

# Winged Foot—A Tough Course

By ROBERT E. POWER, *Editor*

**W**INGED FOOT is a tough golf course. Not so long perhaps in total yardage as some others but so laid out that every shot must be played with accuracy and judgment.

We saw it at its worst during the Open Championship. For five weeks there had been no rain and the fairways which in many places consist of a thin layer of soil on solid rock were in spots fairly cooked to a crisp. Greenkeeper, John Elliffe had done his best and the tees, greens and approaches where he could water were in splendid shape. But Nature had taken command of the open spaces and the going was not by any means easy even for the champions.

Late Friday afternoon a steady downpour of rain set in so that Saturday saw a vast improvement in turf conditions through the green. That was the only break John Elliffe got—everything else was against him.

Winged Foot stands out because of the exacting shots to the greens. They are long, narrow and tightly bunkered. With a strong wind blowing every day from the westerly quadrant, and all but one hole, the short 10th, running approximately north and south, the players were hard put to keep their iron shots on the line. Time after time I saw fine irons hit from the tree-bordered fairways that seemed to be splitting the pin until they reached the open

space near the green when the wind blew the ball off the line into the deep pit bunkers which hugged the putting surface.

Winged Foot was designed by Mr. A. W. Tillinghast who talked to me quite freely about its architectural features.

"I purposely made Winged Foot difficult for the par shooter," he said, "and easy for the average golfer. With a few exceptions the par four holes require long accurate drives to bring the player near enough to the greens to make sure of his second shot. Many of the fairways, particularly in the wooded section, bend slightly to the right or left so that the long hitter must hug one side or the other on his tee shot in order not to be in the rough on the other side. Extreme distance is not as necessary as straight hitting and that is where Farrell, Hagen and several of the other good professionals got into trouble."

The fairways at Winged Foot are mostly blue grass and fescue of a very fine strain while the greens are mixed bent and fescue grown from seed. The course is only six years old, having been opened in June, 1923, so that it is probably the youngest course the Open Championship was ever played on. Even so, it stood the test and as time goes on and the turf matures and thickens it will rank with the best tournament golf courses in the world.



WALTER HAGEN PLAYING FROM THE TREES ON THE 16TH HOLE —P. & A. Photo  
*The British Open Champion was continually in trouble on his tee shots with disastrous results*