

How the Public Links Event Developed

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On February 1, 1922, James D. Standish, Jr., of Detroit, persuaded the USGA Executive Committee to establish an Amateur Public Links Championship and offered to donate a perpetual trophy. The event was awarded to the Ottawa Park Course, in Toledo, Ohio, August 28-31, 1922, at the request of Sylvanus P. Jermain, president of the Toledo District Golf Association; and a USGA sub-committee on Public and Municipal Golf Courses, with Mr. Standish as chairman, was organized to conduct it. The committee had no way of anticipating what to expect and it was a matter of great satisfaction when 140 entries were received and 136 players started in the 36-hole qualifying round for 32 places in match play. The medalist by nine strokes was George Aulbach, a 19-year-old Boston University student, who scored 70-69—139. His score set a mark which held for eighteen years. Scores up to 160 qualified. In the first round, R. A. Wimmer, of Toledo, defeated A. B. Hadden, also of Toledo, at the 24th hole, a distance which has never been surpassed. The winner eventually proved to be Edmund R. Held, 19, of St. Louis, who defeated Richard J. Walsh, 18, of New York, 6 and 5, in the 36-hole final, after eliminating Aulbach on the 20th green in a semi-final. A most unusual incident occurred during match play. Two players had made their approaches on a hole near the finish when a pistol shot sounded in the rear of the gallery; a thoroughly disinterested spectator had chosen that moment to commit suicide.

1923—Prior to the second championship, at East Potomac Park, Washington, D. C., in June, 1923, the late Hon. Warren G. Harding, then President of the United States and an honorary member of the USGA Executive Committee, donated a trophy for a team competition. This second Championship was conducted on the same format as the first, except that each city area was limited to four representatives and the city team competition at the second 18 holes of qualifying. Chicago stroke play was held in conjunction with was the best of 18 teams, with a total of



Edmund R. Held

311, E. B. Lloyd and Bob White scoring 76s, John W. Dawson 78 and Matt Jans 81. Ray McAuliffe, of Buffalo, led 134 starters, with 76-77—153, to win the individual qualifying medal. Richard A. Walsh, 19, of New York, the runner-up in the first Championship, took the title by defeating J. Stewart Whitham, also of New York, 6 and 5, in the final. Both finalists represented the Scottish-American Club of New York. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes presented the trophies. Held did not enter a defense, having joined a private club.

1924—Joseph Coble, a 27-year-old Philadelphia waiter and semi-finalist the previous year, won the third Championship at the Community Country Club, Dayton, Ohio, in June, 1924. After being down at some point in every match, he defeated Henry Decker, of Kansas City, Mo., 2 and 1, in the final. The medalist was Earl McAleer, of Washington, who scored 150. The team competition was extended to 36 holes and Washington scored its first victory with a four-man total of 636. Walsh did not defend.

1925—Coble turned professional after his victory, and Ray McAuliffe, 30, of Buffalo, N. Y., succeeded him by defeating William F. Serrick, of New York, 6 and 5, in the final at the Salisbury Country Club, Salis-

bury Plains, N. Y., in August, 1925. Nelson Davis, of Cleveland, won the medal with 73-74—147, and the qualifying deadline fell to 159. New York won the team competition with a new low of 616. There were several Canadians among the 98 starters and Toronto placed ninth among the teams. Even with the Canadian representation, however, the entry was down to 103 and only 98 started. Both figures are the all-time lows.

1926—Lester Bolstad, an 18-year-old student at the University of Minnesota, defeated Carl F. Kauffmann, of Pittsburgh, 3 and 2, in the final at Grover Cleveland Park, Buffalo, in August, 1926. He remains the youngest winner. Richard J. Walsh, the 1923 Champion, won the medal with 73-73—146, and the qualifying deadline dropped to 155. Chicago won its second team championship with another new low of 608. McAuliffe, like Coble, had turned professional and did not defend.

1927—Carl F. Kauffmann, the quiet Pittsburgh stenographer, made the big step from runner-up to Champion to inaugurate a three-year reign. He defeated William F. Serrick, of New York, on the 37th green in the first extra-hole final, at the Ridgewood Golf Links, Cleveland, in August, 1927. Serrick, who fluffed his approach on the extra hole, had qualified in every Championship and had been runner-up in 1925. Kauffmann also led Pittsburgh to a team victory with a score of 639 in a record field of 20 teams, but individual medal honors went to 17-year-old Clarke Morse, of St. Louis, with 73-76—149. Bolstad, the defender, scored 164 in the qualifying and missed match play by two strokes.

1928—Kauffmann was the first Champion to enter match play in defense of his title, and, once in, he went on to beat Phil Ogden, of Cleveland, 8 and 7, in the final at Cobbs Creek Municipal Golf Course, Philadelphia, in July-August, 1928. It was the most decisive victory scored in any final and highlighted a Pittsburgh sweep of all honors. The qualifying medal went to Sam Graham, also of Pittsburgh, on his 78-74—152, as scores up to 165, the highest ever, qualified for match play. Pittsburgh also repeated in the team competition, with a four-man, 36-hole total of 646, the highest ever to win, as the team entry rose again to 23. Ganson Depew, of Buffalo, replaced

Mr. Standish as chairman of the USGA Public Links Committee.

1929—Kauffmann, now 30 years old, won for the third time in succession at the Forest Park Municipal Golf Course, St. Louis, in August, 1929. He started by tying for the medal with Milton Soncrant, of Toledo, and Patsy Tiso, of New York, at 151, and went on to beat Soncrant, 4 and 3 in the final. On the day after the final, he bested Soncrant and Tiso in a play-off for the medal, thus becoming the first Champion to win the medal, or vice versa. There was another tie, the first, for the team championship at 630, and New York defeated Louisville in this play-off to win for the second time.



Carl F. Kauffmann

1930—At the Jacksonville (Fla.) Municipal Links, in August, 1930, Kauffmann inadvertently disqualified himself by returning an erroneous score in the first qualifying round. This opened up the competition, and Al Quigley, of Chicago, took the medal with 145. The Championship, however, went to Robert E. Wingate, of Jacksonville, who defeated Joseph E. Greene, of Philadelphia, 1 up, in the final. He was the first hometown player to win. Brooklyn took the team championship to the New York area for the third time, with a score of 617.

1931—Charles Ferrera, a riveter from San Francisco who was accustomed to working in high places, ascended to the Championship at the Keller Golf Course, St. Paul, in August, 1931. He defeated Joe Nichols, a 15-year-old schoolboy from Long Beach,

Cal., 5 and 4, in the final. Nichols is the youngest player ever to reach the final. San Francisco also won the team competition, with a score of 620, as a new high of 28 teams took part. David A. Mitchell, of Indianapolis, prevented a San Francisco sweep by taking the medal, with 148, while both Kauffmann, the three-time winner, and Wingate, the defender, were failing to pass the stroke-play test. The entry, which had held comparatively steady through the first nine years, showed its first notable increase this year; 182 entered and 176 started. Both figures were new highs.

1932—Two Millers played in the final at the Shawnee Golf Course, Louisville, Ky., in July, 1932, but they were not related. R. L. Miller, who was 21 and insisted his initials didn't stand for anything, returned the Championship to Jacksonville, Fla., by defeating Pete Miller, of Chicago, 4 and 2. The winner had recently been reinstated after working for a year in a professional's shop. Joe Nichols, who had been runner-up the previous year and was now 16, won the medal with 145, and five players tied for the last two places in match play at 153, a new low. One of the five was Ferrera, the defender, and he got in on the sixth hole of the play-off. Kauffmann failed to qualify for the third successive year. Louisville set a new record of 606 in winning its first team competition. There were 213 individual entries and 32 team entries, both new highs.

1933—Charles Ferrera, the San Franciscan who had won in 1931, became the second Champion to repeat. He dethroned the defender, R. L. Miller, 3 and 2, in the final at the Eastmoreland Golf Course, Portland, Ore., in August, 1933. The Championship was the first held on the West Coast, and most of the entrants were from the West. Tab Boyer, of Portland, Ore., won the medal in a play-off with Leslie Leal, of Billingham, Wash., after they had tied at 144. Boyer scored 75-70—145 to Leal's 76-81—157 in the play-off. Los Angeles took its first team championship with 609.

1934—David A. Mitchell, of Indianapolis, the medalist in 1931, came back to defeat Arthur Armstrong, of Honolulu, 5 and 3, in the final at the South Park Allegheny County Links, Pittsburgh, in July-August, 1934. Armstrong was the first Hawaiian to reach the final of any USGA Championship.

The medalist was Albert (Scotty) Campbell, of Seattle, who scored 144; and Los Angeles retained the team championship, making a new low of 603 to win over 33 other teams, a new entry record. The format of the individual Championship was changed for the first time; sixty-four instead of thirty-two qualified for match play, the first four rounds were played in two days and the semi-final round was extended to 36 holes, like the final. Scores up to 160 earned places in match play under the new system. Ferrera, the defender, was eliminated in the third round.

1935—The new system of play was continued at the Charles E. Coffin Course, Indianapolis, in July-August, 1935, and Frank Strafaci, of Brooklyn, N. Y., won in the second extra-hole final. He defeated Joe Coria, of St. Paul, after 37 holes. Strafaci, like Held in 1922 and Walsh in 1923, was 19. Lloyd Nordstrom, of Davenport, Iowa, won the medal with 145, and the qualifying limit fell to 159. San Antonio won its first team championship by beating Louisville in a play-off. They tied at 612, and San Antonio scored 305 in the replay. Team entries reached another new high of 45. Mitchell, the defender, lost in the third round. The entry of 198 was the second largest to that time, and 196 started. R. Arthur Wood, of Chicago, became chairman of the Public Links Committee, replacing Ganson Depew.

1936—The Championship was returned to Long Island and held on the one-year-old Blue Course at Bethpage State Park, Farmingdale, N. Y., in July, 1936. B. Patrick Abbott, of Pasadena, Cal., defeated Claude B. Rippey, of Washington, D. C., 4 and 3, in the final. Rippey had set a nine-hole record for the Championship in tying for the qualifying medal; he scored 75 in the first round and then 30-40—70 in the second, for 145. His total was matched by James B. Molinari, of San Francisco, and there was no play-off. The deadline fell to 154, another new low. Strafaci was beaten in the second round. Seattle established a new low of 599 in winning its first team championship over 48 other teams, still another entry record. There were 223 entrants and 222 starters, both records, and they represented 58 cities. It was possible to handle the qualifying field only by using both the Blue and Red Courses at

Bethpage State Park. The rule that a player could not compete in both the Amateur Public Links and Amateur Championships in the same year, except by special invitation, became effective.

1937—Bruce McCormick, 28, of Los Angeles, became Champion by defeating Don Erickson, of Alhambra, 1 up, in the first all-California final at the Harding Park Course, San Francisco, in August, 1937. McCormick had been dormie-3 and saved the match only on the last green. Erickson had equalled the qualifying record established by George Aulbach in the first Championship in 1922 by scoring 67-72—139. His 67 was a new 18-hole record. The qualifying deadline of 152 represented another new low; although there were sixty-four qualifiers, it was one stroke below the old low for thirty-two qualifiers. Sacramento completed a California sweep by winning its first team championship with another new low of 587. There were 190 entrants and 186 starters. Exactly half the qualifiers were Californians, and three from that state reached the semi-final round. Abbott was eliminated in the quarter-finals.

1938—Al Leach, a 26-year-old WPA worker from Cleveland, won one of the most exciting finals at the Highland Park Municipal Golf Course, in his home town, Cleveland, in August, 1938. His opponent, Louis C. Cyr, of Portland, Ore., was 6 down after 23 holes but squared the match on the thirty-fourth hole. Leach pulled himself together and took the last hole. Cyr had qualified in an equally exciting play-off in which eighteen players tied at 151 for the last place, still another new low; Cyr's birdie 3 on the first extra hole put him in. The medalist was Walter Burkemo, 20, of Detroit, who scored 72-69—141. Two records were made in the Team Championship; Los Angeles won for the third time with an all-time four-man, thirty-six hole record of 584, and 55 teams, an all-time high, participated. The winning team comprised Don Erickson, 143, and George S. Lance, Bruce McCormick and Neil Whitney, all 147. McCormick lost on the 19th hole in the first round. The entry in this second Championship at Cleveland, reached another new high of 248, and again two courses, both at Highland Park, had to be used to handle the 247 starters in the qualifying round. Seventy-three communi-

ties had exercised their option to send representatives, and this system was making the Championship unmanageable.

1939—Sectional qualifying rounds at thirty-three sites selected by the USGA were substituted for the unlimited number of city-area rounds prior to the Championship at the Mount Pleasant Park Golf Course, Baltimore, in July, 1939. These sectional rounds attracted 2,401 entrants, the largest number received to that time for any USGA Championship. Of these 190 qualified and 178 started. The Championship proper was conducted by the same format as in previous years, and the winner was Andrew Szwedko, a 32-year-old steel worker who took the title to Pittsburgh for the fourth time and to Pennsylvania for the fifth time. He defeated Philip Gordon, of Oakland, Cal., 1 up, in the final. The qualifying round at the Championship proper developed a four-way tie at 144 among Arthur Armstrong, Honolulu, 72-72; Luke Barnes, Atlanta, 71-73; Gerry Bert, Jr., Seattle, 70-74, and Jack Taulman, Columbus, Ind., 74-70. It was the first four-way tie in any USGA Championship, and it was never played off. The team representation was reduced from four men to three, and Los Angeles again retained the team title, winning for the fourth time with a three-man, 36-hole score of 442. Charles V. Rainwater became Chairman of the Public Links Committee, replacing Mr. Wood.

1940—The sectional qualifying system had proved its worth and was continued. Thirty-eight sections were established, and the entry rose to 2,601, with 193 qualifiers and 190 starters in the Championship proper at the Rackham Golf Course, Detroit, in July, 1940. Robert C. Clark, 31, of St. Paul, won by defeating Michael Dietz, of Detroit, 8 and 6, in the final. Clark faced a sterner challenge in the semi-final when he had to play 38 holes to eliminate Ed Furgol, of Utica, N. Y. Furgol and Worth Stimits, Jr., of Colorado Springs, Colo., had tied for the medal at 138, breaking by one stroke the record which had endured for eighteen years. There was no play-off. The qualifying deadline fell to 149, the all-time low. San Francisco won the team championship with 435, a new low under the three-man, thirty-six hole system. Swedko lost his title in the first round of match play.

1941—James C. Clark, Jr., of Long Beach,

Cal., set a qualifying record of 64-71—135 to start the Championship proper at the Indian Canyon Golf Course, Spokane, Wash., in July, 1941. His score, three strokes under the old record and seven under par, represented the lowest eighteen-hole and thirty-six-hole scores made in any USGA stroke competition to that time. Clark was beaten by Jack Kerns, of Denver, in a semi-final and Kerns, in turn, bowed to William M. Welch, Jr., of Houston, Tex., 6 and 5, in the final. Robert Clark, the defender, went down in the second round. The team championship was won for the first time by Detroit with another 435. The entry rose to another new high of 2,816, of whom the Denver section alone contributed 516. The course measured only 6,277 yards and was one of the shortest on which the event has been played in modern times.

1946—The intervention of World War II did not cool Jimmy Clark's blades. When the Championship was resumed at the 6,590-yard Wellshire Golf Course, Denver, in July, 1946, he bettered by a stroke his own qualifying record with 64-70—134, eight under par and again a thirty-six-hole record for a USGA stroke competition. His play also contributed materially to Long Beach's victory in the team championship with a record total of 431 for three men playing 18 holes; to Clark's 134 were added Marshall Holt's 143 and Oscar W. Holberg's 154. Holt eliminated Clark in the first round, Welch went down in the second round and the eventual winner was Smiley L. Quick, 37, of Los Angeles, who defeated Louis Stafford, of Portland, Ore., 3 and 2, in the final. It marked the first time since 1928 that all honors had been won by players from the same metropolitan area. Quick, who had tied for twenty-sixth place in the Open, was invited to play in the Amateur Championship of the same year and went all the way to the 37th green of the final before bowing to Ted Bishop; it was the closest approach to a double in the Amateur Public Links and Amateur Championships and the best three-championship performance on record. The entry for this Championship was 3,586, the largest ever received for any USGA competition. Of these, 1,280 were from the Denver section, and preliminary rounds were required there. A driving contest was held prior to the Championship proper; Leo Roy Gann,

of Tulsa, hit one ball 316 yards, and Einar H. Hanson, of San Francisco, averaged 286 yards with three balls. James D. Standish, Jr., resumed the Chairmanship of the Public Links Committee.

1947—Wilfred Crossley, a 34-year-old Bostonian temporarily living in Atlanta, became the first since Kauffmann to win both the qualifying medal and the individual Championship, and he also led Atlanta to its first Team Championship at the Meadowbrook Golf Course, Minneapolis, in July, 1947. Crossley, a Harvard alumnus, scored 70-69—139 in the stroke rounds and never was down in match play. He beat Avery Beck, of Raleigh, N. C., 6 and 5, in the final. Beck had won a 38-hole semi-final against Benjamin J. Hughes, of Portland, Ore. With Crossley scoring 139, Walter R. Browne 143 and Charles W. Barnes 149, Atlanta tied the three-man, 36-hole record of 431 in the team competition to score the third sweep of all available honors. There were 2,633 entrants, but Quick's name was not among them. He was tardy in filing his entry, and it had been rejected. The number of qualifiers in sectional rounds was reduced to 180, of whom 179 started. In another driving contest prior to the Championship proper, Joseph Carlone, of Cleveland, hit a ball 297 yards, 10 inches.

1948—An all-match play Championship was instituted at the North Fulton Park Golf Course, Atlanta, Ga., in July, 1948, the form being precisely the same as that which had been reinstated in the Amateur Championship a year earlier. The winner, after eight rounds of match play, was Michael R. Ferentz, a 33-year-old Long Beach, Cal., bartender who was competing for the first time. He benefited by stymies to get a half and a win on the 34th and 35th holes and defeated Benjamin G. Hughes, of Portland, Ore., 2 and 1, in the final. Crossley gave up his title in the fifth round. Forty-four sectional qualifying rounds, a new high, were employed, and 210 players were qualified and started, out of an original entry of 2,728. The basis of the team championship was changed again. Play was conducted separately, at only 18 holes, stroke play, on the Saturday prior to the start of the individual Championship, and the teams of three men represented qualifying sections, rather than cities. The Raleigh, N. C., section won for the first

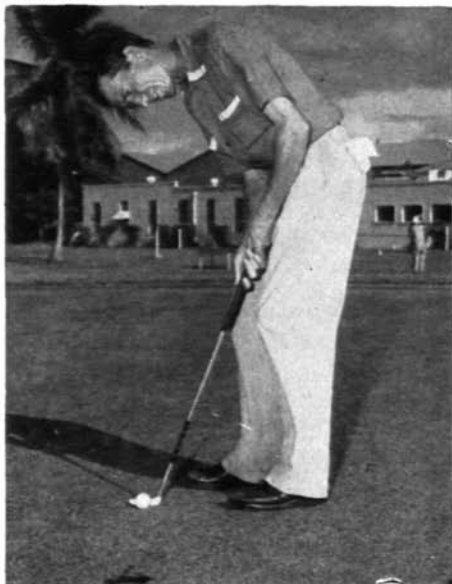
time, with a score of 223. Totton P. Hef-felfinger, of Minneapolis, succeeded Mr. Standish as Chairman of the Public Links Committee.

1949—The all-match-play form was continued, and the next winner was Kenneth J. Towns, who was 20. In an all-San Francisco final, the second all-California final, he defeated William E. Betger, a left-hander, 5 and 4, at the Rancho Golf Course, Los Angeles, in July, 1949. It was the third individual victory for a San Franciscan, and San Francisco also won its third team championship, with a new low for three men playing 18 holes of 221. By sweeping all honors, San Francisco duplicated the achievements of Pittsburgh in 1928, the Los Angeles area in 1946 and Atlanta in 1947. In the first round Ferentz was stopped, and Horace Henry of Houston, Texas, defeated Gordon B. Hammond, Jr., of Rockford, Ill., at 24 holes, equalling the extra-hole record made in the 1922 Championship. The course measured 6,850 yards, the longest on which the Championship has been held.

1950—The Silver Anniversary Championship was played at the Seneca Golf Course on its return to Louisville, Ky., in July, 1950, and Stanley Bielat, a 37-year-old truck driver from Yonkers, took the title to the metropolitan New York area for the third time. Bielat had to win four extra-hole matches to reach the final, but once there he made five birdies on the last eight holes and beat John Dobro, of Chicago, 7 and 5. Towns was eliminated in the fourth round. The Los Angeles section took the team championship to that area for the sixth time by scoring 217, the record for three-man, 18-hole competition. The team consisted of Stephen Z. Shaw, who scored 67, Robert Roux, who did a 74, and James R. Griffin, who made a 76. Thirty-eight teams participated, a record since the establishment of the event as a separate competition.

1951—Dave Stanley, a 20-year-old student at the University of California at Los Angeles, won the longest final, and the third to go extra holes, at the Brown Deer Park Golf Course, Milwaukee, in July, 1951. His par 4 on the 38th hole defeated Ralph Vranesic, of Denver. Vranesic was 5 down after 27 holes but one-putted five greens to square the match. Stanley had been

playing golf only five years, after having been crippled throughout his youth by osteomyelitis and rheumatic fever. Both finalists had had to play 37 holes to win their semi-final matches. In the Silver Anniversary of the team championship, the Dayton, Ohio, section made a score of 234 to win for the first time. Bielat lost his title in the third round. Frederick L. Dold, of Wichita, Kansas, succeeded Mr. Hef-felfinger as Chairman of the Public Links Committee.



Omer L. Bogan

1952—The Championship went to a private club, the Miami Country Club, for the first time on its return to Florida, in July, 1952, but a Californian, Omer L. (Pete) Bogan, 35, of South Gate, was the winner. He defeated Robert J. Scherer, of Decatur, Ill., 4 and 3 in the final. Like his predecessor, who was beaten by Scherer in the second round, Bogan represented the Montebello Golf Course. It marked the sixth time a Los Angelean had won and the ninth time a Californian had won. Five of the California victories had come in the last seven years. No other metropolitan area or state has provided so many individual Champions. The team championship was won by Chicago for the third time, on that section's score of 227. The number of qualifiers was reduced from 210 to 200. The Championship was the first held by the USGA under the new Rules which eliminated the stymie.