

Three Times And??



International News Photo

1935—Ray Billows and the \$8 flivver he rode to fame in the New York State Amateur.

How would it feel to reach the final three times and yet never win the USGA Amateur Championship? The only man who knows from experience is Ray Billows. Ray is by nature a sportsman. After last year's final, a well-wisher offered condolence. "Well, somebody has to lose," Ray responded, "—but why does it always have to be me?" And he laughed. Below is Ray's explanation of the feelings behind that remark.

By RAYMOND E. BILLOWS

RUNNER-UP USGA AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP 1937, 1939, 1948.
MEMBER USGA WALKER CUP TEAM 1938.

It may seem an undesirable distinction to go down in golf history as a three-times runner-up in the USGA Amateur. However, I feel that reaching the final in this great sports event has many compensations.

I am a family man with a demanding job as a printing salesman, and, because of the limited time I have for golf, I'm well satisfied with my golf successes. The game has offered me an opportunity to know many fine people, and through it I was able to make that great trip abroad in 1938 as a member of the Walker Cup team.

Keen competition is stimulating and winning matches is exciting. Being a good winner is mighty easy, but it is so important to be a good loser. I guess I've had plenty

of practice in the latter, but I will say that, though I've lost the Amateur three times, I've won countless friends with each loss.

I love golf, and to win the Amateur is a dream I certainly would like to fulfill. I have played in it since 1934. Luck plays a small role in the matches, but for the most part the ability to concentrate under pressure is a player's greatest asset.

Golf is in my blood, and as long as I can qualify I shall be among the many trying each year for the Championship.

Three times and ?? —what does the future hold for Ray Billows in golf? Whatever is in store, I consider myself fortunate to have had fourteen rewarding years from golf.