

Tribute Paid "The Haig"

Michigan pros and amateurs staged the second Walter Hagen Day golf tournament and dinner at Blythfield CC, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 8 with 150 playing golf through an afternoon rain and 200 at the dinner.

History was made in one respect at the party. The Haig arrived a day early. But, as Horton Smith remarked in his dinner speech, Walter's tardiness often



"The Haig" presents the Walter Hagen Trophy to Horton Smith (left), winner of the tournament event, as host professional Marv Stahl looks on. Nearly 200 attended the second annual Hagen Day sponsored by the Michigan section of the PGA at Blythfield CC, Grand Rapids.

was exaggerated and usually was caused by his reluctance to shake off fellows who were imposing on his good nature, and get going.

Pros and amateurs at the affair frequently commented that it would be fitting for the PGA to make Hagen Day a national event for pros and amateurs. The Haig pioneered in emancipating pros from the caste system and in introducing them to big money. Walter's met a million people and has been a pro good-will messenger to them all.

Walter's feats were related by Joe Kirkwood, Al Watrous, Horton Smith, Sam Byrd and others, and The Haig in a genial "tells all" talk sifted facts from legends.

Maurie Wells, speaking for Michigan PGA members, told about Walter as a famous star visiting home club pros, making them feel like big men and building them up to their members. Detroit golf writers, Drukenbrod, Walter Martin and Dann, recited incidents of Walter's cheer-

fulness in helping writers and photographers cover their assignments.

Kid Field for Hagen

Byrd said that Ruth and Hagen were his boyhood idols and Sammy figured he'd been lucky to be close to both his heroes. Byrd hit a serious note that registered with Walter when Sam expressed the opinion that Ruth's passing left open a big field for a top sports notable to carry on the work for boys that Ruth had engaged in actively prior to his last illness. That highly responsible job now calls for Hagen, said Byrd.

Telegrams from Walter, Jr. and one Walter, Jr. ghosted for Walter III, were intimate endorsements of Byrd's suggestion.

Leon Blodgett, Blythfield pres., in welcoming The Haig and other guests, said Walter had sparked golf's big boom and had led in making the game an American national pastime. He remarked that Hagen's leadership had not only brought professionals into rich fields but had been a powerful advertising factor in making golf clubs a billion dollar investment for fun.

Hagen Reflects Pro Affability

Herb Graffis, GOLFDOM's editor, as toastmaster, voiced the conviction that pros in honoring Hagen honor themselves as The Haig's kindness and eagerness to see everybody enjoy themselves is a reflection of the professional golfers' attitude generally.

In the golf part of the celebration Horton Smith's 69 gave evidence that the Joplin Ghost who acquired considerable of his talent while touring with The Haig, could be on the verge of revival as a tournament contender. Second in the pro class was John Barnum, recent graduate from amateur ranks, with 70. Tied for amateur honors at 71 were Ken Beukema of Blythfield and Mike Heimler of Muskegon.

A tragic accident occurred, unknown to the diners, outside the Blythfield club gates when Mrs. Minnie Traulsen, 62, housekeeper for the family of Marvin Stahl, Blythfield pro, was killed by automobiles after alighting from a bus and attempting to cross the road during the rain. Another tragedy was missed only by luck when a speeding car skidded into the car driven by Joe Kirkwood outside Benton Harbor. Kirkwood, his wife and twin sons were badly shaken and the Kirkwood Cadillac was caved in.