

# Worthington Ball Co. 50th Year Is Celebrated

**F**FIFTY YEARS AGO this month, an inventor and industrialist named George Cushing Worthington, working in a small shop in Elyria, O., founded the Worthington Ball Co. With permission from his friend and fellow golfer, Dr. Coburn Haskell, Mr. Worthington began manufacturing the first rubber wound core golf balls, which Dr. Haskell had invented and patented previously.

Now, 50 years and several billion golf balls later, Worthington's company at Elyria, still manufactures golf balls exclusively. Last year alone, Worthington sold over 6,000,000 golf balls to the ever growing golfing public.

The company which Mr. Worthington started in April, 1904 has made many outstanding contributions to golf as a sport and to the manufacture of golf balls.

Worthington was first to produce a white covered ball, first with the diamond stud

cense from Haskell, began mass producing wound core golf balls.

Around 1910, Worthington developed what was known as the "Radio" golf ball. The center of this ball was composed of raw rubber compounded with radium particles. It did much to establish Worthington as one of the leading manufacturers of golf balls.

After World War I Worthington announced the vulcanized cured cover, that made a golf ball exceptionally tough. Balata, a product of a rubber tree, was used as cover stock for the first time.

Previous to World War II, the centers and threads were made from pure crude rubber and the cover stock was made from Tjipetir — the trade name for gutta-percha. Tjipetir is made from the juice of the leaves of a tree which grows in Java in the Dutch East Indies.

Worthington froze the centers for contraction, treated the thread for extra stretch, X-rayed the balls for trueness, compression-tested them for hardness, gave the balls the cutting test, vulcanized and cured the covers for toughness, chlorinated them previous to painting, gave the balls the adhesion test for paint, and then packed them with meticulous care. In all, 49 operations were required to produce the pre-World War II golf balls. Worthington still manufactured golf balls exclusively.

The golf ball business was really booming in 1941. However, it didn't last long. On December 18, 1941 Worthington received word that no more golf balls were to be manufactured for the duration of the War. To keep the game alive, Worthington undertook the reprocessing of old golf balls. They did this for other manufacturers who were tied up on war work. Had it not been for their effort of reprocessing golf balls for most of the industry during 1942 and 1943, golf might have been a war casualty.

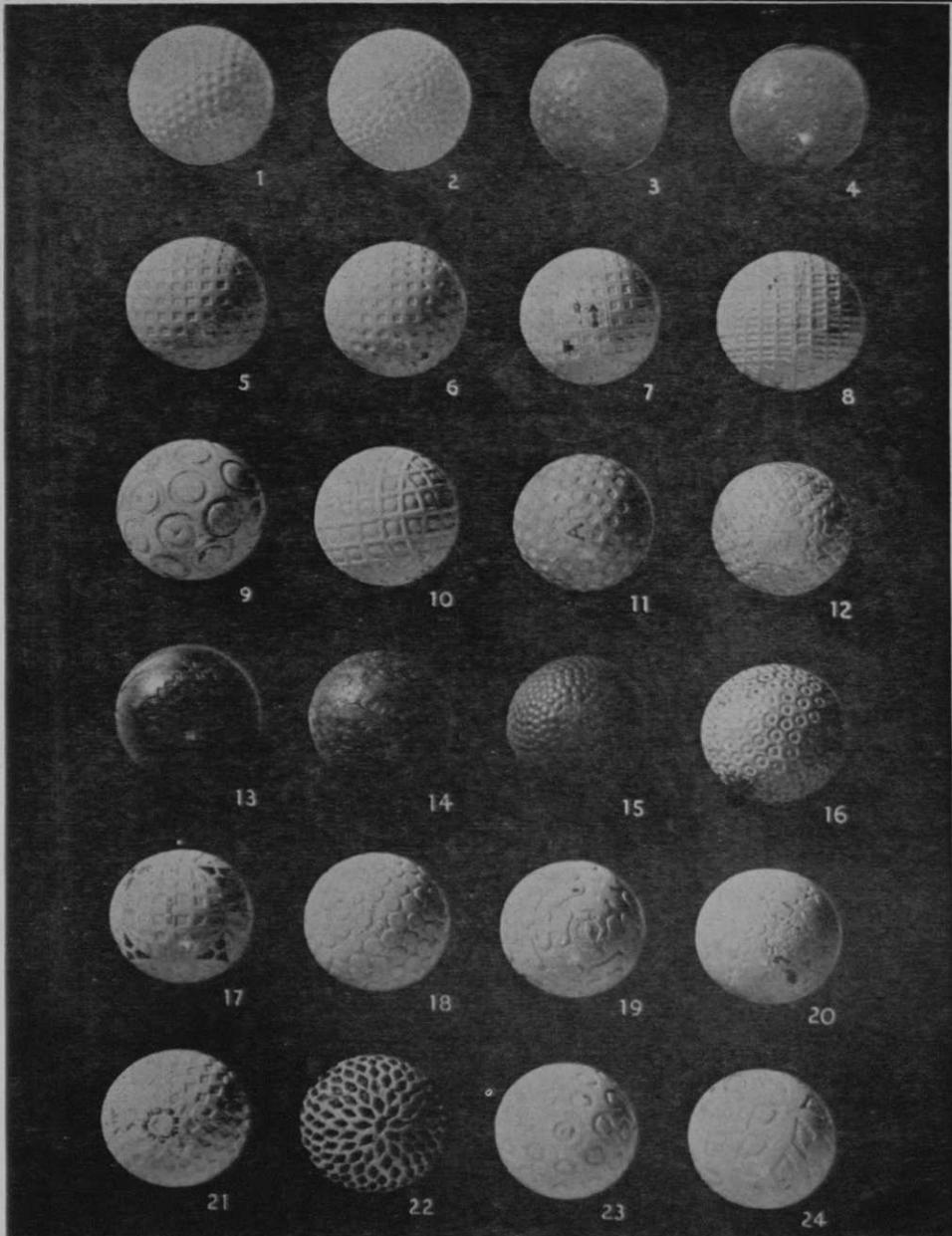
Then the government, through the Surgeon General's Office, offered golf ball manufacturers synthetic materials. They wanted golf balls for the servicemen in hospitals and rehabilitation centers. In 1944, Worthington developed a synthetic golf ball for the Armed Forces. Many thousands of these balls were shipped all over the



Harry M. Naugle, Worthington Ball executive since 1927 and its president since 1934, points to one of the first golf balls the company made.

mesh, first with the large thin walled liquid center, first to develop hardness and ball compression tests, first with the dip process one piece cover, first to design and develop the winding machine and first to use tape winding.

In 1898, the Haskell golf ball was developed. It contained a wound core of rubber strands, but a cover of gutta-percha was still used. In 1904, Worthington, under li-



### BALL MARKING MUSEUM

Worthington Ball Co. has an interesting collection of ball markings, all of which have been made by the company during its 50 years, including a few markings introduced before the company made its first ball. The exhibits include: 1. One of the first recess or dimple marking. Used about 1914. 2. Bramble marking—the reverse of a dimple used on Haskill balls about 1900. 3. Solid Gutta Percha ball—hand marked dimple marking. 4. Dog Tooth marking on a solid Gutta Percha ball. Used before 1900. 5. Original present day mesh marking. Used in 1918. 6. Mesh marking used in 1914. 7. Mesh marking used in 1912. 8. First mesh marking used about 1910. 9. Exaggerated stud marking—1912. 10. Experimental ball—combination mesh and dimple. 11. Hand punched marking—used before mesh marking. 12. Worthington Sterling Special—Fancy marked cover—1909. 13. Solid Gutta Percha ball—Hand punched experimental marking. 14. Worthington Diamond Crown—Maltese Cross marking, 1912. 15. Bramble marking—On a solid Gutta Percha ball—used before 1900. 16. Bramble and dimple marking. 17. Worthington Black Diamond—First ball colored marked for foursome identification. 18. Stud marking—popular in 1910. 19. Worthington White Diamond—1908. 20. Fancy marked cover. 21. Worthington Diamond King—Diamond marking—Popular in 1910. 22. Worthington original Black Diamond—Diamond marking hand punched—1905. 23. Worthington Diamond Ring—Diamond markings in circles—1918. 24. Diamond within a Diamond marking.

world to wherever the Armed Services were and to wherever servicemen could benefit by playing golf.

#### Facilities For Research

After World War II, with restrictions lifted, Worthington again launched a program of expansion and research. Complete new facilities were installed in their Elyria plant for manufacturing high quality golf balls. New processes and materials are constantly tried and tested. Worthington has considerable facilities devoted to research. Worthington has developed many machines and processes which are used exclusively in the manufacture of Worthington balls. Skilled specialists with years of experience add the final touch of craftsmanship.

Worthington today employs over 150 employees, many of whom have been with the company for 25 years or more.

Harry M. Naugle, Worthington's president, became associated with the company in 1927 as a director. Mr. Naugle was elected President in 1934. Prior to joining Worthington, Mr. Naugle attained national recognition for his work as a designer and engineer in steel mills. He is credited with having developed the continuous rolling mill still in use today.

Mr. Naugle brought his vast experience in automatic production methods and research to Worthington. Under his leadership, the company pioneered many new machines for the mass production of golf balls.

J. C. Brydon, vp, Sales, joined Worthington in 1927; R. F. Smith, vp, Production, came to Worthington in 1945, after many years experience in the business. C. R. Hallock, Sec., has 26 years with Worthington,

having started in 1927; while M. E. Foote, Treas., is a 7 year man, starting in 1947.

To celebrate their fiftieth anniversary, Worthington has launched an extensive national advertising and promotion campaign with the theme "Famous on the Fairways of America for Fifty Years." Sales-proven national and local advertising will again tell millions of golfers about Worthington products.

Jim Brydon, Worthington's vp who has devoted his entire career to the sporting goods business, sums up Worthington's business philosophy this way; "Throughout the years, Worthington has done whatever possible to foster golf as a sport and business. As golfers, as well as businessmen, we plan to keep on swinging until one of these days we come up with a golf ball that doesn't hook or slice."



#### WANNA BEAT BEN?

The Great Hogan and Genial James Demaret carry the refined sandwich proclaiming National Golf Day, June 5, when Ben will wipe away sweet smile shown above and give Baltusrol a going over that he hopes will trim every one of the many thousands of golfers who'll stack their handicaps against his scratch figures. The USO and the National Golf Fund, Inc., will be co-beneficiaries of the nation-wide event co-sponsored by Life magazine and the PGA.



In this building, factory of the only maker of golf balls exclusively, Worthington Ball Co. has installed a heavy investment in machines, processes and testing devices since World War II.