

Amateurism Is in the Heart

By E. G. GRACE

HONORARY CHAIRMAN, SAUCON VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FOR 1951 USGA AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The article below consists of notes on remarks made by Mr. Grace at a USGA dinner for contestants in the 1951 Amateur Championship on September 8 at Bethlehem, Pa. Mr. Grace, who is Chairman of the Board of the Bethlehem Steel Co., greeted the guests, made a few introductory remarks in a light vein, and then spoke on amateurism in athletics substantially as follows:*

Why did the Saucon Valley Country Club seek to have the 51st Amateur Championship held here?

We have no interest in Saucon becoming a tournament club. We don't want that. We are not seeking bids for the Open or sectional tournaments. Ours is a family club aimed to serve the community, the area and our friends. It is a membership affair and wholly non-commercial. We like to think of it as a playground with swimming and tennis layouts and ample clubhouse facilities for all types of social functions.

We felt that by holding the Amateur Golf Championship here we might be able to make a contribution to amateurism in golf, and to sport in general. That seems particularly vital at this time when the public has been disturbed by commercialism, and worse, in some of our sports.

Don't misunderstand me — the bulk of play in these various sports is clean. In passing, I would like to remark that Lehigh University last season had the best football team in its history and there was no hint of commercialism or impropriety in respect to any players. Yes, American sport is generally clean, but we must face the fact that there have been various exceptions and that there has been overemphasis on the commercial end.

What Amateurism Is

Hence it is particularly important right now to emphasize that amateur golf is just that and completely that in the fullest spirit of the word. You contestants know better than anyone that you have paid your own way here, and that you are entirely on your own.

The only way in which amateurism in



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sports can be defined is in the sportsman's own heart.

If the player says to himself that the only reason he is playing (and putting up with the sacrifices and inconveniences of stiff amateur competition) is that he gets his full reward out of his enjoyment of the game, then he is a sure-enough amateur. If he expects direct or indirect cash reward, then he is a pro.

It is certainly not dishonorable to be frankly a professional; but to lie to yourself and pretend you are an amateur, when you know in your heart you are lying, is just a ruinous habit. That's the real nub of the amateur problem in athletics. Schools that are supposed to train young men, yet warp their consciences by phony amateur standards, can't have much to brag about.

Saucon Valley has felt that it could make a contribution by surrounding this tournament with an atmosphere wholly appropriate to an amateur event. You will note that we have no advertising in the tournament program. The Club will make no profit from the tournament. The food prices and the prices at the soft drink stands have been kept at normal levels. The Club has operated all of that itself rather than through concessionaires in order to keep control.

All of that emphasizes amateurism.

There is an honorable place, of course, for professional sport. Professional baseball is a great and constructive national institution. Professional golf is conducted on a high level. The players are a great credit to the sport.

There is a place for the professional and a place for the amateur, but the point is to keep the distinction sharp and clear.

I had that in mind when I was down at the Masters Tournament in Augusta last spring and talked with that greatest of amateurs, Bobby Jones. I asked him if he would be willing to write a piece for our program which would point out the place of the amateur and the place of the professional, what their separate fields are. He agreed, and his piece is in our program. It does the job beautifully. Everyone interested in sports should read it.

Here, this coming week, we are going to see the amateur end of the game. We at Saucon Valley will do our best to make this an outstanding example of what an amateur tournament can be.

Volunteer Officials

I was invited to make a few remarks on behalf of the Saucon Valley Club and why we were interested in this tournament, but any comment on amateurism would be wholly incomplete without due tribute to the Board of the United States Golf Association and its efficient staff headed by Joe Dey, its Executive Secretary.

Possibly some of you contestants may not realize that the Board of the USGA volunteer their time, paying all their own expenses, to the cause of amateur golf.

They are all busy men carrying heavy responsibilities in industry and other lines.

They run several tournaments a year and have frequent meetings, all as a contribution to the game of golf, taking nothing whatever for themselves. I can think of no finer example of public service, no finer contribution to our national sports. And their work goes on year after year.

(Addressing the USGA President:)

Mr. Standish, as long as the efforts of yourself and your associates continue, the high standard of amateurism in golf will continue to be an inspiration to amateur sport in all play throughout the country.

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Are Your Local Rules Necessary?

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or repeat some basic Rules of Golf on the club score card.

A better procedure would be for the club to furnish every member with a Rules book at the start of each season — and certainly at the start of this season, when a radically revised code has come into effect.

It is not an easy matter to rewrite a Rule of Golf into shorter or simpler form. It is practically impossible to do so and yet retain the full meaning of the Rule. There are many ifs and buts and exceptions throughout the Rules and, although we may deplore them, they are necessary.

If a club committee sets forth one basic Rule on its score card, it almost has a moral obligation to print them all, or else clutter up the score card with many of the more important Rules. But why do that when all Rules are important and when the club can readily provide a copy of the Rules book for every member to carry in his bag?

It is respectfully suggested that, on the subject of Rules, a score card should contain only the following:

“The Rules of the United States Golf Association Govern Play”

followed by such notes about defining boundaries and hazards and such local rules as may be deemed necessary.

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