

# THE JUNIOR AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP TO DATE

**T**HE possibility of conducting a championship for boys was under consideration by the USGA prior to World War II, and discussions were resumed after the war. On January 9, 1948, the Executive Committee decided to inaugurate a Junior Amateur Championship for boys who had not reached their 18th birthday. Its purpose was to develop in the younger players a knowledge of the rules and background of the game and an understanding of the spirit in which it should be played. The first Championship was conducted by the USGA Championship Committee at the University of Michigan Golf Course, August 11-14, 1948. There were 495 entrants, of whom 128 were qualified for the Championship proper through sectional rounds at 41 locations throughout the country. The lowest qualifying score was a 69 by Warren Higgins at Dallas Country Club. This Championship, like the Amateur, was conducted entirely at match play, and Dean Lind, a 17-year-old high school graduate from Rockford, Ill., came through the seven 18-hole rounds to win. He defeated Ken Venturi, of San Francisco, 4 and 2, in the final. The youngest qualifier was Mason Rudolph, 14, of Clarksville, Tenn., who went to the quarter-final round, where he was beaten by Lind.

**1949**—The final round of the second Championship was played between two boys who qualified together at Louisville, Ky., and roomed together at Georgetown University, while play was going on at the Congressional Country Club, Washington, D. C., in July, 1949. Gay Brewer, Jr., of Lexington, Ky., another 17-year-old high school student, defeated Mason Rudolph, now 15 years old, 6 and 4. Col. Lee S. Read, of Louisville, who had brought the boys to Washington, refereed. Brewer had been eliminated in the second round the previous year. The entry dipped to 416, and the lowest qualifying score again was

a 69, by Ronnie Hughes at the Wilshire Country Club, in Los Angeles. Dean Lind, of course, was too old to enter a defense of his title.

**1950**—Young Mason Rudolph went all the way at the Denver Country Club, in July, 1950. The lad who had gone to the quarter-finals at 14 and to the final at 15 became the first 16-year-old Champion by defeating Chuck Beville, 17, of Los Angeles, 2 and 1, after twice winning on extra holes in earlier rounds. Rudolph already had qualified for the Open, and his victory in the Junior Amateur enabled him to play in the Amateur, his third USGA Championship in the same year. The first two Junior Amateur Championships had been conducted by the USGA Championship Committee, but this year a USGA Junior Championship Committee, with 54 members, was organized to stimulate local interest, conduct sectional qualifying rounds, assist at the Championship and advise on policies regarding junior golf. Richard S. Tufts, of Pinehurst, N. C., who had conducted the first two Championships as Chairman of the Championship Committee, became Chairman of the Junior Championship Committee and continued to conduct the play. Players were housed at the University of Denver. The entry rose to 457, and Jerry Fehr led them all with a record score of 66 in the sectional round at the Olympic View Golf Club, in Seattle. Gay Brewer had gone over the age limit and was not eligible to defend.

**1951**—There was a defending Champion for the first time at the University of Illinois, in July, 1951, but he lasted only four rounds. At that point, Billy Ford, of Charleston, S. C., upset Mason Rudolph by one hole. K. Tommy Jacobs, of Montebello, Cal., another 16-year-old, came on to win, defeating Floyd Addington, 17, of Dallas, Texas, 4 and 2, in the final. Jacobs had lost in the third round the previous

year. Entries this year rose to a new high of 596, and, as in the first year, 41 sectional qualifying rounds were held to accommodate them; Jimmy Powell's 69 at San Antonio, Texas, was the low score. The caliber of junior play was improving steadily. Twelve of the Junior qualifiers subsequently gained places in the Amateur, and Jacobs went to the semi-final round of that Championship. The new Junior Championship Committee also began to take shape and eleven members were present at the University of Illinois.

**1952**—Again the defender could not repeat. Don Bisplinghoff, a 17-year-old Or-

lando (Fla.) High School student, defeated Tommy Jacobs, 3 and 2, in a semi-final and succeeded him by beating Eddie Meyerson, also 17, of Los Angeles, 2 up, in the final. The Championship was held at the Yale Golf Course in July, 1952, and attracted a record entry of 711, who took part in sectional qualifying at 42 locations. The qualifying record was equalled when Dale Lingenbrink made a 66 at the same Olympic View Golf Club, in Seattle, where Jerry Fehr had set the mark two years earlier. Bisplinghoff established another scoring record when he went to the turn in 31, three under par, in the quarter-finals. The prestige of the Championship was well established, after five years, and the qualifiers represented 32 states and the District of Columbia. Among them was Vernon Stanley, 12, of Charlotte, N. C., the youngest ever to gain a place in match play.

**1953**—Rex Baxter, Jr., of Amarillo, Texas, a lean, serious boy of 17, won convincingly at the Southern Hills Country Club, Tulsa, Okla., in July-August, 1953. He defeated George Warren, III, 16, of Hampton, S. C., 2 and 1, in the final. The entry list for this event closed at a new high of 713, representing 41 states, the DC and Canada. Leo H. Jordan, Jr., technically lowered the record in sectional qualifying rounds when he played the Sante Fe Hills Country Club course, in Kansas City, Mo., in 60, although par there was only 58. Three 13-year-olds qualified, and all advanced to the fourth round. The youngest was Jack Nicklaus, of Columbus, Ohio, who had turned 13 in January. Another was Verner Stanley, who qualified for the second time. Three Canadians also qualified, but they went out in the first round. Keith Lopp, of Long Beach, Cal., and Robert L. Prall, of Salem, Ore., went farther in the second round than any pair had gone previously in match play. Lopp finally won on the twenty-third hole. Terry Thomas, of Canandaigua, N. Y., made a hole in one on the 165-yard fourteenth hole as he was losing in the third round. Donald Bisplinghoff was too old to defend.

## NEW MEMBERS OF THE USGA

### REGULAR

American Legion Golf Club, Ga.  
 Audubon Golf Club, La.  
 Bath Country Club, N. Y.  
 Blugrass Country Club, Tenn.  
 Bon-Air Country Club, Pa.  
 Brainerd Golf & Country Club, Tenn.  
 Catawba Country Club, N. C.  
 Cleveland Country Club, N. C.  
 Duquesne Golf Club, Pa.  
 Emerywood Country Club, N. C.  
 Forest Lake Country Club, Mich.  
 Fort Campbell Golf Club, Ky.  
 Galveston Country Club, Texas  
 Glen Lakes Country Club, Texas  
 Goose Creek Golf Club, Va.  
 Harvey Golf Club, N. D.  
 Indian Valley Country Club, Pa.  
 Kurth Golf Course, Texas  
 Lakeside Country Club, S. C.  
 Lincoln Hills Country Club, Wis.  
 McKinney Country Club, Texas  
 Mt. View Golf Club, Wash.  
 NCR Employees Benefit Association, Ohio  
 Pennrose Park Country Club, N. C.  
 Reedsburg Country Club, Wis.  
 St. Clair River Country Club, Mich.  
 Spring Meadow Golf & Country Club, N. J.  
 Standard Town & Country Club, Ga.  
 Toccoa Golf Club, Ga.

### ASSOCIATE

Alpena Golf Course, Mich.  
 Edgewood Country Club, Mich.  
 Minneopa Golf Club, Minn.  
 Ohio University Golf Course, Ohio  
 Purdue University Golf Course, Ind.  
 Tee-A-Way Lodge and Country Club, Wis.