

SMALL MOMENTS REVEAL JACK NICKLAUS' QUALITIES

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“What sort of young man is Jack Nicklaus — that is, aside from his golf skill?” the questioner wanted to know.

Small incidents are often revealing in such matters. Here are some, plucked from memories of Jack before he became the current National Open Champion:

ITEM: Charlie Coe was recalling the final hole in the 1959 Amateur Championship at Broadmoor in Colorado. He and Jack Nicklaus were all square. Charlie's third shot, a recovery from heavy grass behind the green, failed to drop by half a turn of the ball.

“Then,” Charlie reminisced, “I went forward and picked up my ball. All of a sudden it dawned on me that Jack hadn't asked me to lift the ball and hadn't conceded my next stroke, and so I had no right to touch it. I said as much to Jack.

“‘Forget it,’ Jack replied, and he proceeded to roll in an eight-footer for a birdie 3 to win. Jack Nicklaus is a sportsman.”

ITEM: In the same Championship during a match, Nicklaus asked the referee some rather penetrating questions about Rules as they walked along. The referee was moved to remark that Jack seemed to know the Rules very well indeed. “It pays to,” said the talented young man. “The Rules contain a lot of rights for the player.”

ITEM: They were having the Annual Players' Dinner in the 1961 USGA Junior Amateur Championship at Cornell University. The main speaker was Jack Nicklaus. He had come there, at his own expense, just



Arnold Palmer, left, and Jack Nicklaus watch progress of a Nicklaus tee shot during 62nd USGA Open Championship. Jack, the winner, and Arnold, the defender were paired for 54 holes including playoff.

Photo by John Zimmerman

to play the Cornell course and now, after dinner, to give a blackboard talk on tactics to use on that particular course.

His young auditors were spellbound, and Jack himself was so enthused about the subject that he spoke for an hour or more.

Only four years before Jack had been on the other side of the speakers' table.

ITEM: It was the day before the Walker Cup Match last year in Seattle. Jack Nicklaus was on the fringe of the practice putting green, chipping balls toward a cup.

“Trying something new,” he said. “Jack Westland (Team Captain) told me that instead of cutting the ball

on this shot, I might do better by hooding a 4-iron and letting the ball run." It seemed to be working . . .

Three hours and 400 chips later, Jack guessed he'd better stop — "Back's hurting a little." But he had been willing to give himself utterly to the problem for three solid hours — one little shot.

ITEM: Two weeks later, Jack was at Pebble Beach trying to win the National Amateur for the second time. He succeeded convincingly. In one match, Jack and his opponent hit almost identical drives on the eighth hole, near the edge of a deep and dangerous chasm of Carmel Bay; the chasm stretched ahead almost to the edge of the green.

The referee wondered a bit as to who was away. "Let's see you pace it off" Jack suggested slyly.

ITEM: Now the scene is Oakmont, and the time is the fourth round in the 1962 National Open. On the sixth green Jack Nicklaus' tee shot comes to rest less than three feet from the hole. It looks as if it may have settled in the indentation of an old ball mark which had not been fully repaired.

Jack lifts his ball to repair the indentation if it is in fact an old ball mark — but no, it is a spike mark, and he must leave it as it is. With extreme care, he placed the ball back exactly in the indentation.

It was one of those critical moments in the fortunes of a Championship, for a birdie 2 here would help close a five-stroke lead held by the front-running Arnold Palmer. But from the little depression in the green the ball hopped to one side.

Jack Nicklaus merely did the right thing. For him, it had been more important to replace the ball truly than to try to take some other course, no matter the consequence.

From these impressions, it would be a valid conclusion that golf is fortunate to have a young man of such

character as the United States Open Champion — just as it has been fortunate to have Arnold Palmer, Gene Littler, Gary Player and other fine young gentlemen as leading exemplars.

One Over Par for Three Opens

Those who have watched Jack Nicklaus since his days in the USGA Junior Championship are not at all surprised by his victory last month at the Oakmont Country Club, near Pittsburgh.

Now that Jack has scaled the heights of the Open, at age 22, in his first professional year, it is worth looking back at some features of his golfing record, quite aside from his prodigious driving. He is a remarkable score player. When he won the National Amateur for the second time at Pebble Beach last year, he was 20 under par for 138 holes.

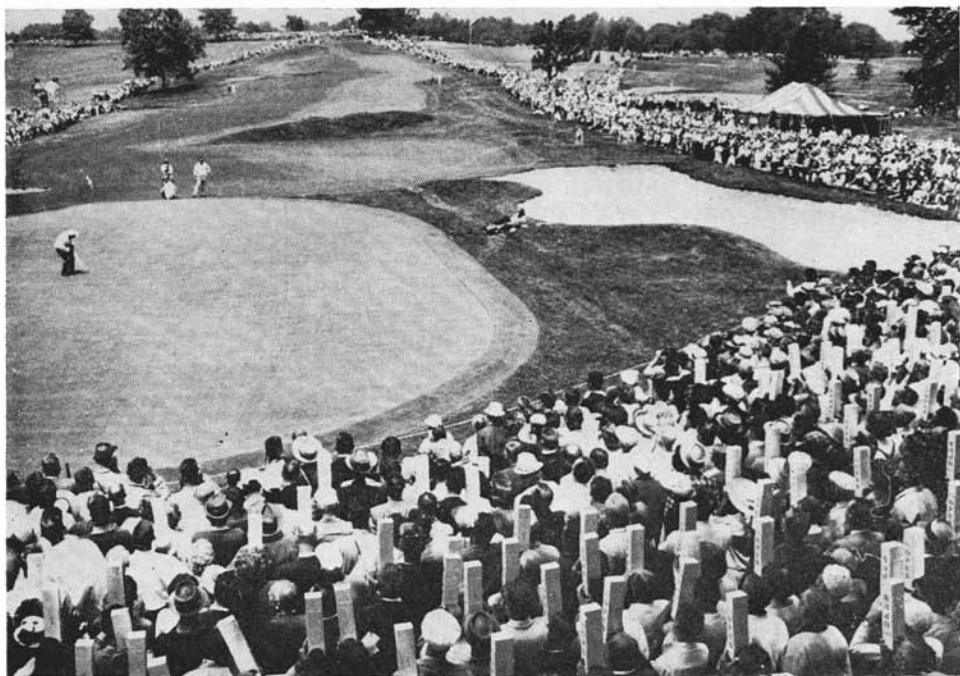
In the 1960 World Amateur Team Championship at Merion, near Philadelphia, he scored 66-67-68-68—269—11 under par over one of the greatest courses.

Now see Nicklaus' scoring record in the last three National Opens (he was an amateur in the first two):

	1960	1961	1962
Cherry Hills	Oakland Hills	Oakmont	
	71	75	72
	71	69	70
	69	70	72
	71	70	69
	—	—	—
Total:	282	284	283-71
			in play-off
Par:	284	280	284-71
Place:	Second	Tied 4th	Winner

In fine, Nicklaus is one over par for 13 rounds, under stern Championship tests.

Oakmont has long been one of the greatest of tests. This was the fourth Open there, and all have been distinguished in requiring real skill of the Champion. It is fair and will



With periscopes up, most of the Open gallery of 19,971 watch Nicklaus putt out at end of second round at the Oakmont Country Club.

Photo by Don Bindyke

yield low scores to the deserving — a last-round 67 by Deane Beman, amateur, was the best of the tournament; it is not punishingly long in terms of modern Open standards—6,894 yards, with a par of 71; but it requires thought and accuracy all the way round.

Oakmont, product of the Fownes family, has stood up so well over the years that Claude Harmon was moved to remark this time: "It is a shrine of golf." Bob Goalby said with convincing simplicity: "The well-groomed condition of the course gave all contestants the opportunity to do their best."

It is on the putting green that Oakmont is severest. Normally the greens are lightning-fast; the Club has long cut them at 5/32 inch as a matter of routine for club play, whereas the USGA norm for Championships is 3/16. A deluge closed the course the

last scheduled practice day and left the greens relatively slow. But they speeded up as the Championship progressed.

If one single factor was decisive in determination of the Champion, it was putting. Arnold Palmer three-putted seven greens in the regulation four rounds and three more in the play-off he lost to Nicklaus — a total of 10 three-putters. Nicklaus three-putted once.

In respect of the competition, it was a classic Open. Gene Littler started his title defense with a 69 for the first-round lead; Palmer had 71 and Nicklaus 72. At 36 holes, Palmer had moved into a tie for the top with Bob Rosburg at 139, Palmer scoring 68 and Rosburg 69 in the second round. Nicklaus had 142.

The double round on the third day brought its usual abundance of shifts in the lead. The third day of the Open

is perhaps the greatest in all sports, requiring as it does that the Champion sustain his skill throughout the day and producing as it does the ultimate in keen competition.

In the morning round Palmer had 73 for 212, and 26-year-old Bobby Nichols 70 to tie Arnie for the lead. But many others were nipping at their heels — the first ten were bunched between 212 and 216; Nicklaus was at 214 after a 72.

Twelve holes from the finish Palmer was sailing along with a five-stroke advantage over Nicklaus. But Arnie took a 6 at the ninth, where he always has reasonable hope of a bird 4, and dropped another to par at the short 13th. Even so, he was around in par 71, for 283.

But Nicklaus played the last twelve holes in three birdies and nine pars, and his 69 gave him 283 also.

The 283s were two strokes better than the next best. Nichols, with a closing 73, tied at 285 with Phil Rodgers, still only 24 years old. Rodgers might have been the winner but for (a) involvement with a small evergreen which cost him an 8 on the 292-yard 17th in the first round, and (b) four-putting the 10th in the second round.

The Nicklaus-Palmer play-off was their third round together in the Open. Nicklaus had begun the tournament with three birdie 3s running. Now, in the play-off, he took the lead at the first hole with a par 4, holed a bird 4 at the fourth for a two-stroke advantage, and suddenly, with a 2 at No. 6, was four strokes ahead when Palmer three-putted.

A characteristic Palmer surge of birdies at 9, 11 and 12 reduced Arnie's deficit to a scant stroke. Three putts at 13 were his undoing, and at the finish it was: Nicklaus 71; Palmer 74.

There was a record entry of 2,502 accepted, pared to 2,475 by later scratches, and everything about the

event was illustrative of why The Open is what it is. It is the genius of the event that every qualified player, be he professional or an amateur with a handicap not exceeding 2, may have a try at it. The 51 who qualified for the last 36 holes included a predominance of touring pros — 34; but there were 12 club pros and 5 amateurs who outscored all the remainder from among the original 2,502. And the lowest single round was amateur Beman's 67.

Gene Littler defended gallantly and was in the thick of it until his closing 75. He was a splendid champion in every way.

For the first time in many years play was by twos throughout. Oakmont has always been a slow course, with its requirement of careful play around the greens, and it was hoped that play in couples might make matters more enjoyable for everyone. But the modern pace of tournament golf is simply very tedious indeed, and there was no improvement this time. Matters were not helped when fog delayed play 22 minutes at the start of the second day and 12 minutes the third day.

But it was a brilliantly-planned tournament in respect of Oakmont's preparations. The Club was unusually fortunate in having a number of low-handicap golfers in key positions on its committees, headed by Jack Mahaffey, Jr., as General Chairman, and they brought unusual appreciations and values to the work. Among them were Jack Brand as Vice-Chairman and Sam Parks, Jr., the 1935 Open winner at Oakmont, who headed the vast scoring system. H. E. McCamey is Oakmont's President.

It was well that the Club was so well prepared, for it was called upon to handle the vastest crowds in the history of the Open. Count was kept

of all who passed through the gates, with the following results:

	1962 Oakmont	Previous Record
Thursday	17,837	14,067 in 1960
Friday	19,971	15,225 in 1961
Saturday	24,492	20,439 in 1961
	62,300	
Playoff:	8,653	

Approximately 175 newspapers, magazines and radio stations were represented in the press quarters.

Prize money of \$73,800 in the Championship proper included bonuses of \$2,500 each to Nicklaus and Palmer in the play-off; Nicklaus received \$17,500 all told. Additionally, \$7,800 was awarded to professionals in the 13 Sectional Qualifying Championships. Thus, the grand total of prize

money was a new high of \$81,600.

Ben Hogan, who won the last previous Open at Oakmont in 1953, was prevented by bursitis in a shoulder from trying to qualify sectionally.

THE SCOREBOARD

Par
4 4 4 5 4 3 4 3 5-36 4 4 5 3 4 4 3 4 4-35-71

JACK NICKLAUS

1st Round
3 3 3 5 4 4 4 4 7-37 4 4 5 3 4 4 4 3 4-35-72
2nd Round
3 4 4 4 4 3 4 4 5-35 4 4 5 3 4 4 3 4 4-35-70
3rd Round
4 5 3 5 5 3 4 2 5-36 4 4 5 4 4 4 4 3 4-36-72
4th Round
5 4 4 5 4 3 3 3 4-35 4 3 5 3 4 4 3 4 4-34-39
Play-off
4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 5-35 4 4 5 3 4 4 3 4 5-36-71

ARNOLD PALMER

1st Round
4 6 4 4 3 3 4 3 5-36 5 5 6 3 3 3 3 3 4-35-71
2nd Round
3 4 4 5 4 3 3 3 4-33 5 4 5 3 4 4 3 3 4-35-68
3rd Round
5 4 5 4 4 3 5 3 5-38 5 4 5 3 4 4 3 2 5-35-73
4th Round
4 3 4 4 4 3 4 3 6-35 4 4 5 4 4 4 3 4 4-36-71
Play-off
5 4 4 5 4 4 4 4 4-38 4 3 4 4 4 4 3 4 6-36-74

HOW THE LEADERS STOOD AFTER EACH ROUND

18 HOLES

Gene A. Littler	69
Bobby Nichols	70
Robert R. Rosburg	70
Robert Schoener, Jr.	71
J. C. Goosie	71
Arnold D. Palmer	71
Frank Boynton	71
Billy Maxwell	71
Gary Player	71
*Eugene C. Francis	72
Jack Nicklaus	72
*John H. Guenther, Jr.	72
Stan Leonard	72

36 HOLES

Robert R. Rosburg	139
Arnold D. Palmer	139
Billy Maxwell	141
Jack Nicklaus	142
Gary Player	142
Bobby Nichols	142
Miller Barber, Jr.	143
Gene A. Littler	143
Dave Douglas	144
Don Whitt	144
Phil Rodgers	144

54 HOLES

Bobby Nichols	212
Arnold D. Palmer	212
Phil Rodgers	213
Robert R. Rosburg	213
Gary Player	214
Jack Nicklaus	214
Gene A. Littler	215
Bo Wininger	216
Dave Douglas	216
Billy Maxwell	216

72 HOLES

Jack Nicklaus	283
Arnold D. Palmer	283
Phil Rodgers	285
Bobby Nichols	285
Gay Brewer	287
Tommy Jacobs	288
Gary Player	288
Gene A. Littler	290
Billy Maxwell	290
Doug Ford	290

Play-off: 18 HOLES

Jack Nicklaus	71
Arnold D. Palmer	74
*Amateur	