

# A Champion Who Laughs

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Golf, which is alleged to be a game, must look like pretty grim business to an uninitiated watcher at a national championship. Competition has become so keen that the utmost concentration appears necessary if a player is to be in the top flight. You have to concentrate merely to play the game at all, much less to play it well.

The result is that many players of championship quality give an impression of utter self-absorption. Smiles are rare. When your average good golfer gets set to putt, the whole world stops breathing; the world, of course, is politely focused on that simple act of trying to roll a little white ball across grass into a hole in the ground. Yes, golf is a game, but with some players it is a game in name only.

By way of contrast, it is particularly refreshing to watch Mrs. Mark A. Porter, the former Dorothy Germain, of Philadelphia. Here is a happy golfer. Here is a young lady who plays as if she gets some fun out of playing, and not as if the fate of nations hung on her ability to explode one from a bunker.

## Golf Her Servant

Not that Dot Porter is exactly casual about golf. She has given it a good deal of time in her young life of 25 years. But she is the master of her golf, not its servant. She has kept it in its right place, as a game.

You could not fail to be impressed with this had you seen Dot win this year's USGA Women's Amateur Championship at the Merion Golf Club near Philadelphia. Dot had been brought up as a golfer on the Llanerch Country Club course not far from Merion and numbers of her friends were on hand to cheer.

It was like a quiet Sunday afternoon

at home for Dot. Championship or no championship, she greeted and chatted with friends between shots, stopped and patted little girls on the head, asked them how things were. Judged by modern standards, you were very pleasantly surprised that she wasn't trudging along glumly, head down. It was wonderfully natural.

Women's golf has never had a more charming, gracious Champion than Dot Porter. She is a delightful personality. Perhaps her enviable ability at keeping golf a game induces the self-control, in mind and skill, which champions need. The paramount place of the spirit is worth thinking about.

There are other factors, of course. Mrs. Porter is engrossed with her family, comprising a husband (who plays so well that he gives her handicap strokes) and a darling daughter named Nancy, who was less than a year old when Mummy won the Championship at Merion.

There is the further factor that Dot is an athlete. She has played and coached field hockey and has served as an official in hockey and basketball.

Mrs. Porter's victory at Merion was no surprise to those familiar with her record. In the last six years she has won the Women's Western Amateur Championship twice (1943 and 1944), was runner-up in the Western Open to Mrs. George Zaharias in 1944 and 1945, has won the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia Championships and has been runner-up in the Women's Eastern and the National Intercollegiate Championships.

Dot qualified in the USGA Championship twice before this year, back in 1939, when she was 15 years old, and in 1941, when she won two matches before losing on the third extra hole to Miss Helen Sigel, who eventually was runner-up.



**Mrs. Mark A. Porter**  
*The Champion*



**Miss Dorothy Kielty**  
*The Runner-up*

At Merion this year it was all match play, with a field of 128, so Dot had to win seven matches to become Champion. Among her victims were three members of the last Curtis Cup Team: Miss Dorothy Kielty, of Los Angeles, who lost in the 36-hole final by 3 and 2; Mrs. Julius A. Page, Jr., of Chapel Hill, N. C., who lost on the 21st, and Miss Dorothy Kirby, of Atlanta, who was defeated in the semi-finals by 3 and 1.

Miss Kielty in reaching the final won from several particularly strong opponents, including Miss Helen Sigel, of Philadelphia, who was runner-up last year; Miss Polly Riley, of Fort Worth, a member of the last Curtis Cup Team, and Miss Marlene Bauer, of Los Angeles. Last year, when there was a qualifying round in the Championship proper, Miss Kielty called a disqualification penalty on herself for inadvertently returning a wrong score after she had easily passed the medal play test. This year she nearly won the Championship.

Merion was a delightful host, both on and off the course. The justly famed

East Course is a great test of the game, and it brought forth some thrilling play.

One of the real features was the play of 15-year-old Marlene Bauer in being a semi-finalist. One of her victims was Mrs. Edwin H. Vare, Jr., six times Champion. Marlene this year won the first USGA Girls' Junior Championship.

It was fine to have Mrs. John L. Hulteng back in the Championship. As Miss Betty Jean Rucker, she has been Pacific Northwest Champion. Since her marriage she has lived in Providence, R.I., and is supervisor of personnel at a hospital. It took Dorothy Kirby to eliminate her in a match which went 19 holes.

One of the most interesting competitors was Miss Frances Stephens, of England, the current British Champion. She lost in the second round to Mrs. Page, who showed real mastery of rainy-day conditions.

One of the contestants was Mrs. Helen B. Stetson, of Philadelphia, who won the Championship 23 years ago on the same course. Another was Miss Margaret Curtis, of Boston, who first played in the event in 1897. A keen spectator was

Miss Frances Griscom, of Philadelphia, Champion in 1900.

The Championship this year was held on a new pattern. Its success was such that it has been decided to repeat it in 1950.

This plan provided, first, for 36-hole sectional qualifying rounds over two days. They were held in 16 sections; 24 sections were originally scheduled, but there was not enough interest to justify play in all. A total of 192 persons sent in entries; rejections for lateness and withdrawals cut the list to an ultimate 171.

After the sectional qualifying, a field of 128 in the Championship proper at

Merion competed entirely at match play, for the first time; they were paired by a sporting (blind) draw.

During an open meeting of players with the USGA Women's Committee at Merion, player sentiment was slightly over 82 per cent in favor of sectional qualifying.

The 1950 Championship will be planned on exactly the same pattern. As before, entrants must have handicaps not exceeding six strokes.

The USGA is sincerely grateful to women's sectional golf associations which kindly conducted sectional qualifying this year.

### Penalties Cut in British Rules

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Bradshaw found his ball in our Open Championship (in which he tied with Bobby Locke) would, by way of example, be an obstruction and he could, under the new Rule, move his ball without penalty. The same Rule will apply to an obstruction in a hazard, and that is a point on which obviously all will not agree.

We have made an effort to discourage the funereally slow play which is sometimes seen in competition. It is now laid down that the committee in charge shall have power to disqualify any player who in their opinion unduly delays the play of others. We have added a recommendation that this Rule should not be enforced without previous warning.

Further, in order to stop the inordinate and unnecessary lifting of the ball on the putting green in stroke competitions, it is laid down that in stroke play when a ball lying on the putting green interferes with the play of another ball, the ball nearer the hole must be played first.

There are many other minor changes, but I have tried to mention the most important ones.

And now, two final points. First, we have been throughout in consultation

with the governing bodies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, with the Joint Advisory Committee at home (representing the English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh Unions) and with the Professional Golfers' Association (British). Secondly, we have borrowed from the United States the layout of the Rules, bringing the Rules for match and stroke play together.

### FATHER

"Who's the stranger, Mother Dear?  
Look! He knows us! Ain't he queer?"

"Hush, My Own! Don't talk so wild;  
That's your father, dearest child."

"That's my father? No such thing!  
Father died, you know, last spring."

"Father didn't die, you dub!  
Father joined a golfing club."

"But they closed the club, so he  
Had no place to go, you see—"

"No place left for him to roam;  
That's why now he's coming home . . ."

"Kiss him, he won't bite you, Child!  
All those golfing guys look wild."

—RUSSELL W. HOBSON