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# HERB GRAFFIS

SWINGING AROUND GOLF

**Glad and sad stories:** Golf has two of the most beautiful buildings in sports. The USGA's Golf House in the scenic rolling meadows of Far Hills, N.J., is a stately mansion, that once was the home of wealthy and cultured Americans. It has been transformed into the headquarters of the first governing body of American golf and a golf museum, art gallery and a library of 6,000 books. This is believed to be the world's largest golf library. It is completely catalogued.

The museum is fascinating. It is comprehensive and tells the history of the tools, gadgets and trimmings of the game so well that one cannot say he — or she — knows the exciting story of how playing the game developed unless the Golf House museum has been seen. Janet Seagle arranged the museum and the library, with the expert and enthusiastic cooperation of all her colleagues in Golf House and the officials of the USGA. The way in which the exhibits are presented for public inspection without interfering with the immense amount of work done at Golf House is an impressive example of the competent way in which the USGA conducts its business for the golfers of the United States. Not by accident has the USGA earned its regard as the most effective and efficient governing body in sports.

The USGA museum chairman, Kenneth T. Gordon, has a show-place that will delight and educate thousands of golfers.

The other magnificent show-place of golf is the World Golf Hall of Fame building at Pinehurst. It is a gem of a sports palace and is set among the pines with some of the beauty of the historic Number Two course framing the picture. When you are at this charming place you have the sort of a feeling one has

when on sport's sacred soil in Greece where the Olympic games were born.

The building is said to have cost \$2.5 million.

John Derr assembled the exhibits in the World Golf Hall of Fame so the inaugural ceremonies could be conducted with promise that the living selected Famous Ones, President Ford and others present, would not have the uncomfortable feeling of attending a house warming at Ghost Town.

The Golf Writers' Assn. was brought into the deal as co-sponsors with the Pinehurst real estate sales promoters. The writers were the babes in the woods who did not read the small type. When it was announced that after more than a century of golf in Britain and the United States only 13 golfers were deemed famous enough to be the first named to the World Golf Hall of Fame, there was criticism and even worse, laughs, about the judgment of the selectors.

Not in the starting lineup were Glenna Collett, winner of six American women's national amateur titles; Chick Evans, first to win the American Amateur and Open titles in the same year, winner of other numerous championships and creator of the Evans caddie scholarships; Lawson Little, winner of American and British national amateur championships in two consecutive years; Joyce Wethered, who is regarded by many authorities as the finest of women golfers and one who defeated our Glenna, Tom Morris, Jr., and others whose credentials as "famous" were considered as adequate as those of some who were among the original 13 saints who came marching in. The American Golf Hall of Fame at Foxburg, Pa. continues to make its selections with due deliberation and has

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## GRAFFIS from page 10

started construction of its building. The PGA has revised procedure for admission to its Hall of Fame and the Ladies PGA keeps quiet about its Hall of Fame.

The real estate sale executives at Pinehurst were let out for spending too much money, it is said. John Derr, who seemed to be the one who could settle the differences between the Golf Writers Assn. and the Pinehurst officials, was fired by the new management at Pinehurst.

And that, to this writing, is the sad story of a very beautiful new building in golf. Whoever can find out how to unscrew this World Golf Hall of Fame should be voted into the hallowed temple.

**He made the desert bloom:** Despited inflation, high interest rates, layoffs and strikes, the Palm Springs, Calif. territory continues to get new golf courses, expensive homes and high-rise condominiums belying its designation as the "desert."

There are a lot of us who can remember when Palm Springs had only a nine-hole course owned by T. A. O'Donnell. George Howard came down from his summer job at one of the best clubs in the Pacific Northwest to be winter pro at Palm Springs. George was a good teacher. Palm Springs was being discovered by Hollywood braves and their weekend squaws who found the land wonderfully bright and warm until the sun dropped over the mountains. Generally, the land was considered good for nothing and the government generously gave much of it to Indians.

Then came a good hotel, several motels, a dude ranch and a gambling joint operated by Detroit mobsters. The desert began to green up a little but it really bloomed when Johnny Dawson got the Thunderbird Country Club started. Johnny was one of four brothers who served golf very well; two of them as California association officials and Johnny and George as amateur players and Spalding salesmen. George became one of the top executives of Spalding. Johnny left the company when the USGA questioned his amateur status. I have never met any one more devoted to the best interests of golf than the Dawson brothers and more truly amateur golfers in spirit.

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# Now— a new stainless steel shaft to complete our bag for '75.

**M**any new investment cast irons bowed in '74. The Keller 211 among them. Of all these brands, ours led the way in sales. With no claims of "forgiving" a chili-dip or a banana ball. We simply put our chips on good design. And on *quality*.

## A lightweight stainless steel shaft.

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## Two new Keller irons.

We now have two new *no*-offset irons. (Shaft-in-hosel and shaft-over.) And, of course, the Keller 211 offset. All have rounded back and sole. No turf drag or back edge bounce with these. And less vibration on those queasy off-center hits. Thanks to a sweetspot further out from the heel. Low center of gravity helps get the ball up faster.



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The letter of the law has to be that way, I guess. Anyway, after Johnny quit Spalding for whom he was selling several thousands of dollars worth of balls, clubs and bags and went into real estate business, he was secure in amateur status. He was runnerup to Skee Riegel in the 1947 National Amateur at Pebble Beach. Thunderbird had tough going in its early years and got solid when it got a number of good-spending members from as far away as Chicago. After Thunderbird got established the desert became a golf empire. It now is by far the greatest golf real estate development in the world and the operation that set the pattern for other huge and successful golf real estate projects in the United States and other countries.

Johnny Dawson has never been mentioned among golf's millionaires, yet the pleasant, handsome, soft-sell salesman has made immensely more money in golf business than any other one man.

## THE NEXT 25 YEARS *from page 24*

afford not to have one," he said. Because of materials and parts shortages, however, orders are backlogged about six months.

Another great innovation is the riding trap rake. Available just the last two years, the concept successfully fits the trend to save time. Perhaps 50 percent of courses with any great number of traps now keep them in shape with tractor-pulled rakes.

Large tree spades, usually rented from landscaping firms, have been a godsend for old courses replacing dead or damaged trees, and to new courses on open land. Such machines make moving a 20-foot pine a routine task.

It hardly seems that automatic irrigation could get more sophisticated, but new types of heads and controllers appear on the market each season. In machinery, better ideas are on the way, such as a combined vacuum and finger-raking machine. How about a golf car riding on an air cushion?

Where are the new trends taking us? How big will golf be by 1980 and 1990? Predicting the future is always risky, and it seems we always under-guess. Golf is now a world-wide game, but still far short of its potential popularity and market. For the final quarter of this century, growth should only be limited by providing enough places to play at acceptable cost □



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