

# WOODIE PLATT FIRST USGA SENIOR CHAMPION

by

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IT may be stretching the imagination a bit to compare a senior golf event to a new-born baby, but now that the first USGA Senior Amateur Championship has been played, we assume that the first interest on the part of the golfing family will be about the appearance of the new arrival.

Of course, it usually takes time for the new-born to develop permanent characteristics. However, perhaps because this newcomer is already a senior, he seems to be showing pretty positive proclivities. It can be further stated with assurance that he does not in any way favor any of his seven older brothers and sisters in the USGA family of Championships.

What, then, are the characteristics of this new arrival, born in September at the Belle Meade Country Club, Nashville, Tenn.? In the first place, it was obvious that the contestants went to Nashville filled with a lot of youthful exuberance and a real enthusiasm for this new Championship and left with these feelings fully fortified. In other words, the USGA has a popular event.

Secondly, and this is a particularly significant feature, it developed that a very large portion of the field at Belle Meade was made up of what might be termed the senior statesmen of golf. Many had enjoyed some official connection with the game, past or present, either as club officers or committee chairmen or as district or regional association officers. Casual conversations around the course and in the clubhouse were just as often related to the administrative problems of the game as they were to play in the tournament. It is obvious that one of the valuable by-products of this Championship will be a closer cooperation and understanding

## **NEW MEMBERS OF THE USGA**

### **REGULAR**

American Legion Golf Course, Ind.  
Hubbard Heights Golf Club, Conn.  
Beverly Hills Country Club, Texas  
Big Foot Country Club, Ill.  
Clock Country Club, Cal.  
Milton-Hoosic Club, Mass.  
Mustang Country Club, Texas  
Selfridge Air Force Base Association, Mich.  
Washtenaw Country Club, Mich.

### **ASSOCIATE**

Ardmore Air Force Base Golf Course,  
Oklahoma  
Indian Canyon Golf Course, Texas  
Mar-O-Dell Golf Course, Ohio  
Northview Country Club, Kansas  
Shady Shores Golf Course, Tenn.

among the USGA, its member clubs and the many other important governing bodies of golf.

On one point there was at first some uncertainty. Most senior events are primarily good-fellowship occasions, whether conducted by regional associations, by membership groups or on an invitational basis. Naturally, some of the contestants went to Nashville with a wrong impression of the purpose for which the USGA Championship was established. The USGA's sole interest is to conduct a Senior Amateur Championship for the qualified members of its nearly 2,000 member clubs. The Association has no intention of competing with established senior events.

But there was great good-fellowship mingled with the serious golf at Belle Meade. The warm reception and hospitality of the good people of the Club made it impossible to be a competitor or a competitor's wife without having a wonderful time. The Senior Championship can never hope to find a more delightful host.

## The First Senior Champion



*Richard S. Tufts, Chairman of the Senior Championship Committee, presents the Senior Amateur Championship Trophy to J. Wood Platt, of Philadelphia, the first winner of the event.*

Adolph Skinner was a most gracious and considerate General Chairman for the Club.

### *Standard of Play Excellent*

The course provided a fair and interesting test for senior golf. The standard of play was excellent, and a most capable Champion emerged in J. Wood Platt, of Philadelphia.

Woodie Platt has long been one of the truly skilled players in amateur golf. As long ago as 1921 he was a member of a United States team which defeated a

British team at Hoylake in a one-day match. The Walker Cup was not then in competition, but this match served as a prelude to establishment of the Walker Cup series the following year. Platt's teammates were the great players of the day: Chick Evans, Francis Quimet, Bob Jones, Jesse Guilford, Fred Wright, Dr. Paul Hunter and William C. Fownes, Jr., Captain.

Woodie Platt has been Philadelphia Amateur Champion eight times and has won



**Martin M. Issler**



**Peter M. Sneker**



**William McWane**



**Allen R. Rankin**

a host of other honors in golf. Now, at the age of 57, his most pleasing moment came when he received his first USGA Championship gold medal.

Indicative of the fact that the competitive fires burn very brightly in the Seniors was Platt's finish against Allen Rankin, of Columbus, Ohio, in the semi-final. Rankin was 1 up with six holes to go. At the 13th Platt recovered from a bunker for a winning par 4 to square. Then he reeled off three straight birdies to close out the match.

He played brilliantly also in the final against George Studinger, former San Francisco City Champion. Platt won by 5 and 4 and was two under par.

The medalist was Martin M. Issler, of Short Hills, N. J., who equalled par with a 72. He lost to Platt in the third round.

The tournament attracted 370 entrants all aged 55 and more. Through 18-hole sectional qualifying in 24 centers, they were reduced to 120 for the Championship proper. At Belle Meade they played an 18-hole qualifying round to determine 32 qualifiers, followed by five 18-hole match rounds.

The qualifying test at Belle Meade found 16 players tied for the last ten places with scores of 79. On the first hole there were five birdie 4s and 11 par 5s—a great exhibition of scoring in such a situation.

The method of play worked well. The field is not yet strong enough to justify going directly into match play at the site of the Championship, and yet the importance of qualifying as many as 32 for match play is indicated by the fact that one of the finalists, George Studinger, had to win his place in the play-off.

The geographical representation was excellent. Players qualified in the sectional rounds from 30 States and the District of Columbia. Representatives from 16 States qualified for the match play flight of 32.

There was a consolation match play division for the defeated 16, and the winner was Eugene Bellville, of Kansas City, who in the final defeated Col. C. D. McAllister, of Orlando, Fla., 3 and 2.

The non-qualifiers had a 36-hole stroke play competition over two days. It was won by William L. Goodloe, Sr., of Valdosta, Ga., with 153. There was a tie for second at 156 between Lt. Gen. Floyd L. Parks, of Chevy Chase, Md., and Chick Evans, of Chicago. General Parks won a toss for second prize.

Chick Evans' third-place medal made striking contrast with other honors this great player has won—and yet, in its own way, it typified the spirit of the Seniors. For as Woodie Platt said in objecting to the name "Senior": "We're all boys at heart."



**Leslie B. Hoss**



**George Studinger**



**Edwin Watkins**



**J. Wood Platt**