

YOU'VE GOT TO BE LUCKY TO WIN --- ONCE

by

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SOMEONE with more gall than gallantry once informed a great champion that, after all, a golfer had to be lucky to win a major championship. "That's right," the winner of several major championships responded with gracious blandness. Then he returned the barb:

"You do have to be lucky to win—once."

The roll of golfers in position to make that remark, under provocation, is impressively short. When limited to amateurs, it is even shorter.

As a result of the 56th Amateur Championship, however, one more name can be added to the roll, that of E. Harvie Ward, Jr., of San Francisco.

As an appropriate conclusion to a pleasant event at the Knollwood Club, in Lake Forest, Ill., Ward defended his Championship. It was the first time anyone had done that in twenty-one years, and only the eighth time it has been done. The last to do it was, of course, Lawson Little, in 1935. The others who have done it were H. J. Whigham, Walter J. Travis, H. Chandler Egan, Jerome D. Travers (twice), and Robert T. Jones, Jr. (twice).

International Champion

Ward's dominance over amateur golf is not solely national. It is international. He won the British Amateur in 1952 and the Canadian Amateur in 1954, so that, at the age of 30, he has held four national championships in three major golfing countries during the last five years.

It is nice to be able to report that he does these phenomenal things with light-heartedness and humility. He is by instinct a sportsman and gentleman. He enjoys the game to the hilt and has the happy faculty of mixing concentration and banter—with

opponents, spectators or whoever else happens to be at hand.

At a critical point in the final against Chuck Kocsis, of Detroit, Ward was preparing to line up an important putt which, if made, would increase his growing margin.

"Take it easy on an old man, now," Kocsis pleaded.

"I see your lips moving, but my hearing aid is turned off," Ward cracked as he banged the putt squarely into the hole.

While Ward is deadly accurate with both woods and irons and can play, probably, as wide a variety of shots as anyone in amateur golf, his putter is his best weapon.

The final was one of the best—to a point. But, unfortunately, Kocsis, who is a businessman not accustomed in recent years to playing 36 holes day after day, ran out of strokes near the end and the 5 and 4 margin was not indicative of the caliber of the resistance he put up.

Kocsis, who first played in the Championship in 1930, when Jones was winning his Grand Slam, played the course in par in the morning, and in spite of losing the last hole, went to lunch 1 up. The two finalists and their wives, incidentally, lunched together.

Ward Surges Back

When they resumed, Kocsis won the first hole with a par to go 2 up, and Ward decided enough was enough. He won back the third with a birdie 3, and then took the last four holes of the nine with a birdie-par blast to go 3 up turning into the final nine. Ward was five under par for the last thirteen holes and three under for the match.

That left him 11 under par for the 142

THE CHAMPION HAD OTHER IDEAS



World Wide photo

Since 1930, Chuck Kocsis, of Detroit, Mich., right, has been trying to win an amateur Championship. This was almost his year. However, Harvie Ward, of San Francisco, Cal., the defending champion, refused to step aside. With a 5 and 4 win, Ward became the first man to successfully defend his championship in 21 years. It marked only the eighth time the feat has been accomplished.

holes required to win seven matches. To complete the statistics, Kocsis was 7 under par for the 145 holes he had to play.

There were several critical points at which Ward asserted his ascendancy in dramatic style.

In his fourth round match, Frank E. Boynton, of Orlando, Fla., a Rollins College boy, went 3 up after five holes and, with a fine barrage of pars, still had Harvie 1 down going to the sixteenth, a par 5 of moderate length. Boynton placed his second squarely on the green. Harvie's second left him more than 100 yards short.

Yet Harvie escaped. He pitched fifteen feet from the hole, made the putt for a birdie 4 and won when Boynton failed on a comparatively short chance for his birdie.

That did not end the excitement, however. On the seventeenth, 190 yards long, Harvie put his No. 4 iron shot no more than two feet from the hole and finally went 1 up with a second successive birdie. They halved the last in pars, and Harvie made no bones about the tightness of the squeeze as he came off the green.

Again in the quarter-final round, Ward was called upon by Arnold Blum, of Macon, Ga., to prove himself. Playing solid, one-under-par-golf, Harvie had pulled steadily away to a 3-up lead as they came to the fifteenth, a drive-and-pitch hole. Both pitched their seconds onto the green, Arnold's stopping about twenty-five feet from the hole and Harvie's twenty feet away.

Blum had to start his drive now or never. He took great pains in lining up his putt and stroked it into the hole for a birdie 3. Ward took similar pains and knocked his twenty-footer in on top of it for the half. Blum also birdied the long sixteenth in his closing drive.

Perhaps the most ferocious of all, however, was Ward's semi-final against Joe Campbell, of Anderson, Ind.

Campbell looks very much like a young man who may one day win the Amateur Championship, although at the moment he is only 20 and a senior at Purdue University. However, it appeared to be his idea to win this very year.

Ward, on the other hand, seemed in a mood to insist on his seniority rights. He played the morning round in 70, one beneath par, to lead by a hole, and he picked up two more holes on the first nine of the afternoon.

At that point, Campbell tried to call halt. He played the last eight holes in five under par—4-4-1-4-4-3-3. The 4 on the tenth was a birdie. The 1 on the twelfth and the 3 on the sixteenth were, of course, eagles. This earned him just one hole, net, and a lasting respect for Ward's ability to fight back. Ward had played the same eight holes in four under par, to win, 2 and 1.

Canada Represented

For the second time in the last four years, there was a Canadian in the semi-finals, and a good one, too. Gerald J. Magee, of Toronto, a 22 year old, had played most impressively all week and engaged Kocsis while Ward was playing Joe Campbell. Their match was just about as good. Kocsis was level par in the morning and 2 up. When Magee came back with a 34 to the turn after lunch, so did Chuck, and it eventually ended, 4 and 2.

In advance publicity, the name of Kenneth P. Venturi, of San Francisco, was mentioned as often as any other, and if there could be a favorite, other than Ward, in such a competitive carousel as this Amateur Championship, he probably was it.

Certainly, Venturi has the know-how and the determination. He had been leading amateur in both the Open Championship and the Masters Tournament. At 25, he seemed due.

Roos Upsets Venturi

Yet Robert A. Roos, Jr., a businessman in his forties and a fellow San Franciscan, turned him out sure-fistedly in the third round, birdying the last hole to win, 1 up. While this was one of Roos' most notable feats, he is, as a matter of fact, an old hand at beating strong players.

Joseph W. Conrad, of San Antonio, Texas, the 1955 British Amateur Champion, who seldom has much luck in our Championship, once again went out in the first round, the 2 and 1 victim of Ed Tutweiler, Jr., of Charleston, W. Va., also an old hand at that sort of thing.

Another heralded player who stayed only briefly at the party was Doug Sanders, of Miami Beach, Fla., first amateur winner of the Canadian Open earlier this year. Blum, a fellow Georgian, disposed of him, 3 and 2, in the third round.

Knollwood's role in the Championship was memorably in two particular aspects, among others. It offered the players probably the finest putting greens most of them had had the privilege of using, and they were quick to admit it. Also, despite a shortage of spectators on the weekdays and a problem in obtaining caddies, it conducted itself in the most gracious sporting spirit. One is tempted also to give Knollwood credit for arranging such fine, cool weather.

The start of the third round, on Wednesday morning, was delayed an hour and a half by heavy fog, but that was the only adversity in the weather. As a result of that delay, one fourth-round match on Wednesday afternoon failed to finish in daylight. Blum and Charles W. Harrison, both Georgians, were even with one hole to go when darkness fell, and Blum won the eighteenth hole and the match the next morning. It was the first time since 1949 that a regular day's play has been incomplete.