

Pebble Beach and the Ladies

It has been eight years since the USGA Women's Amateur Championship was held at Pebble Beach. The return of the tournament to the famous California course this month points up sharply the changes in the cast of leading players which have occurred in the meantime.

You would naturally expect eight years to bring forward new players of prominence and to dull the skill of some others. But the changes among the ladies have been unusual because every Champion from 1938 through 1947 has turned professional. They are Miss Patty Berg, Miss Betty Jameson, Mrs. Frank Newell (Miss Elizabeth Hicks), Mrs. George Zaharias, and Miss Louise Suggs, winner last year.

This year's Championship is the 48th in the USGA Women's Amateur series. Its schedule of play is in marked contrast to the first event, which was held in November of 1895 at the Meadow Brook Club on Long Island.

There were just 13 entrants in the first tournament, and they decided the Championship by a single stroke play round of 18 holes. Mrs. C. S. Brown was the winner with a score of 132.

At Pebble Beach the schedule starts with an 18-hole qualifying round to determine 64 qualifiers, followed by six match play rounds, five at 18 holes and the final at 36.

Pebble Beach is one of the two courses of the Del Monte Golf and Country Club. This is the fourth USGA competition to be played there.

At Del Monte in the Nineties

The Monterey Peninsula is inseparably linked with golf in California. Two or three California courses may be older than the old Del Monte course, but Del Monte was the first of national importance, and it was the first site of a State-wide tournament.

Golf was first played at Del Monte in the late nineties. The Del Monte tournament was started in 1897, and in 1913 it was merged with the State Amateur Championship for men. The women's tournament played at the same time is still known as

the Del Monte Championship for Women.

The first winner of the State Amateur was J. F. Neville, who played on the USGA Walker Cup Team at St. Andrews in 1923 and who won the State five times, having been champion as late as 1929. He first played in 1907 as a boy.

The California State Golf Association was formed in 1912. That was the first year of the State Championship and the last of the old Del Monte Championship, both events being held separately and a week apart. Jack Neville won both. The next year the two tournaments became one and have remained such ever since. Neville has won the event more times than any other. Among the fine golfers who have been California champions were Scotty Armstrong, Dr. Paul Hunter, and George Von Elm. Those still at the front include Roger Kelly, Ernest Pieper, Jr., and Bruce McCormick.

Amateur Architects

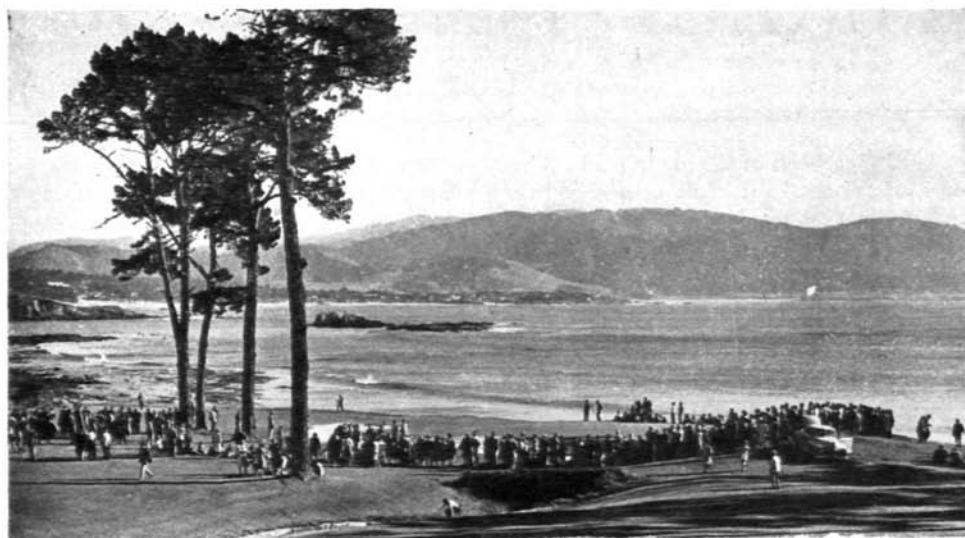
In 1915 a course along the shore at Pebble Beach was conceived. The World War was in its second year, and none of the great golf architects was immediately available. The men selected to make the first tentative layout were Neville and Douglas Grant. Grant was also a State champion; for twenty years he had lived in England and had been recognized there as a top-flight player. In addition, he was a student of golf architecture and had a personal sketch book with detailed drawings of the great holes of the world.

It is an extraordinary tribute to these two amateurs that, with all the talent which later studied the Pebble Beach course and the brilliant architects who were employed to make recommendations about it, the original layout is almost exactly the course as it is played today. But Chandler Egan must be given credit for the greens and the bunkers as they now exist.

As soon as the Pebble Beach course became seasoned, the State Amateur Championship was moved there from Del Monte, and it has been held there ever since.

Shortly after the first war, the late Miss

Home Hole



Julian P. Graham photo

The 18th hole at Pebble Beach curves along Carmel Bay. Beware a hook to the rocky beach below the fairway! The Santa Lucia Mountains are seen in the background.

Marion Hollins originated the Pebble Beach Championship for Women and won it the first six years it was played. She won as recently as 1942, three years before her death.

Pebble Beach has been played by great players from all over the world, and only once, it is said, has one of them had a criticism to offer. Long Jim Barnes looked up from a shot which he had badly topped and, gazing out over the blue waters of Carmel Bay to the Santa Lucia Mountains, he remarked with a broad Cornish accent that it was so "dommed" beautiful he couldn't keep his mind on the game.

Looking Back

In 1929 the USGA Amateur Championship was played at Pebble Beach. This was the year when John Goodman beat Bob Jones in the first round, and Jimmy Johnston defeated Dr. O. F. Willing in the final. In 1940 the 44th USGA Women's Amateur Championship was held at Pebble Beach, with Miss Betty Jameson the winner for the second successive year. Last year Pebble Beach was again the scene of the USGA Amateur, and Skee Riegel won.

Bing Crosby's annual pro-amateur invitational tournament was brought to the Monterey Peninsula for the first time in 1947 and has become a fixture. It is an unique tournament of 54 holes over three beautiful courses, Cypress Point Club, Monterey Peninsula Country Club and Pebble Beach. It will be held again early in January, 1949. Proceeds go to the Sister Kenny Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

In 1925 Cypress Point came into existence, and in the same year the Shore Course of the Monterey Peninsula Country Club was opened. Thus, there are four top courses within a radius of three miles of a central point of the Del Monte Forest, in addition to the municipal course at Pacific Grove, nine holes laid out by Chandler Egan.

Competent authorities rarely mention great courses without including both Pebble Beach and Cypress Point, and hypothetical composite golf courses usually include holes from both of them. But these links, better known as they are, are not as popular with the rank-and-file of players as the much-loved old Del Monte Number One and the Shore Course of the Peninsula Club.