

PROS FORECAST GREAT DAYS AHEAD FOR AMATEUR STARS

PROS ARE CONFIDENT that by 1947 there'll be coming to the top some of the finest amateur golfing talent this nation has seen. They want it to happen, too. Amateur accent in an essentially participating game is fundamental as a broad, solid base for pro business, so sage professional businessmen agree.

What many pros hope is that a youngster with a great combat record wins the 1946 National amateur, thus helping to remind the public that a lad who had a good sound game can regain it after a few years absence to play for keeps in the biggest game of all. That doesn't look to be a long shot hope, according to this year's amateur play in Cleveland, O., for instance. Joe Fogg, jr., a young veteran of hard fighting in Europe, won the Cleveland District GA title, and Pfc. Alex Polli, 22-year old former Mayfield high school player, home from Pacific combat on a convalescent furlough, won the Cleveland amateur title.

GOLFDOM queried pro authorities on amateur golf prospects and here are some of the comments:

Northern California Future Greats

Eddie Duino, San Jose (Calif.) CC pro, said:

"In my opinion, there are several promising youngsters in this area. Here at my club I have two promising 16-year old boys, Ruskin Shepperd and Eli Bariteau, Jr. Eli this year went to the finals of our club championship, losing to Ernie Pieper, nationally known amateur. He also was a finalist in the Northern California Junior championship, losing to Billy Ogden, Tommy LoPrestis, ace from Sacramento. How far these boys will go will be determined a good deal on what application they will make in the next 4 or 5 years. They have the stuff and what they will do with it remains to be seen.

"Benny Coltrin, Lake Merced GC, San Francisco, has a promising ace in Ned Eichler, 14 years old. Ned shoots consistently in the 70's on his course. He is a big-framed boy and according to Benny has everything champions are made of. Dewey Longworth, Claremont CC, predicts a bright future for 16-year old Dick Kevser. His best score is a 72, and he has already scored an eagle 3.

"Orinda's professional, Pat Patten, has a real comer in his 15-year old son, Ronnie. Harold Sampson at California GC has two future brights, Gilbert Moore, 16, and Bob Cardinal, 15.

"Hillview GC here in San Jose has two coming stars under the tutelage of the veteran Scot professional Frank Noble,

Al Andrade, 15, who shot a 66, and a Bobby Harris, 16, who is consistently in the low seventies. These are only a few that I am acquainted with, and I am sure every golf club must have one or two youngsters in the Service who could shoot our course in 75 or better. It was my experience with these kids that probably none of them would have gone on to do big things in golf for the reason that upon attaining the age of 18 or 19 had the war not come along, they wouldn't have been too interested in scaling the heights. As you know, it takes a tremendous amount of time, money, energy, and sacrifice to make an outstanding golfer. These kids would have been more interested in the serious part of life, that is, completing their education and preparing themselves to make a decent livelihood and their golf games would have been secondary. They would always be good golfers as business men's golf goes, and even when they return from this ordeal, they will be good golfers again but not of the championship caliber. When you consider how comparatively few make champions, either amateur or professional, I question the value of winning championships as compared to the many virtues and benefits to be derived from this grand game.

"The golfers of tomorrow are the youngsters of today, and with that thought in mind, we as professionals should do everything in our power to interest and develop both boys and girls in their early teen ages. Personally, unless youngsters are a good size for their ages, I don't believe starting them too young is of much value. An ideal age, in my opinion, is 10 or 11. It has also been my experience that once young people are properly and thoroughly schooled in the fundamentals of the game, they will always want to play golf; and of course the more youngsters who are interested in the game, the greater the percentages are going to be in developing champions. It would be interesting to know just how many golf club members there are in the United States today who learned their golf as juniors.

School Program Helps

"The schools and colleges were doing a grand job previous to the war with junior golf. Though this program was somewhat retarded during the past few years, I know it will be resumed and enlarged upon. In some sections of the country, golf was offered as a regular part of their athletic curriculum, and it wouldn't surprise me to see that program become a



Connolly's living in that postwar world already.
—By Mac in Camp Gordon (Ga.) Cadence.

Stuart Hawley, Jack McChessney, and Frankie Campbell. With a toll that heavy in one locality, you can imagine what the results nationally must be. The kids who will return safe and sound of mind and limb, after being away from golf at least 4 years, may not be able to regain their previous form and the necessary spirit and will to achieve what they might have done. After all, these kids will have missed their best productive and competitive years, and so I look for our future champions to come from the kids who have missed this horrible ordeal of combat."

More Goodmans?

Stanley Davies, Omaha Field Club pro, is noted as a judge of budding golf talent, amateur and pro. Davies looked over the situation in his territory and reported:

"We have two high school boys here in Nebraska who show great promise golf wise. One is Don Spomer, 17 year old Lincoln high school boy and Nebraska state high school champion, who recently won the Norfolk (Neb.) open with 142 for 36 holes. The other youngster, Dick Knight of Omaha Central high school, broke the course record with 65 at the Happy Hollow club in Omaha this year. Both these lads seem especially gifted when it comes to golf. I don't believe there are any girls here at present who show brilliant aptitude and determination at the game.

"Today's crop of young golfers, I believe, compares more than just favorably with the crop after World War 1. For instance; several youngsters competed at Norfolk and shot good games. Among them one 14 year old banged out a 75.

"I know of no golfer, who gave outstanding promise before the war, whose development has been retarded by it. In fact I have observed that many fine young service men who played excellent games before the war have grown even more powerful through the strenuous physical training they received while in the service. There's no doubt in my mind that this improvement, coupled with the strict discipline they have received, will make them better golfers.

"As for interest in amateur golf, that should come again with the renewal of the Walker Cup series. The boys won't have to be as good as a Byron Nelson to get a lot of publicity. The national amateur championship with its keen competition will have them all 'raring' to go.

"Golf professionals commenced to make real money when Jones came into the sports' limelight. He proved just the impetus that the game needed then. However I myself believe that Walter Hagen was the man to blast the trail for the public's interest in golf, for his marvelous ability and handsome appearance plus his

standard thing in our schools and colleges.

"Amateur golf today is suffering from lack of competition and it takes competition to make real champions. With so many of our fine young players in the Service and with U.S.G.A. cancelling for the duration all of its major tournaments, naturally amateur golf, as far as interest that is being focused on the game, practically passed into obscurity. However, when we get back to a peace-time schedule, I believe it will bounce back more so than ever. From an interest standpoint, amateur golf received its greatest attention during the era and reign of Bobby Jones, because as a simon-pure, he could more than hold his own with the best professionals; and for a few of the reasons that I outlined above, it won't be too many years before we will have another Bobby Jones come along. All through the decades, amateur golf has managed to contribute one or more outstanding stars, and it is reasonable to assume that in the future we will develop amateur stars to even greater proportions, and this certainly will again place amateur golf in the limelight it should enjoy. I am not attempting to infer that amateur golf will or should ever overshadow professional golf, but it certainly will resume its position of a few years back.

"As for the present crop of youngsters as compared to those before the war, I would say that on an average, they aren't as good but this will all change when the world regains its peace-time complacency.

Battle Takes Young Stars

"Here in northern California, the war claimed two of the finest young players ever developed in this area in Bud Brownell and Eddie Fry, son of professional Earl Fry. Both boys met their fate in the Pacific theater. These two boys were really destined to do big things and seemed to have possessed all the qualifications of real champions. We also lost three other promising youngsters in



The kids gather to shoot for a prize list valued at \$1500, topped by a scholarship at Ohio State university. The prizes were offered to a field of 94 caddies selected for conduct, ability and sportsmanship, who competed in the Columbus (O.) city caddie tourney at Twin Rivers muni course. The tournament was sponsored by ex-caddie Mayor James A. Rhodes of Columbus.

spectacular genial qualities made him not only the idol of the fans, but of the pros too.

In short, Hagen the professional, and Robert Jones the almost unbeatable amateur, gave golf a color and popularity that time hasn't dimmed. Today's fine looking and clean living golf pros, who hold high the standard of good sportsmanship, owe a great deal of their successful popularity to those two stars of yesterday."

Sunkist Crop Looks Good

George Lake, pres. of the Southern California PGA, and pro at Recreation Park courses at Long Beach, is very optimistic about the younger crop of golfers bringing amateur golf up very close to professional scoring standard soon. George is a canny judge of playing technique and temperament. He points out that CPO Dale Andreason winning the Southern California PGA title from a fast field is an indication that much star ability is going to come out of uniform soon. Andreason has been in the Navy since 1942. Before that he was asst. to Vic Baker at Lakewood. Andreason has been in charge of the golf part of the rehabilitation program at Corona Naval hospital.

Lake said that some pros' youngsters are among the most promising of the potential champions. He named Willie Hunter's boys, Mac and Bill, as the best looking prospects. Dave Bauer's daughters, Alice and Marlene, are excellent prospects. Alice, the older, is 16. Marlene is 11.

George added:

"We have a lot of boys and girls who show much promise. We have at this club the Beaver girls. The older sister holds the Ladies' City championship and usually shoots in the high 70s. Her swing is not as fundamentally sound as the younger one and I don't think she will go as far. I have several boys and girls

from my golf classes who are playing well and show promise. I played with one last week, Dorothy Deatherage, who defeated the older Bauer girl, Alice, for the Long Beach city junior championship. She had 82 with me and putted badly. She has nice style and is very interested. We have several boys here and at the other clubs who look good.

"The present crop of youngsters seems to be better on the average, but with less standout stars among them. Possibly this is true because we have so many that all shoot in the 70s. Before the war we had several low scorers, but a big gap to the next group. Now they are all playing quite well and show a lot of interest. My school classes this year were by far the best I have ever had. The classes were larger, the kids stayed in them from start to finish; they would wait a long time to get a little help on their swings.

"Standout players who were called away to war were: Bobby Judson, U. S. Marine Corps, who at 16 was the medalist in the L. B. city championship, with 67. Ted Richards, bombardier, who is now only 20 and who has won the So. California Prep Championship, had a beautiful swing, and will definitely be back in there when he returns. Walter Porterfield, Jr., now 18, and in the Merchant Marine, won last year's Southern California Prep Championship. He won the Recreation Park Men's Club championship last year, having 8 birdies the first 16 holes in the finals. S 1/c Jackson Bradley, now 23, former S. C. Prep winner and winner of the 1942 \$1,000.00 Open as a pro, from a field including Lloyd Mangrum, Willie Hunter, Olin Dutra, etc. One boy from San Francisco, who was the best in the Bay Region, was Earl Fry's son, Eddie. He was killed at Okinawa.

Competition Abounds

"Here in So. California and Long Beach we are overcrowded on all of the golf courses. We have a very active Pub Links association and private club association. The tournament calendar for amateurs is really overcrowded. Most of the amateurs can't find time to play in everything.

"I believe enough is done for the established golfer but most pros and club officials have eased up on promoting the game with beginners because they have all the business they can handle. I feel this is very bad, as it is the ideal time to encourage more players and the construction of more courses.

"Golf after the war should be terrific, for these reasons:

"Service men have been encouraged to play. We allow all enlisted men to play free any time with rental sets going out for 25c. Have been running about 1,500 rounds per month here. The PGA pitch-and-putt program is fostering new interest. We have five such courses in So. California under construction at the present time. I teach a class of 15 combat fatigue patients from the U. S. Naval Hospital four times weekly. I have enlisted men on Tuesdays and Thursdays and officers on Wednesdays and Thursdays. I have each group for four weeks and then they start playing. The instruction and range balls are free to them and most of them have never played before. I find that most of our service patients have started since the war.

"Many defense workers, who have had their scale of pay take a boost, have tried this rich man's game and found out it was inexpensive. They will continue to play regardless of the drop in income. Many people have been working nights and have had plenty of time to play golf in the day. With this labor shut down, we will lose these, but they will continue to be week-end golfers.

PGA Has Problem

"The PGA will have to do something to establish its members in a different light from just any pro. Since the war, with all of the big Opens, and Nelson's fabulous wins, many of the boys are turning pro and expect to get rich quick. In most cases, they are not the type I would want for an assistant. All they want to do is play and have almost established themselves as golf bums. I have had five applications this week from fellows leaving defense jobs, who wish to get into pro golf. I know that we have to get our assistants from the amateur ranks because of the depleted caddy pens and we will be better off because of this, but we will have to be careful in choosing these people or the whole profession will suffer."

Carolina Juniors Blossoming

George Corcoran, Carolina section PGA pres., and pro at Starmount Forest CC, Greensboro, N. C., finds the amateur picture bright in that nursery of some pretty hot golf talent. George has noticed that the kids are taking advantage of opportunities to study the star pros' games close up. He is convinced that considerable pro attention must be devoted now to the encouragement of top grade amateur ability.

George commented:

"There isn't any question about it; pros should concentrate more on amateur golf. More so than ever, because that is where our future business lies (not only in lessons and sales, but keeping a sound membership at the clubs). During the depression, it wasn't the good golfers that dropped out first, but the dubs.

"We are very fortunate, I think, in our section, in having a few fine amateurs who, I am sure, will be heard from in the golfing world within the next few years. The first one is Aaron Rice, Jr., who recently won the Carolina Junior Golf championship. Incidentally, we had the largest field ever competing in the Junior tournament. The second boy is Burman McKenzie, Jr., of Asheville, a 16-year-old, who has been burning up the courses of late with low rounds of 67, 68 and 69.

"I find that the amateur golfers, particularly the younger boys, are much keener students of the game than the amateurs of ten years ago. I think that is due to the fact that more tournaments have been held within the last few years than ever before, and this gives the average amateur a chance to study the Nelson, Byrd, McSpadden and Wood golf swings.

"The war has set back a few promising amateurs of prewar era, such as the Alexander boys of Durham—Chick and Chuck; and also Bobby Dunkelberger, of High Point, and several others who gave promise of becoming good golfers. However, I really don't think it will take them too long to get back in the swing.

"I think to encourage more golf, not only the high schools and colleges but grammar schools as well, should have driving nets and have golf instruction a part of the regular school curriculum.

"As far as the girls are concerned, I know three young lady golfers who show great promise. The first is Marjorie Burns, of Salisbury, who recently won the Carolina Junior Girls' championship; the second, Mary Clay O'Connor, of Durham, a former Carolina Junior Girls champ who also made a very good showing in the recent North and South Ladies championship, at Pinehurst; and Jane Thomas, of Salisbury, who, for a girl, has one of the finest and soundest swings I ever looked at."