

Nelson Demonstration Features PGA Meet—Officers Reelected

By HERB GRAFFIS

Ed Dudley was reelected PGA of America pres. for his 6th term at the association's 1946 annual convention. Joe Novak was reelected sec., and Willie Maguire reelected treas. New vps elected were: George Corcoran, Greensboro, N. C.; Alex Cunningham, Glenview, Ill.; L. J. McClellan, Topeka, Ks. Tom Walsh, Chicago, again was named honorary pres.

Business handled at the meeting included revision of the PGA magazine publishing set-up and problems of the tournament circuit. Success of the tournament bureau conducted by Fred Corcoran in getting events for every available weekend and running prize money up to more than \$500,000 yearly has developed complications. Heavy schedule has worn down headliners and without their appearance sponsors and galleries are dissatisfied. Fall tournaments are pushed out of newspaper space nationally by football news.

Instruction clinic during which Byron Nelson demonstrated and discussed his methods was conducted under chairmanship of Harold Sampson. Merchandising subjects were covered in addresses by George Dawson of Spalding's and Victor East of Wilson's. Robert Winthrop Adams demonstrated a new device for assisting the pro in teaching timing. A new Electro-golf driving net device with electric eye-apparatus to determine approximate length and character of shots was shown for first time and received approval from the pros who tested it.

The Nelson demonstration was followed by lively discussion during a question-and-answer period.

Nelson Explains His Game

Byron maintains that if the pro can teach the pupil how to grip the club correctly and start it back properly the tough part of the job is done. He says the left hand does the guiding and the right hand the hitting in his game, but that both hands are firmly on the grip. He says his hit is as delayed as anyone's in golf; his wrists staying cocked longer because they are not cocked so much at the top.

He pointed out that he plays the ball a bit more forward than many other stars do because of his lateral shift "or sway, if you want to call it that." He doesn't move around much on the ball for various shots but lets the club loft care for that factor.

Byron described his left hand grip as "a combination palm and finger grip" that

permitted him to push the club up with the left arm without tightening up.

He said his average drive is 248 yards. He advised against playing any shot as hard as it can be hit as then control is sacrificed.

He commented on the considerable variation in putting styles and observed that the one point common to most good pro putters was that both thumbs were straight down the shaft. In talking of bunker play differences, he cited Snead as one of the greatest in this department but had a style almost opposite that of Hogan who also was a master in this phase of the game. He remarked that more good shots are played out of the traps than off the tees in pro golf.

After admitting he'd had "better luck in helping good players than bad players," he told of Frank Stranahan who was his pupil at Inverness. "Stranahan was a good player before I got him," Byron said, then added that Frank then did not know how to hit a deliberate hook or slice, or play a downhill or uphill lie consistently.

Starts With 118 Score

In telling of his own development Byron said the first game in which he ever kept score took 118 strokes. He told of Ted Longworth's interest in his game and Ted's patient efforts to keep Nelson's right hand from getting too far underneath and hooking shots all over the state. Ted also kept after Byron to shorten his backswing. Nelson remarked that Longworth's effort succeeded when Byron fell off a barn and landed on his back which definitely shortened his swing. Watching the PGA at Dallas as a caddy Nelson noted that Hagen and Al Espinosa didn't have long backswings and that observation helped him.

The venerable Willie Maguire, counsellor to so many of the Texas kids who've risen in golf, also helped in giving Nelson a good foundation for self-analysis of his game. Byron said he worked 10 years to eliminate false moves. He remarked that he realized what Longworth had been trying to do for him in shortening his backswing when it dawned on him that he was tall enough to get leverage without a long backswing.

Does Byron Sway?

He confessed that he didn't know whether or not he swayed but he did know that he had more weight on his left foot when he was starting his backswing and

could feel the weight transfer as the back-swing progressed.

One of the great lessons he received, Byron said, was when he was an amateur playing with Bobby Cruickshank in a Texas open. Bobby got across to him clearly the method and reasons for proper gripping.

When Byron was at Texarkana in his first pro job, for 2 years, the studious and widely-known veteran amateur, J. K. Wadley, who had learned from Jim Barnes, impressed upon him how the club should be taken back. Later, when he was having trouble with his shots flying off to the right Harold McSpaden helped him correct the fault of taking the club back too much on the inside. During the 2 years Byron was with George Jacobus as playing pro George gave him a lot of help in supervising practice and analyzing the game that Byron was acquiring.

Shanking Gave Him Hysterics

To one who has observed Nelson's development casually but frequently shortly after Byron graduated from the caddy ranks there was one comment Nelson made in his PGA talk that was revelatory and impressive in disclosing the intensity of his application. He told that when he was a budding amateur he had a shanking spell of 3 months and in one practice session shanked so many shots he got hysterics and had to be taken home.

How magnificently he has succeeded in controlling a temperament like that was shown at the 1946 National Open when his caddy accidentally kicked his ball for a penalty that possibly beat Byron out of the title. Many a pro who has missed a putt in title competition has had rather violent outbursts, but Nelson merely shrugged off the penalty as a bad break in a game that had given him his good and due share of good breaks.

U. S. HEAD SAYS 1947 GOLF BALL OUTPUT TO INCREASE

Although the rubber industry produced a record peacetime volume of goods in 1946 and is expected to repeat this performance, or better it, in 1947, the pent-up demand for rubber products is such that shortages will continue for many months, says Herbert E. Smith, pres., United States Rubber Co. Indications are that final sales figures will show that the industry in 1946 produced goods valued at \$2.3 billion, which was more than double the volume of 1940, the previous record year of wholly peacetime output. It is estimated that sales in 1947 will be \$2.3 to \$2.5 billion.

The demand for tires is still greater than the supply and dealers find it impossible to build up inventories. This situation will probably continue during the first 3 to 6 months of 1947 but during the second half supply is expected to be more adequate.

The supply of golf balls and bathing caps will

remain tight, although these articles will appear in much larger numbers than in 1946. Lastex yarn will be short in the first part of the year, but will be more plentiful in the latter half. Industrial products such as belting and hose, for which demand still far exceeds supply, probably will be short all year.

In 1947, for the first time in four years, the industry will use more natural rubber than synthetic. Consumption of natural is expected to be about 51 per cent of the total. This compares with 22 per cent in 1946.

Total consumption of rubber by the United States in 1947 is estimated at 980,000 tons, of which 502,000 tons will be natural and 478,000 tons various kinds of synthetic rubber. Consumption in this country in 1946 was slightly over one million tons.

WILSON PROS CELEBRATE MIAMI BRANCH OPENING

Wilson's advisory golf board members took the first 4 places in the recent Miami \$10,000 open then went to the new branch office of the company at 1030 S.W. 8th St. on "The Trail" for the office formal opening.

Those in the debut picture are, front row, L to R: Harry Todd, Sam Byrd, John Revolva, Ellsworth Vines (who tied for 3d), Denny Shute;



second row, L to R: Fred Haas, Jr., E. J. "Dutch" Harrison (who tied for 3d), Sam Sneed who won with 269, Bob Duvall (office mgr.), George Schneider, Clayton Haefner (second) and Jim Ferrier.

The new building has about 50% more space than Wilson's previous Miami branch building, and has a lot of parking space adjoining.

J. R. "Bob" Duvall, Miami mgr., came with Wilson in May, 1940 and was made Miami mgr. in June, 1942. Previous to joining Wilson he was for 10 years with L. A. Young Golf Co., covering Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota.

L. M. Gary, Miami branch pro salesman, was with pros Bobby Cruickshank and Tom Galloway in Richmond, Va., before joining Wilson's in Sept. 1944.