

HOW JACK FLECK BEAT JACK FLECK

IF YOU WANT to win the Open Championship, on what do you concentrate in practice?

Jack Fleck has an unusual answer.

"On keeping composed," he says frankly. "In the last three years I've worked much more at keeping myself under control than at hitting shots."

You wanted to know why that was.

"Well," Jack replied, "I used to let myself get disturbed easily, and it was ruinous. I remember, for instance, one tournament on the winter circuit a few years ago when I was going well. Lynn and I were on our honeymoon. I was under par in the first round and I was also under par for the second round through the 15th hole.

"At the 16th I three-putted. I let myself get mad at myself. At the 17th I three-putted again. I hate to play badly like that, and it upset me so that, seeing my wife near the 18th tee, I told her 'You go pack up—we're going to leave.'

"Lynn looked at me as if she thought I was crazy. 'Pack up?' she said. 'Why, you're well under par.'

"I agreed that if I made a birdie on the last hole we'd stay. But I took 6, one over par, and we left the tournament then and there. I just couldn't control my feelings of deep disturbance with myself."

But how did Jack happen to change?

"A number of people helped me," the Open Champion said. "I remember once that Horton Smith, realizing the trouble I was having to keep myself under control, said to me: 'Jack, there's just one thing you've got to learn to do—PUT YOUR SCORE ON THE BOARD. Put it up there no matter whether it's 89 or 69.'

"Dr. Paul Barton has helped me a lot, too. I used to caddie for him. He has been a good player for a long time—once won the Iowa Amateur Championship. He helped me to learn about trying real hard to avoid giving in to discouragement. He told me that the only way to play the

game is always to keep on trying, no matter what happens.

"I certainly have a lot of people to thank for helping me to realize that I had to conquer myself first before I could do anything worth while."

Anyone who saw Jack Fleck win the Open at San Francisco in June must have been deeply impressed with his self-control. Even in the thick of his play-off with Ben Hogan at the Olympic Country Club, he did not allow anything to get the better of his composure.

It's an old lesson, but it has a fresh meaning with every new Champion.

Putter for "Golf House"

Jack Fleck visited "Golf House" a few weeks after his victory and presented the putter with which he won the Open to the USGA Golf Museum. Actually, he is going to continue to use the putter for a while longer but he has given title to it to the Golf Museum and, in the meantime, an exact duplicate of it will repose in "Golf House." The USGA has a truly great collection of clubs, balls and other mementoes of Champions' victories.

The putter was the most useful single club in Jack's bag in the Open. In the five rounds of the Championship proper and the play-off, he figured he used a total of 149 putts—just a fraction under 30 per round. He says you can't win a tournament on the professional circuit unless you average better than 30 putts per round.

Jack was the first professional from a municipal course to win the Open.

Young Craig Wood Fleck, the Champion's 4½-year-old son, came rather close to having a different combination of names. Mrs. Fleck told the story to Brad Wilson of the DES MOINES REGISTER:

"Jack wanted to name him Snead Hogan Fleck, but I wouldn't stand for it. So we compromised. Jack gave me a list of all the Open winners and I picked Craig Wood."

"Golf House" Gets the Champion's Putter



New York Herald-Tribune Photo

Jack Fleck, USGA Open Champion, (left) presents the putter which was instrumental in defeating Ben Hogan in the play-off at San Francisco to Joseph C. Dey, Jr., Executive Director of the USGA. The putter will eventually be placed among the Clubs of Champions in the Golf Museum. Actually Fleck will continue to use the original club a while longer. Meanwhile a replica will repose in "Golf House."

Jack drinks milk and eats quantities of ice cream, his wife said. "He doesn't drink, smoke or even drink coffee. Why, he thinks cigarettes cause everything from dandruff to athlete's foot," she laughed.

Things are a bit different for the Flecks today, money-wise, than in 1950, when they were driving from one circuit tournament to another. "It cost us \$8 for every \$1 Jack won that season," said Mrs. Fleck. "In 1953 Jack won \$13.75 at the

San Diego Open, and then turned around and paid his caddie \$25.

"He used to tell me when I saw something: 'I'll buy that for you when I win the Open. So put it down on your list.' Last winter I stopped by a store window to look at a dress and Jack remarked: 'You know, that list of yours must be so long now that I don't think I can afford to win the Open this year.'"