

TRADITIONS WILT U.S.G.A. SHOWS

By JACK FULTON, Jr.

HIDDEN in the formal wording of the annual report of the USGA executive committee, which was read to delegates at the Association's 42d annual meeting on Jan. 11 in New York city, were a number of subjects which give evidence that the rulers are keeping open minds to current trends. For instance, tradition was thrown to the winds in the Championship committee's report when it gave notice that punishment of disqualification might be the lot of slow-play competitors in future USGA championships.

Likewise, the stymie in match play came close to getting the gate, the vote splitting 8 to 5 for retention. If any tournament players of the nation are disappointed at this decision, they at least get satisfaction from the fact that the life of the stymie is still nip and tuck and hence the whole subject will have to be brought up again at some future time.

During the year, the Rules of Golf committee had its usual allotment of decisions to make. Most important was the ruling that the committee in charge of any medal tournament has the right to call off play if the weather is bad. In match play, competitors may take shelter by agreement without disqualification, unless in the opinion of the committee in charge, they unduly delay play.

Championships Improve Gate Net

The Championship committee reported a gross take of \$40,736.95 from its tournaments of the year. Disbursements amounted to \$17,215.65, leaving net receipts of \$23,521.30. This was considerable improvement over 1934, when the gross was \$35,457.65, disbursements were \$19,216.22, and the net figured only \$16,241.43. Largest gains came from the Open, which in 1934 netted \$7,979 against \$12,492 this year; and from the Women's event, which rose from a 1934 deficit of \$322 to show a 1935 profit of \$1,662. This latter reversal of financial form was the result of scheduling tourney matches in the afternoons rather than in the mornings, the custom heretofore.

From the report of the Membership and Reinstatement committee came less pleasant news. In spite of 28 clubs elected to

Association membership and 23 member clubs reinstated, total club membership dropped from 839, as of a year ago, to 767, due to 61 club resignations and 62 clubs dropped for non-payment of dues. The Association's roster is the lowest in ten years, having declined from the all-time top of 1,154 clubs in 1931. Obviously the continued health of the body demands that considerable attention be given this present year to ways and means of educating clubs to the benefits of USGA membership. With dues only \$30 per year per club, the job should not prove too difficult, once club officials are made to realize what the USGA has done and can do for the good of the game.

Golf Has Five Law Suits

Morton G. Bogue, general counsel of the association, reported there were but five decisions involving golf reported to him in 1935. Negligence litigation, Bogue reported, appears definitely to be on the wane. The underlying reason is not known; perhaps more golf insurance is being written and the insurance companies are settling these claims out of court.

Most interesting of the year's cases concerns the apparent refusal of a Coast golf club to permit one of its members to resign his membership. It appeared that the plaintiff became a regular member of the club in 1916 and continued as such until the latter part of 1931 when he paid all dues and assessments against him, endorsed his certificate of membership in blank, and tendered it along with his written resignation to the club. His resignation was refused by the directors, who relied on a by-law which read as follows:

"The resignation of any member shall be made in writing addressed to the Board of Directors. No resignation of a member shall be effective until accepted by the Board of Directors, nor shall the same be accepted while such member is in anywise indebted to the Club nor until he has

AT LITTLE COST

... any club can send its greenkeeper to the NAGA convention, Cleveland, Feb. 4-7, and gain back many times its investment in the late greenkeeping information its man will acquire.

assigned and delivered his certificate of membership. Until the transfer of the certificate of membership on the books of the corporation, or until the date of the expulsion of a member, the record owner of each membership shall be and remain liable for all dues, fees or other charges which have accrued or which may thereafter accrue."

The court concluded that by paying his dues and turning in his certificate the plaintiff had done every substantial thing required by the by-law and that for defendant to hold him as a perpetual member on its mere fancy or caprice would be obnoxious to the spirit as well as to the clear meaning of the statute. The court refused to consider the contention that an assignment of a new candidate for membership was required by the by-law. Accordingly so much of the by-law as permitted the club to deny the right of resignation on the ground that it had merely withheld its consent or declined to make the necessary book entries was held to be invalid because unreasonable and arbitrary.

In a New York workmen's compensation case, a caddie was injured by climbing a tree on the grounds while waiting to be called. He was paid by the members who employed him, not by the club, and that day had not been employed at all. It was held that the claimant was doing something for his own amusement, and hence the accident did not arise out of or in the course of his employment.

Up in Massachusetts, a caddie stood on the first tee, one Monday morning, watching two other caddies who were preparing to tee-off. One of them took a practice swing without looking, and struck the claimant in the head with his club, inflicting injuries to the nose and right eye. It was shown that caddies were permitted to use the course on Mondays.

The court pointed out that the claimant's employment did not require him to be on the first tee and that he was not engaged in any of the duties for which he was engaged. Therefore, since he was injured while waiting for an opportunity to

play golf for his own pleasure, the claim was not allowed.

A total of \$19,660.63 will be available for Green Section activity during 1936. Fifteen thousand dollars of this is the 1936 allotment and \$4,660.63 is unexpended balance from 1935. There may be certain additional funds made available through donations from those not connected with the Association; \$405 was so donated during 1935.

Gross income of the USGA for 1935 amounted to \$47,315.85. Expenses of \$34,683.40, plus a \$82.82 loss on sale of bonds, leave a net income of \$12,549.63 for the year.

Badminton Boom Going Strong At Golf Clubs

BADMINTON this winter has taken a strong hold at golf clubs. Where there are fairly large rooms with high ceilings the racquet game with the feather duster birdies has been getting a lively play from men and women.

Badminton came into the United States from Canada. It's a cousin to tennis with a court 20 ft. by 40 ft. long and a mesh net 5 ft. high. The shuttlecock, batted back and forth on the tennis plan, is a piece of cork one inch in diameter with a circle of feathers stuck into its top.

One of the attractive features of the game is that experience is not necessary to provide a good workout and fairly close competition although the badminton experts can make the cork birdie do tricks with finesse and control that are amazing to the uninitiated.

With the indoor boost the game has received with golf club members this winter it is certain to get a fine play from club members on their own lawns or at club outdoor courts the coming season when the members want a quick workout.

There is a wide range of cost in badminton equipment. There are complete outfits ranging in price from \$10 to \$22.50 and including from 2 to 4 rackets, net, posts, tape and shuttlecocks. The better rackets in the Spalding badminton line cost \$10 each.

It looks like badminton equipment is due for a pretty fair sale at pro-shops next season, inasmuch as the equipment is an extra-profit line for the pro and does not conflict with his golf interest. Spalding branches will furnish pros with complete details.