



By JOSEPH W. DRAGONETTI

## 24-Hour Day— It Isn't Long Enough for Fazio

*You'd agree that it isn't, too, if you traveled around in George's wake . . . He designs courses, operates a couple clubs and even fills in as club pro when the rush is on*

**W**hat happens when an old playing pro (in this case old connotes experience rather than age— he is only 48) seeks new horizons in the golf world as a course architect, builder and operator? He may end up working 16 to 18 hours a day, seven days a week as seemingly tireless George Fazio does.

Five time winner of the Philadelphia Open, former Canadian Open champion, strong contender in the 1950 USGA Open and one of the country's top golfers for many years, Fazio, who lives in Plymouth Meeting, Pa., shows amazing zest for a variety of activities.

He doesn't get as much time to play or teach as he used to, but he has a full schedule on the business side of the game.

Fazio operates the Flourtown (Pa.) CC, and the Langhorne (Pa.) CC. He has designed and is building the Atlantis CC, near Beach Haven, N.J. He drew up the plans and is building the Kimberton GC, near Phoenixville, Pa. On top of that, he has two other courses in the drawing board stage. (He is not ready yet to reveal their locations).

Quite a schedule and quite an achievement for a man who started caddying

at a club near Norristown, Pa., when he was only seven.

### Enthusied Over Atlantis

Of all his present projects, Fazio speaks most glowingly of the job he is doing at Atlantis. It will be finished this fall and opened next spring. This potential 36-hole course is located atop a bluff on Great Bay overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Long Beach Island. Fazio has utilized much creative ability and vast experience to design a course that will offer many challenges and breathtaking scenery.

Fazio says that he is confident that Atlantis will be one of the finest courses in the country. It is 100 per cent wooded, has four natural lake holes on it and the course is designed in many shapes and contours, taking full advantage of the natural terrain.

In playing courses throughout the world, Fazio has acquired an abundance of knowhow and feel on how a course should be designed and built. "Feel" connotes an artistic and intuitive approach and George indicates that more than mere drawing boards, blueprints and money are necessary to make a course come alive with individuality.

### Architects Meet Challenge

"We can't all be fine golfers," Fazio says, "but golf certainly is appealing to a great cross-section of people. In many respects in our concentration on championship play we have neglected the average golfer. The trend now is to help him, yet keep courses tough for the pros and better amateurs. It poses problems, but I think most architects are equal to them."

Fazio has been the operator of Flourtown CC for the past three years. This is a 9-hole course and was in a rather rundown condition when he assumed control. He has rehabilitated the entire course, put in three swimming pools and added facilities to feed 500 people. Although membership is well-screened, he has kept member and other fees reasonable to stay within the reach of middle bracket people.

He has done a similar job at Langhorne, an 18-hole course. The club is about 60 years old and was in rather rundown condition when George took over. Fazio has been the operator there for the past year. The clubhouse at Langhorne has been remodeled and swimming facilities added. Some changes in the course have been made.

George Fazio attended Norristown



This is one of George Fazio's favorite photos — with Ben Hogan and Lloyd Mangrum, prior to the playoff in the 1950 USGA Open. "They let me hold most of the cup," George recalls, "but when it was all over Ben's the fellow who took it home."

High School and after his caddying experience, became a caddiemaster. He obtained his first pro job at Plymouth CC, also near Norristown. This was followed by a job as assistant pro at Cedarbrook for a year.

### Pine Valley Influence

In 1939 Fazio went to a club which has had, according to his own estimates, one of the greatest influences on his golf career. He became an assistant pro at Pine Valley in Clementon, N. J., one of the world's great courses.

Fazio became a par player at Pine Valley and learned much about the game from John Arthur Brown, who has been president of the club for over 30 years and, at 86, still plays good golf. Eb Steiniger, the course supt., also taught him a great deal.

"Brown," Fazio says, "is one of the finest men I have ever known. He is a man of firmness and high integrity and he can make definite decisions. His guidance helped me over many a rough spot."

At Pine Valley, Fazio also absorbed design and maintenance ideas from Steiniger. In later years, as he began to think more and more about becoming an architect, he consulted with Joe Valentine, Merion's venerable supt. He thinks that Steiniger and Valentine are two of the greatest greenmasters he has met.

Fazio served in the Navy in World War II and after the war became a pro at the Hillcrest CC in Los Angeles. Among those who took lessons from him were Bob

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## **24-Hour Day Too Short**

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Hope, Jack Benny, Danny Kaye, Randolph Scott, Clark Gable and Fred Astaire.

Bob Hope probably took more golf lessons from Fazio than from any other pro. "But don't say I taught Bob Hope to play golf," he corrects you. "He can do anything well. I think he had the most studious approach to the game of any man I taught. He tackles golf like Einstein tackled the theory of relativity. He has a terrific analytical mind and he grasps things very quickly."

After his West Coast experience, Fazio came east to be closer to his family. He is married to the former Mary Galie. They have a married daughter, Rosalie and two grandchildren. Fazio also wanted to be closer to his father, Vincent, who is now 88. The elder Fazio used to be a golfer but has not played in recent years.

### **Auto Agency Interest**

In 1948 Fazio went into the steel business at Conshohocken, Pa., and later opened a Ford agency, in which he still retains an interest. In 1950 he went to Woodmont CC in Washington. For a couple of years in the 50's, Fazio was a consultant to the city of Philadelphia on its public golf courses, working with Garry Renn, superintendent of the system.

Fazio doesn't get much time for tournament play any more, but he has been in some stiff competition in his many years as a pro. He beat Dick Metz to win the Canadian Open in 1946 at Montreal. He included a 63 in his rounds in the Western Open at Davenport, Iowa. He shot a 287 in the Open at Merion in 1950 but lost to Ben Hogan in a playoff. He had tied with Hogan and Lloyd Mangrum. That was the year that Hogan made his famed comeback.

How does it feel to play with the great stars and yet today get little opportunity for tournament play? "I have no regrets," says Fazio. "My present activities keep me busy enough. As a pro I had an opportunity to meet some fine people. Golf gave me great opportunities."

### **PGA Seniors Golf Film**

American's senior pro golfers are the stars of a recently produced golf film, "The PGA Seniors' Championship." The black and white, 16 mm sound film, 28 minutes in length, was produced by Wm. Teacher & Sons, Ltd., Glasgow, Scotland, distillers.