

MISS RAWLS' THIRD WIN IN A STRANGE OPEN

*Error in Scoring
Disqualifies Mrs. Pung*

THE 1957 USGA Women's Open Championship will always occupy a distinctive place in golf history for its strange mixture of the game's harshest penalty — disqualification — and overflowing human kindness.

Miss Betsy Rawls, professional of Spartanburg, S. C., used 299 strokes to play four rounds over the East Course of the Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, N. Y., last month. Then along came Mrs. Jacqueline Pung, jolly Hawaiian professional now living in San Francisco, with what appeared to be a winning 298. On the home green she embraced her weeping-for-joy 15-year-old daughter, Barnette, accepted congratulations all around, and was being interviewed by the press when it was discovered that she had inadvertently signed her card for a 5 at the fourth hole where she actually played 6.

Mrs. Pung was thus disqualified. Miss Rawls became the winner.

Spontaneously, hearts went out to Jackie Pung. Pocketbooks were opened by Winged Foot's wonderfully sportsmanlike members, spectators, officials, all—and a special purse was raised for Mrs. Pung. At last report it exceeded \$3,000. Miss Rawls' winning prize from the USGA was \$1,800, although her enhanced prestige as champion may increase her earning power.

Nothing Over 5 for Miss Rawls

Although Miss Rawls' sympathy also was with Mrs. Pung, her own golf was very worthy of the title. Her aggregate of 299 (74-74-75-76) was doggedly consistent and in 72 holes she had nothing over a 5 on her card.

At 29 she is a seasoned campaigner with three Open titles now to her credit. She won in 1951 at the Druid Hills Golf Club, Atlanta, Ga., and again in 1953 at the Country Club of Rochester, N. Y., when



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Miss Betsy Rawls receives the news that she is Champion for the third time.

the Championship first came under USGA auspices. On that occasion Miss Rawls tied with Mrs. Pung and won on a play-off.

Miss Rawls is a purposeful player with a three-quarter swing which stood her in good stead in the strong wind of the final day. She is long from the tee, yet gives the impression of playing well within herself, conserving her energy for the big hit when necessary.

A Phi Beta Kappa in college, her temperament is excellent and she refused to be disturbed in the third round when her marker, Miss Betty Hicks, reached the turn in a birdie-studded 35. But Miss Rawls

finished in 75 to Miss Hicks' 76. In the final round she twice took a 5 at par 3 holes, but again put the encumbrance behind her.

Mrs. Pung's four rounds were 78-75-73-72. Her 145 for the last 36 holes, one under par, represented superlative golf, especially in the stiff cross-wind which swept most of the holes.

The Fatal Rule

But the final issue hinged on a Rule of Golf dealing with scoring, one which has cost careless players dearly in the past.

In stroke play each competitor's card is recorded by a marker or scorer, who may or may not be a fellow-competitor. For many years until this year it was customary in USGA Open Championships for markers to be club members, usually ladies. However, due to a number of scoring problems which arose last year, the system was changed in 1957, and in both the recent men's and Women's Opens each competitor's marker was a fellow-competitor. (A lady member of the club also scored for public information only, but not officially.)

At Winged Foot last month both Mrs. Pung and her fellow-competitor-marker, Miss Betty Jameson, scored each other as 5 for the par 5 fourth hole, where both actually played 6. It was an odd coincidence, and it was entirely inadvertent. Their cards were turned in with the 5s, signed by both players. On each card the 18-hole total reflected the actual score, including 6 at the fourth—but the total shown is immaterial, and the following Rules are pertinent:

Rule 38-2: "The competitor is solely responsible for the correctness of the score recorded for each hole. The Committee is responsible for the addition of scores . . ."

RULE 38.3: "No alteration may be made on a card after the competitor has returned it to the Committee.

"If the competitor return a score for any hole lower than actually played, he shall be disqualified.

"A score higher than actually played must stand as returned."

Thus, both Mrs. Pung and Miss Jameson were disqualified.

New Interpretation

Last year there were two cases of inadvertently wrong low scores in the men's Open Championship — involving Jack Burke and Gil Cavanaugh — and another in the Women's Open Championship— involving, of all people, Miss Betsy Rawls. In each case the penalty was two strokes, rather than disqualification. The disqualification penalty provided for in Rule 38-3 had been modified by the Committees in charge of the 1956 Championships under authority granted by the following general Rule dealing with all cases of disqualification:

Rule 36-5: "The Committee has no power to waive a Rule of Golf. A penalty of disqualification, however, may, in exceptional individual cases, be waived or be modified or be imposed under Rule 1 if the Committee consider such action warranted."

Last winter the USGA Executive Committee unanimously decided that future violations of Rule 38-3 would be penalized by disqualification, and that there would be no waiver or modification. This decision was widely published, reversing as it did the policy applied in 1956 Championships.

Thus, when the Winged Foot contretemps arose, the Committee in charge was under mandate from the full USGA Executive Committee to apply Rule 38-3 exactly.

It is ironic that Miss Rawls, victim of the Rule last year, should be the unwitting beneficiary of it this year when Mrs. Pung was disqualified.

In the light of the penalty against Miss Rawls in 1956, it would not have seemed consistent to have waived all penalty against Mrs. Pung this year, even if that had been possible.

The USGA has long taken pains to assist players to check and return stroke play scores properly, in the following ways:

1. The USGA prints a special score card for each Championship, and a sample is given to each player upon registration at the Championship site. For stroke play, the card contains extracts from Rule 38 at the top, and for the recent Women's Open the card said:

"After each hole the marker shall check

the score with the competitor. On completion of the round the marker shall sign the card and hand it to the competitor. The competitor shall check her score for each hole, settle any doubtful points with the USGA Committee, ensure that the marker has signed the card, countersign the card herself, and return it to the USGA Committee immediately."

2. Immediately above the space provided for the competitor's signature there appears the following on the USGA card:

"I have checked my score hole by hole."

3. When players return scores, it is customary for the USGA Committee to give another reminder by suggesting orally that the score be checked hole by hole.

Checking a score before returning it is as much a part of the game and the duties of a golfer as observing the playing rules on the course.

Reasons for the Rule

If the Rule were lax, chaos would be invited. Suppose it were permissible to change scores generally after they were returned. In open events the distribution of prize money could be affected after being presented. In qualifying rounds for match play events, the determination of the qualifiers and the draw for match play could be greatly confused.

Suppose in stroke play a player comes to the home hole knowing that he needs a birdie to tie a score posted by a previous competitor. The player knows he must play his approach shot boldly—all or nothing. But his shot does not quite come off, leaving his ball in a bunker from which he has no reasonable hope of scoring a birdie. Then, after he has finished with a good recovery for a par, he finds that the posted leading score was one stroke lower than the true score, due to error by its owner. If the owner were then allowed to change it, an injustice would be created.

There are many reasons for the preciseness of the Rule covering returning of scores. Without such a Rule disorderly and unfair conditions could result.

The size of the penalty is another matter. Question exists in the minds of many golfers as to whether the penalty should re-

main disqualification or should eventually be reduced. But when Jackie Pung finished in the 1957 Women's Open, the penalty in the code was disqualification, and the Committee in charge had no choice but to apply it.

Winged Foot a Strong Test

The unprecedented drama climaxed a Championship which had hitherto run on oiled wheels, for which Homer Johnson and his Winged Foot Committee must take full marks.

The 6,246-yard East Course, par 73 for women, was in superb condition, but its subtleties were too numerous for most of the 95 starters. Of 276 rounds played, only seven were par or better.

This was due in part to the final day's stiff cross-wind. Although the rough was negligible, there was little margin for error on the second shot with the fast undulating greens caught in the jaws of gaping bunkers. Even the ultimate winner admitted that she had never had to work so hard for a title before.

How the Lead Changed

The last two rounds were just too much for the 36-hole leader, Miss Alice Bauer, the most petite entrant. In the comparative calm of the first two days, with her iron shots straight and her putter doing her bidding, she compiled 72-73 for a three-stroke lead over Miss Rawls.

The following morning in the wind the 98-pound Miss Bauer lacked the necessary anchorage, and her over-full swing was blown out of groove. She rocketed to an 87 and out of contention.

It was the telling third round which brought the eventual leaders into focus. Miss Rawls assumed the lead with 223, three strokes ahead of Mrs. Pung, who had come up from sixth position with a par-equaling 73. The two Bettys, Miss Hicks and Miss Dodd, moved in third at 228, one ahead of Miss Jameson and two strokes better than Miss Patty Berg, who also equaled par.

Over the last nine holes it developed into a two-player race. Miss Rawls, turning in 38, seemed to dissipate her chances when

she bunkered her tee shot to the short 13th and, after a good recovery, three-putted from nowhere. It let Mrs. Pung in, but all to no avail.

Miss Berg, who has lost nothing in length or gallery appeal in her 20 years of tournament golf, summoned her vast experience to see her through the final stanza, and, like an old melody back on the Hit Parade, entered the Magic Circle. Her 75 was good enough to sweep her into second place with a 72-hole score of 305, six strokes back of Miss Rawls. Miss Hicks and Miss Louise Suggs were next at 308.

The amateurs, though numerically superior in the record entry, were never in the running, and it was left to Miss Barbara McIntire, late of Toledo and now living in Florida, to be low amateur at 313. Last year Miss McIntire tied for the Championship and lost a play-off to Mrs. Kathy Cornelius, who this time finished with 328. Second amateur was the Canadian holder of our Women's Amateur Championship, Mrs. Marlene Stewart Streit, with 315.

Prize money for the 12 leading professionals was increased by 20% the day before play started and totaled \$7,200.

The Human Touches

But the most memorable aspect of the 1957 Women's Open Championship are of such human touches as Betsy Rawls' generous and sympathetic attitude to Jackie Pung—of the great warmth of kindness which welled up in the hearts of the Winged Foot members and some of their guests in raising a special purse for Mrs. Pung (that sort of thing comes naturally to Winged Foot)—and finally of Mrs. Pung's own reaction.

In the last 18 months Mrs. Pung had sustained several great personal difficulties, and here was a fresh one—the National Championship snatched from her when she had it won.

But she was not crushed. Deeply disappointed, to be sure, but not crushed. The reason she was able to take it like the splendid character she is may be found plainly in her own words:

"If this is God's will, it's best this way."

For Jackie Pung has a sense of values which regards ultimate things as even more important than her own profession of golf. She has, in fact, another profession, and her life bespeaks the deep religious faith which she regards as her true profession.

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