

# PEBBLE BEACH: JOHNSTON GOT HIS FEET WET

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The first USGA Championship ever played west of St. Louis was the Amateur of 1929 at the Pebble Beach Golf Links, Pebble Beach, Calif. The distinctive oceanside characteristics of Pebble Beach, where the Amateur returns next month, are evidenced by a single stroke played during the 1929 Championship.

The stroke was played by Harrison R. (Jimmy) Johnston on the last hole in the morning round of his final match against Dr. O. F. Willing.

The 18th at Pebble Beach is one of the great finishing holes in golf. A par 5 of 540 yards, the hole is bordered by a cliff and pounding surf along the entire left side.

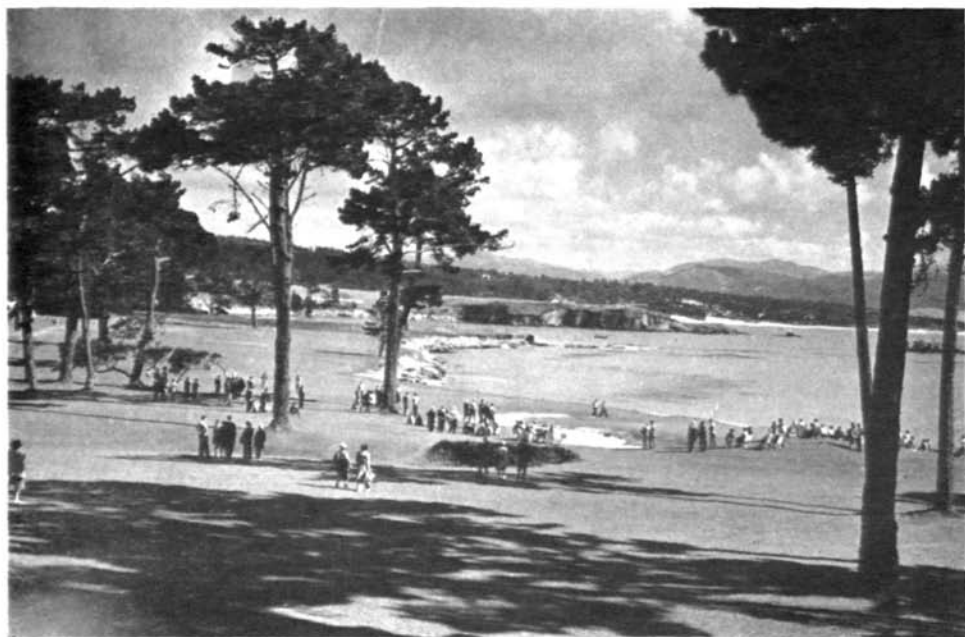
Johnston, 1 down to Dr. Willing at the time, hooked over the cliff with his

second. He thought the ball had gone into Carmel Bay. Johnston's own words describe best what then happened:

"My provisional brassie shot was good, just short of the green, but as I went through the crowd, my caddie came rushing up from the ocean and said that if I hurried, he thought I might be able to play the ball.

"I found the ball lying on a bunch of pebbles the size of eggs at the water's edge. It was necessary to stand in the ocean to address the ball, and as I hurriedly did so a gentle wave swashed through my legs and eight to ten feet onto the beach, burying my feet some seven inches in water.

"Fortunately, when the wash receded, my ball had not moved, and before the



The 18th hole at Pebble Beach is one of golf's most notable par 5s. The player who seeks to shorten the distance by playing close to the left side must reckon on the danger of the cliff that borders the entire left side of the hole.

next wave came in I quickly banged the ball up over the cliff to the edge of the green from where I was able to get a par 5 to halve the hole, thus ending the morning round only 1 down instead of 2, which, needless to say, put me in a more comfortable and better fighting frame of mind."

The spade mashie with which Johnston executed that shot was later donated by him to the USGA. It is now lodged among the Clubs of Champions display in "Golf House" in New York City.

Deane Beman, Jack Nicklaus, Charlie Coe and all the other contenders for the 1961 Championship may not have to get their feet wet to win but they will always be conscious of the craggy headlands that drop sharply into Carmel Bay. Eight holes run along the bay. They include some of the most spectacular visions in golf.

Jim Barnes, Open Champion in 1921, once looked up after topping a ball at Pebble Beach. Gazing out over the blue waters of Carmel Bay to the Santa Lucia Mountains, he remarked that the course was so "dommed" beautiful he couldn't keep his mind on the game.

Pebble Beach is one of three courses which serve as sites every January for the National Pro-Amateur tournament sponsored by Bing Crosby. The others are the Cypress Point Club and the Monterey Peninsula Country Club. All three are within a radius of three miles of a central point of the Del Monte Forest.

The other courses, the Del Monte Golf Course and a municipal course at Pacific Grove, are within the same radius. The Monterey Chamber of Commerce does not hesitate to refer to the Peninsula as the "Golf Capital of the World."

Next month's Amateur will be the fifth USGA Championship at Pebble Beach. The Amateur was played there in 1929 and 1947, the Women's Amateur in 1940 and 1948. The Pebble Beach course had been selected for the Amateur in 1942, but World War II intervened. The winner will add to the heritage of a great Championship and a great course.

#### **JIMMY JOHNSTON IN 1929**

All eyes were on the great Bob Jones in the practice rounds for the 1929 Amateur. He had won the Amateur four times, the Open three times and the British Open twice—all in the space of seven



**Jimmy Johnston**

years. He tied for the medal this time with a 145, and the gallery loved it.

All seemed in readiness for the spectacle of another coronation of the undisputed King of Golf.

The king was assassinated in the first round by young John Goodman. One observer wrote: "Five thousand people walked away as from the scene of a particularly atrocious murder."

Goodman, on the very afternoon of his great upset, was put aside by an even more obscure player competing in his first Amateur, 18-year-old Lawson Little, Jr. (who now lives just off the first fairway). The two later proved that their achievements at Pebble Beach were not accidental. Goodman won the Open in 1933 (no Amateur has won since) and the Amateur in 1937. Little went on to the "Little Slam," victories in both 1934 and 1935 in both the U. S. Amateur and the British Amateur. He added the Open title as a professional in 1940.

Johnston's march to the 1929 Championship was marked by a thrilling 39-hole match in the quarter-final round against George Voigt. Jones, on the sidelines now, refereed this match.

Johnston rallied from a morning round deficit to defeat Dr. Willing, a dentist, by 4 and 3 in the final match.

The semi-finalists were two of the most distinguished veterans of the game. Fran-

cis Quimet, winner of the Open in 1913 and the Amateur in 1914, beat Little 1 up before bowing to Johnston in the semi-final round. H. Chandler Egan, the Amateur Champion in 1904 and 1905 who had a hand in preparing Pebble Beach for its first USGA event, gave one of his greatest exhibitions in carrying the fight through a great field to reach the semi-final round.

#### BETTY JAMESON IN 1940

Miss Betty Jameson, of San Antonio, Texas, Women's Amateur Champion in 1939, became the 8th player to win the Championship in successive years when she defeated Miss Jane S. Cothran 6 and 5 in the 1940 final match. The feat has not been accomplished since.

Miss Jameson defended her title with comparative ease. Four of her five 18-hole matches, through the semi-final round, went no further than the 15th hole. She was extended only by Miss Mary Agnes Wall, who lost 1 down in the second round.

Pebble Beach proved a difficult scoring test. Only three players of a starting field of 157 scored below 80 in the quali-



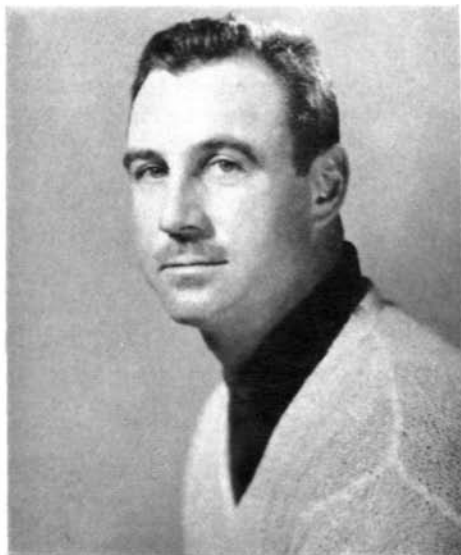
Miss Betty Jameson

fying round. The medalist was Miss Dorothy Traung, whose score was 78.

The women golfers of California responded avidly to their opportunity to compete close to home in a national championship. Thirty-nine of the 64 qualifiers for match play were representatives of California clubs.



Pebble Beach's 13th hole is a par 4 of 400 yards. Carmel Bay and the Santa Lucia Mountains are in the background.



Skee Riegel

#### SKEE RIEGEL IN 1947

The Amateur Championship of 1947 was conducted entirely at match play for the first time since 1936. The Champion, Robert H. (Skee) Riegel, had to play 163 holes in his eight matches.

Riegel, 32, defeated John Dawson by 2 and 1 in the final round. Among his victims were Don Cherry, a member of the 1961 Walker Cup Team, in the first round and Bob Rosburg, National Hearst Junior Champion that year, in the quarter-final round.

Two long putts, a 30-footer on the 24th for a half, and a 20-footer on the 25th for a win, were vital for Riegel in the final. The second putt gave him a lead he never relinquished.

Dawson, at 44, was at that time the oldest finalist in the history of the Amateur. His most notable victory came against Frank Stranahan, the pre-tournament favorite, in the fourth round. Dawson chipped in for an eagle 3 on the 20th hole to end the match.

Jimmy Johnston, 18 years after his victory at Pebble Beach, was an entrant. He lost to Gene Andrews, another 1961 Walker Cup player, in the first round.

A Hollywood touch was added to the Championship when movie star Randolph Scott qualified at Los Angeles with 150.

He lost in the first round.

#### GRACE LENCZYK IN 1948

Ted and Rudy Lenczyk, caddies at the Indian Hill Country Club, Newington, Conn., had sister Grace hitting golf balls at age 11. Her classroom was the club's 14th hole across the street from the Lenczyk home.

Ten years after her brotherly instruction, Miss Lenczyk won the Women's Amateur Championship to climax an outstanding 1948 season. She had won the Canadian Ladies' Championship earlier.

Miss Helen Wilson, the runner-up in the 1941 Championship and a semi-finalist in 1946, again lost in the final round, by 4 and 3.

Pebble Beach proved an even sterner test in 1948 than in 1940 when three players scored below 80 in the qualifying round. Mrs. Bettye Mims White, the 1948 medalist with 77, was the only player below 80.

Miss Marlene Bauer, winner of the first Girls' Junior Championship the following year, reached the quarter-final round. She was 14 years old.

The 1948 Champion, now Mrs. Grace Lenczyk Cronin, is still an outstanding player. She won the Connecticut State Championship this summer two weeks after her early instructor, Ted Lenczyk, won the men's amateur championship of the same state.



Miss Grace Lenczyk