

The Why of Amateurism

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The basis for the distinction between an amateur and a professional golfer has always been that the latter, by reason of his "unlimited" opportunity for playing the game, might be expected to acquire greater proficiency. It is by reason of this distinction that competitions like our Amateur Championship, from which professionals are barred, came into being.

In each decade, at least, of our golfing history we have had one or more amateur golfers capable of competing on equal terms with the best professionals. There have been many more, and there will be many in the field at Saucon Valley, so capable if they had chosen to step into professional ranks.

Some of the truly great champions of the game have achieved their glory as professionals after only mediocre success in amateur competition. It is these who have proven the validity of the distinction. Among them are Tommy Armour, Denny Shute, and, in Great Britain, Abe Mitchell.

At this time, when so many sports are suspect, it is comforting to reflect upon the strict requirements of the USGA for

the retention by a player of amateur status, and the fervor with which insistence upon fulfillment is made.

The fact that our amateurs must observe the highest ideals of amateurism has been the most potent influence in bringing about the present most satisfactory condition of both professional and amateur golf.

Because no man without some means, or a good job, can play a lot of golf as an amateur, many youngsters of good capabilities and good character have chosen to pursue golf as an honorable profession. On the other hand, because of rigid restrictions, there has been no temptation for the amateur to attempt encroachment upon the prerogatives of the professional.

More than in any other sport, the amateur and the professional in golf are mutually dependent and mutually supporting.

In the truest sense, the championship at Saucon Valley will be a real Amateur Championship.

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the ball travels and, vice versa, the less sand the greater distance."

Contrary to this accepted teaching, my belief is that distance is obtained from the amount the clubface is opened or shut; as the clubhead is straightened for distance, the stance becomes less open and the ball is played nearer the center. I like to visualize the ball standing in the sand on two matchstick legs and that the club cuts these legs in half.

The explosion shot means only one thing to me: the shot for the buried ball. In this case it is much better to take a 9 iron or pitching-wedge, since the flange of the sand-wedge, projecting downwards as it does, causes the clubhead to bounce

before it can go sufficiently deep under the ball, thus spoiling the stroke. The stance and clubface are square, with the ball to the left of center, and the player must aim slightly to the right of the hole to compensate for the adverse pull on the left hand by the weight of the sand. Be sure to aim at least two inches behind the ball, hitting definitely under and through the ball or the shot will be ruined. NEVER leave the clubhead in the sand. It is almost impossible to obtain any stop on shots of this type unless the sand is wet.

