has lost one of its keenest devotees in the passing of J. Frederic Byers, of Sewickley, Pa., President of the United States Golf Association in 1922 and 1923.

Mr. Byers was a member of the USGA Executive Committee in 1918 and 1919 and a Vice-President in 1920 and 1921. He was a member of both the International Relations Committee and the Advisory Committee at the time of his death.

When an active officer of the Association, Mr. Byers participated in conferences with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club which resulted in more uniform Rules and in the establishment of the Walker Cup Matches, first played in his first year as President.

His brother, Eben M. Byers, won the Amateur Championship in 1906.

SPORTSMAN'S CORNER



Sam Snead

If any contender for the Open Championship ever had reason for public bitterness, it would be Sam Snead because: (a) in 1939 he took 8 on the last hole and finished two strokes out of the Championship tie; (b) in 1947 he led Lew Worsham in the play-off by two strokes with three holes to go, and Lew won; and (c) this year Sam needed pars of 3-4 on the last two holes to tie Cary Middlecoff and finished 4-4.

Yet after he lost the 1947 play-off to Worsham, Sam made a classic speech of sportsmanship at the presentation. Maybe his heart was breaking, but one wouldn't have suspected it. Now here's a letter Sam wrote the USGA after this year's Open; it's further proof that his personal popularity is solidly based on abundant sportsmanship:

"I'm terribly sorry for not having been present at the presentation of prizes following the Open Championship. However, we had to drive quite a way that night, and I was forced to scoot.

"Middlecoff played two excellent rounds in the third and fourth rounds. He certainly deserved to win. However, I tried quite hard on my last two, but the goat just seems to skip away at the very end. I hope I may catch him before I'm through.

"Again, it was a swell tournament, and I'm looking forward to the medal, which will have some happy memories as well as discouraging ones.

"Sam Snead"

Can I Beat Myself?

Here is the reason that men and women continue to "sweat it out", hitting and chasing a small white ball over miles of grass. Laziness disappears, lethargy is drowned in hope and trepidation in the invitation of the greens.

Whether the score be in the 100s or the 70s, the desire to conquer engenders adventure in competition. And so strong is the spirit of conquest that the pleasure it brings and the thrills defy heat and cold and even drenching rain. It is not uncommon, even with snow in the air, to see players slapping their hands to restore circulation before chopping a piece of the frozen turf.

Golfers suffer aggravations beyond compare—the good drive ending in the pond, long grass discouragingly clubbed to move a hidden ball, dignity lost by wading in the brook to splash a partly submerged ball and emerging mud-spattered and bedraggled, and the irony of a lusty swing in a sand trap to raise a futile cloud of dust. Such is golf!

But beyond this looms the exhilarating thrill of a well-hit, sizzling ball disappearing in the distance. Or the charmed sphere found resting inches from the cup for a par, a birdie or an eagle.

Golf's "Can I Beat Myself?" keeps virile the red corpuscles that make a healthy body and an active mind with the relish of accomplishment. It provides for old and young, for the expert and the dub, for men, for women, for girls and for boys, wholesome adventure in competition.

HELEN B. AND ROY F. PERKINS

(Reprinted from fiftieth anniversary year book, Wannamoisett Country Club, Rumford, R. I.)

Definition Revised

QUESTION: How do I get a rub of the green off my pants?

ANSWER: See Definition in Rule 12.

The Craven

By JOHN J. O'BRIEN

(with apologies to Edgar Allan Poe)

Once upon a fairway grassy, as I swung a futile brassie,
Cutting sod and raising havoc with my more than ample score,
In a complicated antic, I was nearly driven frantic
By the raucous voice of someone, someone yapping at me: "Fore."
"Bless my soul!" I grimly muttered, oozing sweat at every pore.
Only that and nothing more.

Once again the ball addressing, trying hard to keep from pressing,
Painfully relaxing muscles from my toes up to my jaw,
Came the sound of something plopping, rolling on and gently stopping,
Stopping neatly on the fairway where no ball had been before.
"Can't he wait?" I murmured crossly, and the words stuck in my craw.
Only that and nothing more.

Then I smote with wild abandon, with the faint hope that I'd land on
Level fairway and avoid the traps that wait with yawning maw.
But the ball rose fast and faster, as if stroked by some old master
Who from Bobby Jones or Kirkwood had obtained his golfing lore.
"On in three!" I shrieked upstarting, for it reached the green's smooth floor.
One short putt to make par four.

As I crouched above my putter, thinking thoughts I dared not utter,
While I deftly tapped the pellet—from the sky a spheroid tore—
Struck me where the flesh is whitest, struck me where the pants are tightest,
Drove me to my knees in anguish, caused my putt to rise and soar.
Wafted faintly o'er the fairway came a boisterous guffaw.
Only that and nothing more.

I arose with eyes gone glassy. "Boy," I yelled "give me my brassie."
Turned about and strode to battle, like a knight in days of yore.
"Knave," I snarled, "when you're approaching, first be sure you're not encroaching
On the rights of fellow players who are putting for a score."
Swung my club and dropped him limply, as I coldly grunted, "Fore."
Only that, but lots of gore.

(From the San Diego Country Club Bulletin, submitted by Harold A. Dawson.)