

Local Newspaper Tie-up Aids Popular Father-Son Event

By J. LEWIS ROBY

Indiana is not the leading golf state in America, nor is Anderson the foremost links community in Indiana, but under the sponsorship of its leading newspaper and an enterprising young golf course, that industrial city has developed a solid approach to the promotion both of golf's future and of the all-important companionship that should exist between every father and son. This summer, on the traditional Sunday following Labor Day, the Anderson Daily Bulletin and Edgewood Country Club will present their fifth annual Madison County Father-and-Son Golf Tournament.

Civic- and youth-minded individuals are responsible for the novel idea, which is the highlight of each summer for golfers from "seven to seventy," coming as it does on the day before school resumes. It is the last fling for kids who wistfully long for many more weeks for day-long golf instead of those first few days of half-hearted attempts to get back into the scholastic saddle. And for Dad, it's his last day with his son or sons, except for scattered week-ends, for nine long months.

Edgewood, a rapidly-improved golf course, was five years ago just beginning to forge ahead in financial as well as physical health. It is a long, rolling layout of nine holes and offers a true test with its small, elevated greens and variety of shots. Being young, the layout challenges and instills a pioneer spirit in the hearts of those who have sought to make it something. This pioneer spirit, together with the civic- and youth-mindedness mentioned above, has helped develop the father-and-son event.

As with most good ventures of this type, persistent plugging away was necessary to establish the tourney. Appropriately, representatives of the Anderson Country Club and the municipal Grandview course were included by Edgewoodites on the original planning committee in 1946. Altogether there were C. O. Davisson and Lew Roby of Edgewood; Pro Wayne Hensley, Clyde Armstrong and Red Wolfe of Grandview, and Assistant Pro John Nelson and Tony Templeton of Anderson CC.

Newspaper Sponsors Event

They set to work with a will and found an eager sponsor in The Bulletin, an evening newspaper published by George D. Crittenberger, no mean golfer in his own

right. Thereafter the idea caught on and spread like wildfire as business-harried men grabbed at so splendid an opportunity to spend a whole day on the links with their "carbon copies" and that evening with them at the awards banquet. Yes, this one day the ladies of the family were strictly bystanders. (But a prouder, more beaming gallery you never saw!)

Competition was, and is, based upon the total score of any father-son combination. A father may compete with as many sons as he chooses, and for no more than his own single low entry fee plus one each for the boys.

In order to equalize the affair among the sons because of the wide span of their ages, two brackets originally were instituted: the Junior for those through 17 years, and the Senior for sons who were 18 and over. The following season found three groups—Junior, Intermediate and Senior, and so great has been the superiority of the 16-17 years group that the fifth renewal this year will carry four classes: Prep for lads through 11, Junior for 12 through 14, Intermediate 15 through 17, and Senior 18 and over.

Here's an example of how it has evolved. . . . In 1946 there were 82 out for the inaugural. Mark Williams and 16-year-old Bob, the first of the line of successful "under-18ers," teamed to fire a joint 155 on the par 72 layout. Only 11 over par between them, Mark had a 79 and Bob a neat 76. A year later, the only Senior duo to succeed came through with an identical total as the son once again beat out his Dad. Bob Gibson, barely 18, used 77 shots to edge his father, Chet, by one stroke. This trend was interrupted in 1948, but the Intermediates came back into their own, when Floyd Poore posted a 78 and Kent, a mere 15 years old, made the trip in 80, for a winning 158. To prove it was no fluke, they repeated last summer with Kent, now 16, lopping six strokes off his game for a blazing 74. Floyd added 77 for a record 151, seven lower than their 1948 total, and once again a son had beat his father.

Sons, Low Scorers

Therefore, in four years, there has been but one Senior winner and only once has the winning father scored better than his son. And the Intermediates get still another good crack at the title this September, Kent being but 17 and still "gunning" for Dad.

This besting of their Dads by Masters Williams, Gibson and Poore is symbolic of the entire affair. It is no exception to the rule when Junior comes into the clubhouse with a score lower than Pop's. Throughout the summer the men's locker room echoes with "Doug, is Donny going to hold you up again this year?" or "Hey, Harold, is there any chance of you beating both your father and two boys this time?" (And just for the record, the youngsters get in the same digs, pertaining to their fathers, as they spend the vacation months diligently preparing for the big event.)

The tourney's most famous family is that of the Oliver and Harold Campbells. Oliver is the grandfather, and Harold the father of two stalwart young lads. Therefore, for one entry fee, Harold gets a three-way chance at the title—one as a son and two as a Dad. In these days of costly clothing and food, it is a rare advantage to a man with a large family!

Both Campbell boys, Joe and Eddie, can be depicted along with Don Granger, city junior champ; Donny McGregor, young Poore and many, many others as living examples of the value the Madison County Father-and-Son Tournament has been to golf's future in that region. With their fathers' help, all are potential record-breakers of the 1950's. The influence that the tourney has had on them is terrific, and shows up in the Anderson High School golf team. The school already holds the

never-approached four-man record of 292 strokes in rugged North Central Conference championship competition, and all four of the now-grown boys—Oscar Melson, Charlie Laughlin, Bob Skiles and Harry Forse—are veterans of the Father-and-Son tourney.

Since a record 97 turned out for the 1949 chapter, the field this September 10th will probably exceed 100 for the first time. It will be seeking to match these winning scores of last season: the Poores' 151 in Intermediate play; an ideal 156 by none other than the "pioneer" Mr. Davisson and son Dick in the Senior bracket, and an unheard-of 186 for the Juniors by the Shannon Chambers duo. Only 10 years old, Shannon, Jr., was a four-year veteran of the meet!

So once again the time approaches. Gazing back over the years, the original committee (pared to six by the untimely death of Mr. Armstrong) recalls the first trying days with satisfaction. They remember that it was no easy road, but then there is no easy route to a good thing. Their only hope is that the father-son idea will prosper not in Anderson alone, but throughout the nation. They are eager to help anyone who would like to see the same thing in his own town. The city need be neither big nor small. The size of the citizens' hearts is what really counts, and in that respect the golfers of Anderson, Indiana, feel they have to take a back seat to no one.



Tony Templeton, master of ceremonies and tourney committeeman, awards the coveted championship trophy of the Madison County Father-and-Son Golf Tournament to Kent and Floyd Poore, 1949 winners. Left to right around the awards table are Shannon Chambers, Jr. and Shannon Chambers, Sr., the Junior champions; Kent Poore, Mr. Templeton, Mr. Poore, Dick and C. O. Davisson, the Senior kings, and Howie Schulz, former player-coach of the Anderson Packers, professional basketball team.