

JOANNE GUNDERSON WINS HER SECOND AMATEUR

By

ROBERT C. RENNER
USGA Tournament
Relations Manager

It is a strong statement when a golfer says, "Don't beat me once because you may never do it again."

But, Miss JoAnne Gunderson said it and she has made it stick.

Miss Gunderson won her second Women's Amateur Championship at the Tulsa Country Club, Tulsa, Okla., August 22-27, and besides making her point about not losing to the same player twice, she also joined Mrs. Edwin H. Vare, Jr., in a rarified record bracket.

They are the only two recent women golfers who won National Championships, were defeated in later playings, and then came back to win again. Mrs. Vare, who was Glenna Collett during many of her great years, won the Championship five times in the 1920's and 1930's and came back to win again in 1935.

JoAnne won her first Championship in 1957, defeating Mrs. Ann Casey Johnstone, 8 and 6. This year she defeated Miss Jean Ashley, 21-year old school teacher from Chanute, Kansas, by 6 and 5 for the title.

After the victory, JoAnne said, "No one beats me twice. At least, they never have."

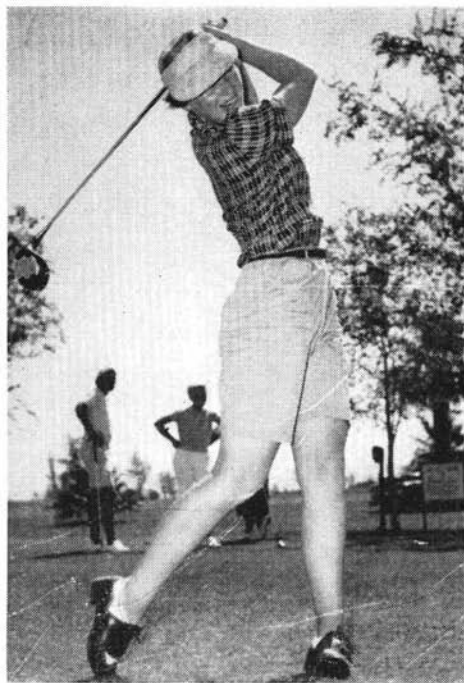
This is exemplified by her victory in the semi-finals over Miss Judy Eller. "Judy had beaten me in the Trans-Mississippi and I just could not let it happen again," she explained.

The Champion from Kirkland, Wash., also recalled that Miss Sandra Spuzich defeated her in the Women's Western. The two met again in the fourth round at Tulsa but JoAnne turned the tables.

In her seven Championship matches at Tulsa, JoAnne was 17 strokes over par for 122 holes.

Miss Ashley was 44 strokes over par for her 133 Championship holes. Miss Eller was 20 strokes over par for 98 holes while Mrs. Johnstone was 29 over prescribed figures for 95 holes.

This points up the fact that JoAnne



Miss JoAnne Gunderson

was playing better than anyone in the field. She consistently outdrove her opponents, averaging above the 220-yard mark.

The 6,150-yard Tulsa Country Club course played to her liking, as the beautiful Bermudagrass fairways served as a cushion and discouraged ball roll.

Her tremendous start in the second round against Miss Marjorie Burns, of Greensboro, N. C., displayed what her long-distance hitting does for her. She birdied the first three holes (measuring 397,553, and 350), parred the next two and then birdied the sixth hole to go four under par after only six holes. This splurge of under-par golf is typical of JoAnne's style of play.

While watching her play, one gets the

definite impression she is enjoying the game. Instead of the usual serious attitude of many tournament players, JoAnne displays a refreshing manner. She constantly applauds an opponent's good shot, and pulls for her opponent's bad ones to take a good bounce or for their putts to drop in the cup.

While the outstanding performance of Miss Gunderson was the high point of the tournament, the tremendous play of Miss Ashley certainly was another highlight.

Here was Miss Ashley in her first USGA Women's Championship, pitted against the best in the nation. Her home course is the Chanute Country Club, a nine-hole course without a single sand bunker. Her only victories had been the Kansas State Women's Amateur and the Broadmoor Invitational. Her closest scrape with national fame came earlier this year in the semi-finals of the National Intercollegiate Tournament when she carried Judy Eller to the 19th hole before losing.

Practically no one mentioned the name of Jean Ashley until the third round when she sent Miss Polly Riley, six-time Curtis Cup player, to the sidelines on the 21st hole.

Miss Ashley moved further into prominence in the quarter-finals when she upset the defending Champion, Miss Barbara McIntire, by dropping in a 15-footer for a birdie three at the tight 17th hole and then sinking a six-footer for a par and a one up victory on the final hole. Miss Ashley proceeded to oust Mrs. Johnstone in the semi-finals by gaining control with a par-birdie - birdie combination on holes 10, 11, and 12 and holding on for a one up victory. This win put her in the final against Miss Gunderson, her third straight current Curtis Cup member.

Miss Ashley won the first hole of the finale but went 18 more before winning another. Evidently attempting to keep up with JoAnne's booming drives, Miss Ashley began to stray off line and lost five holes on the first 18. Thus, JoAnne took a four-hole lead before lunch, and she increased it to five by winning the opening hole with a birdie three, in the afternoon.

It was here that Miss Ashley began a comeback as she won the next two

holes to cut the margin to three. After halving the next five holes, JoAnne pushed it back to four up at the turn by winning the 27th hole.

Miss Gunderson then won the 95-yard 29th hole with a birdie two to assume a five up lead with seven holes to play. The 30th hole was halved and ahead lay the 360-yard 31st hole which both played in true championship style. Miss Ashley just missed her 22-foot birdie try by inches and then watched as JoAnne calmly stroked her 14-foot putt into the cup for a birdie and the 6 and 5 victory.

There were five Curtis Cup players among the quarter-finalists: Mrs. Johnstone, and the Misses Anne Quast, Gunderson, Eller, and McIntire. In an all-Curtis Cup team match, Miss Quast, the 1958 National Champion, lost to Mrs. Johnstone. Miss Gunderson defeated Miss Natasha Matson, and Miss Eller defeated Miss Andrea Cohn. Miss McIntire, the defending Champion and the winner of the 1960 British Championship, lost to Miss Ashley.

In the Champion's march to the title, JoAnne defeated Miss Betsy Cullen, of Tulsa, 6 and 5 in the first round; Miss Burns, 6 and 5, in the second round; Miss Lorraine Abbott, Toledo, Ohio, 6 and 5 in the third round; Miss Spuzich, one up in the fourth round; Miss Matson of Wichita, Kansas, 7 and 6, in the quarter-finals; Miss Eller in the semi-finals, and Miss Ashley in the finals.

Miss Ashley's path to the final was spectacular. She defeated two current Curtis Cup members and a former member, Miss Riley. She defeated Mrs. Sam Schwartzkopf, of Lincoln, Nebraska, 5 and 4 in the opening round; Mrs. Harton S. Semple, of Sewickley, Pa., 3 and 2, in the second round; Miss Riley on the 21st hole in the third round; Miss Diana Hoke, of Pittsburgh, Pa., 4 and 2, in the fourth round; Miss McIntire in the quarter-finals, and Mrs. Johnstone in the semi-finals.

The Tulsa Country Club did a superb job as host for the Championship, under the very able guidance of Mr. Bud Woods, the general chairman, and the honorary chairman, Mr. Frank Gray. All of the committees functioned perfectly and everyone agreed it was a wonderful Championship