



# PHILLY *warms up with a* GOLF SHOW!

***If they weren't a bunch of rabid golfers, you'd say it was because Spring wasn't far away . . . Anyway, 3,000 of them showed up***

By **JOSEPH W. DRAGONETTI**

The great interest shown by more than 3000 visitors at Philadelphia's fourth annual golf show at the Sheraton Hotel, Apr. 4, indicated that there is no recession in the golf business.

This was the largest crowd in the history of the show, according to Leo Fraser, pres. of the Philadelphia section of the PGA which sponsored the event. The crowd reaction was enthusiastic, especially in response to the free instruction by experts, free golf clinics, golf driving nets, shotmaking exhibitions and displays of the latest golf equipment and accessories. Admission to the show was \$1, plus tax.

Forty-one equipment and accessory firms had booths in the gallery and main ballroom of the hotel. This was the greatest number of exhibitors since the show started. More than \$250,000 worth of equipment was on display, including a large group of cars. An increasing assort-

ment of golf clothes for women, indicating a trend toward smart styling with free-swinging ease, was in evidence.

Expressing the feeling of most of the distributors, James G. Hogg, pres. of the Plymouth Golf Ball Co., said, "There is no recession in the golf business." He pointed to a 30 percent increase in his company's sales in the first quarter of 1961 over the same period last year. Moreover, he said sales in 1960 increased 22 percent over 1959 and sales in 1959 increased 20 percent over 1958.

#### **Reaction Encouraging**

"The crowd reaction at this show," Hogg added "was the most encouraging I have seen. It indicates that golf continues a fast growing participant sport. Notable, too, is the increasing number of women who are taking up golf."

The pro-shop suppliers paid \$75 each for booth space to help defray the cost of the show. The Philadelphia shows, however, are not designed for profit but to stimulate interest in shop merchandise.



Panelists at the afternoon session of the Philadelphia golf show were, l to r: (top row) Leo Fraser, pres. of the local PGA section, Jack Whitaker, TV sports announcer, and Patty Berg. (Front row) Charles Lepre, Henry Williams, Dorothy Germain Porter, Helen Sigel Wilson and Skee Riegel.

Effective promotion also helped to bring in the big crowd. This was handled by Charles A. White, Jr., an account executive for The Richard A. Foley Advertising Agency, Inc. Rather than splashing big space at one clip, he used 20-line ads in Philadelphia newspapers over a 10-day period prior to the show to help publicize it. Posters were also used in retail stores in the Sheraton and other stores in the center of the city. Tent cards were used to get attention in the various dining and cocktail areas in the hotel.

#### 100 Pros Participate

More than 100 home and touring pros from about 75 clubs in the Philadelphia Section stimulated great interest in golf by giving free lessons, participating in shotmaking demonstrations and assisting in the clinics and panels.

Two panels on golfing techniques were held at 4:30 to 5:30 P. M. and 7:30 to 8:30 P. M. Patty Berg of the Ladies PGA and Jack Whitaker, well known WCAU and WCAU-TV sportscaster, acted as moderators of the afternoon golf panel. Questions from the floor were intelligent and numerous.

Members of the panel included Mrs.

Mark Porter and Mrs. Helen Sigel Wilson, both outstanding women amateurs. Also on the panel were three well known professionals, Skee Riegel of Radnor Valley CC, Henry Williams of Berkleigh CC and Charles Lepre of Tavistock.

#### Patty Was Busy

Patty Berg also was on the evening panel with Bud Lewis of Manufacturers CC, Marty Lyons of Llanerch, Toby Constanza of Sunnybrook and Wally Paul of Warrington CC.

Another highlight of the show, which was under the personal supervision of Leo Fraser, was the awarding of citations to persons in the newspaper, radio and TV

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A. G. Spalding & Bros. was represented by this delegation (l to r): Al Procher, Larry Spence, unidentified lady visitor, Jerry Port, Andy Studwell and Bob Ferrara. All except Port are with Spalding's sales staff; he's pro at West Chester CC.



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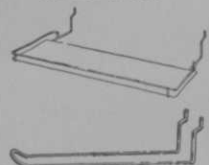
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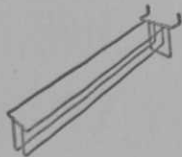
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## Philly Golf Show

(Continued from page 32)

fields who, in the opinion of a section committee have contributed most to the furtherance of golf in the Philadelphia area over the past few years. Winners were Joe Schwendeman of The Evening and Sun Bulletin; "Red" McCarthy of the Norristown (Pa.) Times-Herald; Ton Rodgers of WFIL and WFIL-TV; Otts Hulleberg of the Camden (N. J.) Courier-Post; Fred Byrod of the Philadelphia Inquirer; Mayer Brandschain of the Philadelphia Inquirer; Bill Cambell of WCAU and WCAU-TV; and Jack Whitaker of WCAU and WCAU-TV.

The show ran from noon to 10 p.m. Prior to the admittance of the public the pros had an opportunity to inspect the various exhibits and to get acquainted with some of the new equipment and accessories available to them.

There was always some attention-getting event in progress from the opening hour until closing. Lesson and driving areas were constantly in use when the panel discussions were not in progress.

### Need More Clubs

"I think this show demonstrates," Fraser said, "that there is increasing enthusiasm for golf. At present, we really need more clubs to take care of this great swing to golf as a participant sport. A lot more questions were asked of the pros this year than at any other show we have sponsored.

"Television showings of championship golf matches have stimulated a tremendous interest in golf. Women are following their husbands in taking up the game. Where the women are concerned, golf styles offered in the pro shops are attracting great attention. The free swinging skirts insure comfort as well as high style. There is also a trend toward lighter type shoes.

"This show really kicks off the season in the Philadelphia area, especially with the weather getting balmy and interest at such an all time high. I was interested in listening to the great number of questions asked of the panel members and the pros who gave free instructions. Many of the questions were concerned with the transfer of weight in handling a swing. This is a good tipoff that people are intensely interested in improving their games."

Fraser said that the Par 3 courses, ranges and miniature layouts have helped

stimulate interest in the game. He also declared that newcomers to the game realize that it is wise to first take lessons from pros and learn the correct techniques from the beginning. Further public interest in taking up golf, he added, has been stimulated by the fact that our last two presidents, Eisenhower and Kennedy, are both golfers.

The idea for the show was originated four years ago by Fraser since the Philly pros wanted to do something to promote the game. Fraser has a diverse interest in the business of golf. He is one of the few pros who is pres. and owner of a club, the Atlantic City CC, Linwood, N.J.

Leo also operates, with Harlan Will, a consultant firm for courses, including methods of construction, design, remodeling and improvement of management techniques. He has been pres. of the Philly section for the past five years.

#### Scholarship Booth

In addition to the regular exhibits, there also was a booth at the show to supply information about the J. Wood Platt Caddie Scholarship sponsored by the Philadelphia section. About 20 students are now attending college in the Philadelphia area as a result of this fund.

An interesting news sidelight developed when Patty Berg, the freckle-faced miss who has been a dominant power in women's golf since her teens, told interviewers she still retains her zest for the game after 21 years as a pro.

She said she has no intention of quitting the tournament trail in the immediate future. "I've never heard of anyone giving up a hobby and a livelihood easily," said Patty. "I expect to be able to play competitive golf at least until I am 50. That gives me seven years. After that maybe I'll think more about going on or quitting."

Patty gave a brief technical talk and demonstrated shots prior to serving as a moderator at panel discussions. Throughout the day and evening, the pros took turns at demonstrating shots and giving free instructions. Harlan Will was master of ceremonies.

#### Northeastern Wisconsin Meeting

Northeastern Wisconsin GA will hold its annual meeting and clinic at Butte des Morts CC, Appleton, on May 22. It will be divided into 10 sectional gatherings with a general meeting and clinic climaxing the day's activities.

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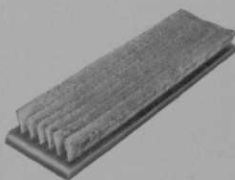
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