

# Miss Dorothy Kirby Comes Into Her Own

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The playing of the USGA's 51st Women's Amateur Championship revealed an unusually large number of skilled golfers who were new to the upper brackets. Selection of next year's Curtis Cup Team to meet the British abroad should be a particularly interesting procedure for the USGA Women's Committee.

Yet at the end of the championship the winner turned out to be one of the most experienced players in the field. In 1933, at the age of 13, Miss Dorothy Kirby had won the Georgia Women's Championship. Now, 18 years later, she holds the USGA title.

Few if any players of comparable skill have had to wait so long before becoming Champions. Miss Kirby's record furnishes an object lesson in patient persistence and in sheer faith. Through the long years of her deferred hope, she established herself as not only a first-line golfer but also as a thorough sports-woman. There could scarcely have been a more popular coronation than hers at St. Paul, Minn., last month over the venerable course of the Town and Country Club.

It was Miss Kirby's thirteenth entry into the USGA Championship. She had made her first in 1934, when 14 years old, and has since played in every tournament except that of 1935.

As early as 1939 she reached the final, only to lose to Miss Betty Jameson. In 1947 she was again a finalist, and was defeated by a fellow-Georgian, Miss Louise Suggs, 2 down, in perhaps as sparkling an exhibition of golf as could be imagined between women amateurs.

Thus, Miss Kirby's victory in her third Championship final crowns an exceptional record which includes representation of our country in the last two Curtis Cup matches, plus many sectional and district honors.

The tortoises of golf should take a



Miss Claire Doran,  
the runner-up in  
the USGA Women's  
Amateur Cham-  
pionship.

lesson from the new Champion. She is one of the fastest of players, a crisp and decisive stroke-maker who rarely hesitates long over a problem. She simplifies the golf swing about as much as anyone you can think of—no fuss and feathers about it—just a natural-looking stroke from start to finish. Just before the tournament at St. Paul Miss Kirby made a slight adjustment in her method—she gripped the club more firmly with her left hand and altered the backward path of the clubhead a bit. She believes these modifications helped her to win.

Miss Claire Doran, of Cleveland, was a most worthy opponent for Miss Kirby in the 36-hole final match. Although she never was able to gain the lead, she always was in the running, and near the finish she gave Miss Kirby some uneasy moments. Miss Doran was 3 down after 27 holes and then won three of the next four to square the match. Thereupon Miss Kirby holed a birdie 2 and went ahead for keeps, winning by 2 and 1.

This was the closest match of the week for Miss Kirby. The five others were at 18 holes, and in four of them she was at least five holes ahead at the finish.

In the semi-finals Miss Kirby defeated Miss Grace De Moss, of Corvallis, Ore., 6 and 5, while Miss Doran went to the home hole before eliminating Mrs. Julius A. Page, Jr., of Chapel Hill, N. C., 2 up. Mrs. Page, like Miss Kirby, has a

### Among the Quarter-Finalists in The USGA Championship



Miss Grace DeMoss



Mrs. J. A. Page, Jr.

Miss Edean  
Anderson

Miss Jane Nelson

wonderful record over a long period in the Championship. She was the winner in 1937, the runner-up in 1938, and still is a leading contender even though she plays very little competitive golf.

Miss Doran has appeared on the national scene only in recent years, and has developed her game to a top grade in comparatively short order. Miss Doran, who is 27 years old, is a school teacher of both academic subjects and physical education.

Throughout the Championship at Town and Country Club it was evident that women's competitive golf in the higher ranks is in a rather radical stage of transition. This was manifested mainly by the prominence of many players who are comparatively new to the championship and also by the self-created ineligibility of a number of former Champions.

It seems to have become rather the vogue for winners of the title to turn professional. Only two of the last nine winners are still amateurs (excluding Miss Kirby). The developing interest in golf among ladies has created a field for professional employment of players who are prominent (or personable). Golf equipment manufacturers employ some to promote their products. Others give golf instruction at school and colleges, where interest in the game is growing apace.

However, there would appear to be a fairly narrow field for women professional golfers, inasmuch as the largest area of employment—at clubs—prefers men.

Miss Mary Ann  
DowneyMiss Patricia  
Lesser

*Photos by Alex Bremner*

The other side of the changing scene involves the arrival to prominence of an unusually large number of players. There are, for example the recent post-debutant of the junior set—to name a few, the Misses Pat Lesser, of Seattle; Barbara Romack, Sacramento; Barbara Bruning, New York; Betty Dodd, San Antonio; Bonnie Randolph, Columbus, Ohio.

Others who have come forward to national attention in the last few years include the Misses Carol Dinger, Tiffin, Ohio; Grace DeMoss, Corvallis, Ore; Marjorie Lindsay, Decatur, Ill.; Edean Anderson, Helena, Mont.; Patricia O'Sullivan, Orange, Conn.; Mary Lena Faulk, Thomasville, Ga.; Jane Nelson, Indianapolis; Mary Ann Downey, Baltimore; Mae Murray, Rutland, Vt.

All this adds up to a busy time for the USGA Women's Committee in selecting a Curtis Cup Team to play the British next June at Muirfield in Scotland.