

FUN EMPHASIZED WHEN MISS GUNDERSON PLAYS

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The silence was almost deafening as Miss JoAnne Gunderson addressed a putt of six feet on the Country Club of Rochester's 18th green. She had to hole that putt to avoid defeat in her match against Miss Barbara Williams in the quarter-final round of the USGA Women's Amateur Championship last month.

Miss Gunderson drew back her putter. It trembled in her hands. Then she remembered that golf, after all, is supposed to be a game and not a nerve-shattering experience.

She hesitated for an instant, chuckled, and walked off the green, to the accompaniment of laughter from a gallery of more than 1,000.

The tension dissolved, JoAnne walked back to the ball and quickly dispatched it into the center of the cup. Two holes later she won the match. Two days later she won the Championship by defeating 17-year-old Ann Baker of Maryville, Tenn., by 9 and 8 in the final match, scheduled for 36 holes.

And so Miss Gunderson, who has a degree in education, again taught her lesson that golf, and winning golf at that, can be fun.

This talented young lady from Kirkland, Wash., makes golf easy to watch, too. The first 18 holes of the final match consumed only 2 hours 58 minutes. Nine more holes were played in 1 hour and 20 minutes.

The qualities of Miss Gunderson's personality are such that these overshadowed her golfing prowess in accounts of the Championship—no small feat since she was three under par for 28 holes of the final.

"Gundy" (she was called nothing else throughout the week by players and spectators alike) continued her long-time habit of applauding the good efforts of opponents; would occasionally duck under the gallery lines to chat with spectators while walking down the fairways; and every round, without fail, would pluck an apple from an orchard adjoining the 9th fairway before continuing her pleasant stroll in the sun.

When she threw the core out of bounds, and thereby avoided the possibility of a sticky loose impediment ruling (see Definition 17), everyone in attendance smiled. They were having a good time watching a good player at her best.

Indeed, JoAnne described her Saturday performance as the single best day of golf in her career. She was credited with a 70, two under par, for the first 18 holes, which were featured by her phenomenal number of 3s, eight in all. She recorded four birdies and one eagle.

After one of the birdies, which came about after a long iron shot had been drilled to within 6 feet of the hole, Miss Baker turned to an official and complained "JoAnne makes my pars look like double-bogies."

Exceptional Hitter

The eagle occurred on the 10th hole, a par-5 of 525 yards, where male visitors to the Country Club of Rochester are likely to be intimidated for years to come by their hosts who will tell them that a girl got home in 2 with a drive and a No. 5 wood shot, then downed a 7-yard putt.

Connoisseurs of the long drive will be interested to know that Miss Gunderson's drives averaged approximately 220 yards during the final. Often, as on the 10th, she will fly one a good deal longer.

JoAnne, the USGA Girls' Junior Champion in 1956, has now won the Women's Amateur Championship three times. Her other triumphs came in 1957 and 1960. She was runner-up in 1956, at age 17. As a three-time Champion, she joins such illustrious companions as Miss Beatrix Hoyt, Miss Margaret Curtis, Mrs. Dorothy Campbell Hurd, Miss Alexa Stirling and Miss Virginia Van Wie. Mrs. Edwin H. Vare, Jr., in a class by herself, won the Championship six times.

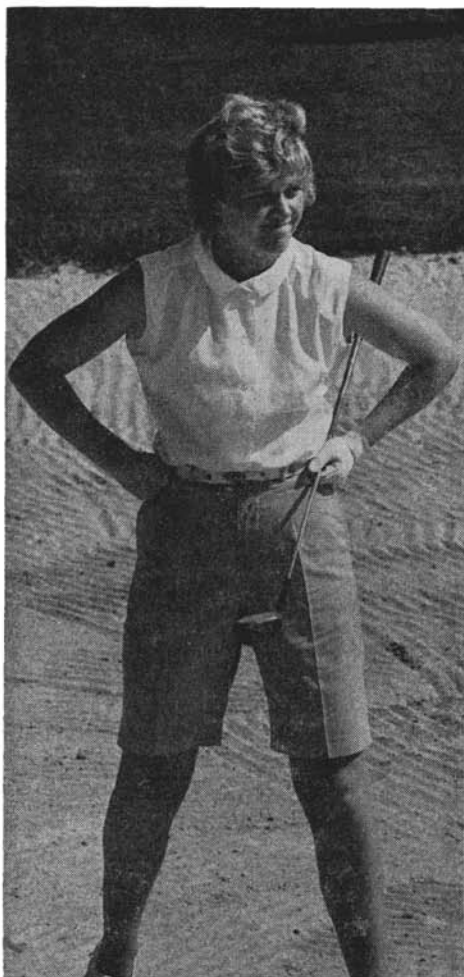
Throughout the week JoAnne was questioned about the possibility of her becoming a professional. Her reply invariably was "no", that golf would lose its appeal if "I had to play it every day."

On her way to the final, Miss Gunderson defeated Miss Nancy Gunther, 7 and 5; Mrs. Joseph Nesbitt, 4 and 3; Mrs. Natasha Matson Fife, 5 and 4; Miss Nancy Holmes, 5 and 4; Miss Williams in 20 holes; and Miss Phyllis Preuss, 3 and 2.

A Narrow Escape

The match against Miss Williams was something of a classic. Miss Williams, who is only a bit larger than a brassie, was 3 down after 10. She made a remarkable comeback while conceding an average of 50 yards off the tee.

Miss Williams won 12 with a par and 13 and 15 with birdies to draw even. On 16, a par-3, she came within two feet of a hole-in-one, to go 1 up. Miss Gunderson won 17 with a par and eventually won on the 20th, a par-5, when Miss Williams missed her third shot, the ball coming to



MISS JOANNE GUNDESON
THE CHAMPION!

Photo by James Drake

rest on the bank of a water hazard short of the green.

The precocious Miss Baker, one of a swarm of talented youngsters, who went over to Rochester from the Country Club of Buffalo after competing in the Girls' Junior Championship, lost in the final match just as Miss Gunderson did at age 17 six years ago to Mrs. Marlene Stewart Streit.

Miss Baker served notice that she

had Championship aspirations by beating Mrs. Les Johnstone, a member of the USGA Curtis Cup Team, 7 and 5 in the first round. She then won from Miss Maureen Crum, 3 and 2; Miss Sally Carroll, 7 and 6; Miss Brenda High, 5 and 4; Miss Marcia McLachlan, 2 and 1; and Miss Patricia Hahn, 1 up.

Against Miss Hahn, Miss Baker executed a grand shot from a bunker beside the 18th green to come within a few feet of the cup. The shot enabled her to halve the hole in par.

Miss Baker, a straight-A student, is a high school senior and plays basketball outside the golf season.

Mrs. Jay D. Decker, nee Anne Quast, the defending Champion, began her defense of the title as though she might again dominate the Championship as thoroughly as she did in 1961 at Tacoma.

Mrs. Decker breezed through her first four matches. She was only two over par for the 57 holes these required. No other player approximated such figures through the four rounds.

Two factors brought about Mrs. Decker's downfall in the quarter-final round. First, Miss Hahn played the first nine holes in 35, one under par; second, Mrs. Decker's normally impeccable short game went awry. Miss Hahn raced to a lead of five, and eventually won by 5 and 4.

The other semi-finalist was Miss Phyllis Preuss, who has won more matches during the past two Championships than any other player. Last year she lost to Mrs. Decker in the final round. This year she fully extended Miss Gunderson on one of the latter's very good days in the semi-final round.

Fine Foreign Field

The competition was enhanced by the presence of many foreign entrants.

Twelve came from Canada. Five British Curtis Cup Team members competed. Mrs. Frances Smith, the non-playing British Captain, and Miss Sheila Vaughan, both advanced to the fourth round.

The luck of the draw brought about a second-round match between mother and daughter—Mrs. Jean Trainor and Miss Anne Trainor, members of the host club. Mrs. Trainor, who hasn't yet lost to her daughter in competition, won this time by 4 and 3. In the very next round Mrs. Trainor was eliminated by her house guest, Mrs. Decker, by 3 and 2.

Althea Gibson, the former United States and Wimbledon tennis champion, was among the entrants. Miss Gibson defeated Miss Jeanie Butler, Harlingen, Texas, by 2 and 1 before losing to Mrs. Paul Dye, Jr., Indianapolis, by 2 up.

All eight playing members of the USGA Curtis Cup Team competed, as did non-playing Captain Miss Polly Riley. Miss Gunderson, Miss Preuss and Mrs. Decker advanced to the quarter-final round.

The fall of many prominent players in the early rounds only emphasized what was apparent on the eve of the tournament, that is, there are more good women players in this country than ever before and that the number increases yearly.

The Country Club of Rochester, site of the first USGA Women's Open Championship in 1953, again proved to be a completely gracious and efficient host.

The thanks of the USGA is accorded to Scott Stewart, Jr., the General Chairman, and the hard-working members of his committees, who overlooked nothing in their efforts to stage a successful competition while assuring the comfort of the visitors.