

WESTERN DEPARTMENT

By "LOCHINVAR"



MR. E. HOOVER BANKARD, one of the leading players of the Midlothian Country Club and secretary of the Western Golf Association in 1916, attended the annual meeting of the United States Golf Association at New York and was much impressed with the amount of general discussion on the stymie problem.

It was not brought up at the meeting nor referred to by President Wheeler in his address, but both before and after the session, Mr. Bankard found it a popular topic. The consensus of opinion was that the stymie rule in its present form should be abolished.

It is known that the matter has been discussed by the Executive Committee of the U. S. G. A. which has had correspondence with the Rules Committee of the Royal and Ancient Club of St. Andrews, but during the past four years no changes have been discussed by the British supreme council. As no reference was made to this correspondence by President Wheeler it is presumed that the U. S. G. A. is waiting to hear from St. Andrews.

Mr. Bankard found that few of the men at the meeting championed the present stymie rule and it has been his experience in gatherings around the nineteenth hole that the majority of

players desire a change.

Asked for his ideas on the matter Mr. Bankard wrote as follows:

"Although many discussions have been held in connection with the stymie rule, to my knowledge at least, no concerted action has been taken by any groups of clubs or associations, with the result that the rule remains almost as originally written a great many years ago. Feeling exists in this country that the chief stumbling block to the elimination of the stymie rule is the Rules Committee of St. Andrews and I think this is true, but the fact is often lost sight of by American golfers that whereas in this country stymies are but rarely played in two ball matches unless in tournament play, in England and Scotland it is the universal custom in friendly matches to always play stymies, so that it is quite natural for the Royal and Ancient Rules Committee to view this matter from an entirely different standpoint than that usually taken by the American golfer.

"The Western Golf Association, at its last amateur championship, which was held at Midlothian two years ago, eliminated the stymie rule, substituting therefor a rule whereby the ball nearer the hole was holed out when it interfered in any way with the play of the ball farther from the hole but, as you know, the application of this rule proved extremely unsatisfactory to the players in that tournament, as it hurried the playing of the nearer ball, often with disastrous results and unquestionably gave a distinct advantage on many occasions to the player whose ball was the farther from the hole, with the result that it was discarded before the finals in the tournament were reached.

"The great weakness of any rules that have been suggested as substitutes for the stymie rule lies in the fact that all of them necessitate the lifting of the ball nearer the hole from its original position. The whole tenor of the rules in match play is to the effect that the ball must be played where it lies or the hole is lost. This is acknowledged, but at the same time, I consider of the two evils that the lifting of the ball is the lesser as compared to the necessity of playing a stymie when your opponent has stymied you. The suggestion that I have made for a good many years has been this—that if your opponent stym-

ies you, you can request him to lift his ball or to hole out his ball at his option, but when you stymie yourself you should be made to play.

"The reason for this, to me at least, is plain, namely—there is nothing in any other part of the game of golf which permits your opponent to interfere in any way with your play and if he is permitted, by chance or by design, to stymie you then he most certainly is interfering with your play. On the other hand if you stymie yourself, this result can only be brought about either by carelessness on your part, lack of skill or poor judgment and in one of these three cases I think all golfers will be willing to pay the penalty, while the application of the first part of this rule eliminates interference by your opponent and reduces the element of luck which plays always such a large part of the game on the putting green.

"I presume, this suggestion of mine can be legitimately criticised and better ones offered, but in addition to what I have said above, it seems to me that it is the simplest solution that can be found and still be fair, although it does not eliminate the stymie entirely, as such is not, I believe, the real desire of thinking golfers, as the successful negotiation of a difficult stymie requires steady nerves, practice, and skill with a result always disconcerting to an opponent.

"There are many hundreds of thousands of golfers in this country who would appreciate the help of the press towards securing concerted action on this stymie question, as I believe it merely requires a little team work to demonstrate to the Executive Committee of the U. S. G. A. that golfers as a whole are in favor of the elimination or modification of our present stymie rule."

MR. BANKARD undoubtedly has the right idea in asking that concerted action be taken, but it would appear that the players best fitted to express opinions on the matter are the leading experts, the men who have taken time to practice playing the stymie.

When the last changes in the championship rules for three cushion billiard's were made, twelve of the leading players of the country who were about to compete in a tournament at Chicago, held a session at which each rule was discussed. They were the men vitally interested, and it would appear that the leading golfers are best fitted to pass judgment on the

stymie. However, this is a democratic country and in which the will of the majority rules, and if it can be determined by a referendum vote of the leading sectional and state associations, that majority of players desire the abolition of the stymie or a modification of the present rule, there seems no reason why a change should not be made in this country.



Mr. A. ALONZO STAGG, President
Olympia Fields C. C., Chicago

The United States Golf Association and St. Andrews are in accord except that the Schenectady putter is allowed here, while barred in Great Britain. Mr. Bankard's suggestion, while not a new one, appears worthy of a trial.

In Western Golf Association events, the stymie is barred and it will be interesting to note through the coming summer how many of the state and sectional organizations in its territory

follow the U. S. G. A. or the Western ruling.

THE Westmoreland Country Club has the king of philosophers. He plays around the hundred mark and has a predilection for getting into bunkers. One day at the end of the poor round in which he had found a number of hazards he remarked: "These bunkers cost a lot of money and it seems only fair that we should make use of them."

CAPTAIN ROGER D. LAPHAM of the San Francisco Golf and Country Club, was gassed at Chateau-Thierry, while rescuing a wounded comrade. It was feared at one time he would lose his eyesight but he has recovered and when last seen at Paris, said he hoped to be on the links again this summer. Captain Lapham was runner-up to Douglas Grant in the Northern California championship in 1916, the match going 37 holes. In the semi-finals he defeated Mr. Heinrich Schmidt. He is a former member of the Apawamis Club. Mr. Douglas Grant, winner of the Northern California championship in 1917, who lived in England for several years prior to the war, expects to return there in May.

LIEUT. ROBERT A. GARDNER, former national champion, has resumed his former position with the Peabody Coal Company of Chicago. His regiment finished training and was ready to go into action two days before the armistice was signed. He is planning to compete in the national amateur championship at Oakmont, and may play in a few other tournaments if business will permit.

VETERAN GOLFERS who were the pioneers of the game in this country sometimes speak with regret of the passing of the sociable team matches, and while the "old boys" invitation events played by a number of clubs have helped to renew this spirit, they have not filled the bill. As this condition is prevalent in a number of golfing centers, a recent action by the Chicago District Golf Association will be of widespread interest.

This organization consists of thirty-two clubs, and while one of its main objects is the uplift of the caddy, it in reality is a Mutual Benefit Association. The welfare committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Morris Woolf, showed the value of organization by making a fine record last year, while the interchange of ideas between various committees of the member clubs has helped in many ways.

The most recent plan of the C. D. A. is a series of team matches for the championship of the organization. To enable these to be played inside of three months the city has been divided north, west and east and each section will have two divisions.

Elimination tournaments will be held in each section, the winning teams qualifying for the championship final.

In order to give the poorer players a show there will be four classes A, B, C, and D, excluding juniors. Class A will range from par to plus 12 strokes; B from last figure plus eight strokes; C from last figure plus ten strokes; D, last figure and upwards.

This appears to be a happy idea as the members of each club will have some incentive to make the team, and in the matches will oppose players of about their own ability on equal terms. Each team will consist of from four to seven players, the scores of the low

four men counting.

The three teams having the lowest scores in each class in each section will qualify. The individual championship will be decided in a similar manner, the player having low medal score winning the championship of his section, while the first three low scores will qualify for the final at 36 holes.

A provision is made that no two players from the same club can play in the same quartet, the idea being to have players meet as many other players as possible during the series.

For convenience and to avoid congestion, both in the elimination and championship matches, only two classes will be allowed to play over the same course at the same time.

Thursday has been picked as the day for holding the matches, the series running from June 5 to Sept. 5, on which date the finals will be played.

Here is a sample of the schedule:

| | Sec. | Class | Div. | Class |
|---------|-------|-------|------|------------|
| June 5 | South | C-D | 1 | Beverly |
| June 12 | West | C-D | 1 | Hinsdale |
| June 19 | North | C-D | 1 | Lake Shore |
| June 26 | West | A-B | 1 | Oak Park |

This schedule was drawn up by Mr. Charles Evans, Jr., and Mr. Norman C. Naylor of the Westmoreland Club.

The new scheme appears to possess great merit. With a minimum of four players no team is likely to be short. Then the schedule is compact and the games will afford mid-week diversion.

At the regular meeting of the directors at which the work of the special committee was ratified, there was a strong sentiment that the member clubs should do all in their power to help the professionals by giving them more chances for competition.

The Skokie Club announced it already had arranged a mixed tournament for professionals and amateurs, and others probably will follow suit.

The team and individual championships for caddies and the individual championship for caddy masters will be run on similar lines to those of the amateurs.

In the February issue it was predicted that invitations to compete in the western amateur championship at St. Louis would be extended to Mr. Francis Ouimet, Mr. Jesse Guilford and Mr. John G. Anderson and others who played at Midlothian in 1917.



Mr. SPENCER PENROSE, President Broadmoor Golf Club, Colorado Springs, Colorado

The Western Golf Association has decided to go further than this, as Mr. Jerome Travers, Mr. Oswald Kirkby, Mr. Max Marston, who played in Red Cross matches under the auspices of the W. G. A., will be invited to play, in fact, it practically will be an open event, and as the Sunset Hill Club is planning a number of attractions, it looks as if the field will be almost equal to that of the national amateur championship.

THE CHICAGO professional contingent has been strengthened by the ad-

dition of Eddie Loos, formerly with the Philadelphia Cricket Club, who will be at the Beverly Country Club next year. He succeeds Frank Adams. The new house of the Beverly Club is nearing completion and President G. J. L. Janes announced recently that the last membership had been sold for \$700.

Willie Hunter, the veteran British internationalist, will be at the Onwentsia Club, succeeding Phil Gaudin. Hunter was last year at the St. Louis Country Club, and his place will be taken by Stewart Maiden formerly of Atlanta, Ga., where he taught Miss Alexa Stirling, Mr. Robert Jones and Mr. Perry Adair. The middlewest can now produce a professional team which looks the strongest in the country. St. Louis has Tim Barnes, Stewart Maiden and Willie Kidd, Chicago has Jock Hutchison. Bob MacDonald, Phil Gaudin, Eddie Loss, Willie Hunter and others. Detroit has Alec Ross and Walter Hagen, while Minneapolis can boast of George Sargent and Tom Vardon.

ARGUMENTS regarding playing on regular greens through the winter are frequent and those who kick on having to bobble the ball over the rough surface of temporary greens will be interested in an expression of opinion by Stewart Gardner, professional at the Old Elm Club of Chicago. Gardner came west from Garden City and for a time was located at the Exmoor Country Club. When the Old Elm Club was formed he was engaged at a substantial salary and his excellent supervision of the course has brought it to a high state of perfection.

His solution of the problem is that the turf on putting greens is composed of two classes of grasses. One kind

reseeds itself each year and must be carefully protected through the winter, while the other class, which has its roots deep in the soil, grows in the same manner as trees.

"Most of the turf on the Chicago greens" said Gardner, "is composed of the first class of grasses that reseed themselves. The greens at Exmoor and South Shore are composed almost entirely of this grass, and most of our putting greens contain a large percentage of it. This grass produces a fine turf, which is usually in its prime between May and July, but the greens deteriorate after that time, and green-keepers usually refer to such greens as 'summer greens' for the reason that they cannot be maintained at a high standard all through the season. These greens do better if they are covered in the winter time, and to tramp over them would spoil them.

"The perennial grasses, which grow from their roots, are much more hardy, and the greens at Old Elm, Onwentsia and Ravisloe are composed of a mixture of bluegrass, creeping bent, red-top and fescue, which produce a turf that can be used without harm throughout the entire year."

Gardner says he hasn't sown a pound of seed on the Old Elm greens since they were built, six years ago, and he finds that they can be kept in perfect shape by a simple process of topdressing and fertilizing, and for general practice he advocates keeping the weeds out of the greens and the roller off from them.

Onwentsia has an experienced green-keeper in Willie Marshall, and Ravisloe has another skilled man in Alec Taylor, so it sounds reasonable that other clubs can produce greens that will be playable the year around.

AT THIS WRITING no date has been set for the Transmississippi tournament, which, like the Western amateur event, is to be played at St. Louis. It seems assured it will be held either in the week preceding the Western or in the week following.

This will permit players from west of the Mississippi to take in both events, which insures a big entry. The Transmississippi will be a Red Cross event under the same general plans as that of last year at Kansas City which netted over \$5,000. Ribbons and medals will be awarded for prizes and the entrance and all other fees above expenses will be given to the Red Cross fund.

It is expected the tournament will be quite up to the standard of the pre-war years and that Mr. Harry Legg of Minneapolis, Mr. Sam Reynolds of Omaha, Mr. Alden Swift of Chicago, Mr. Buck Warren of St. Joseph, Mr. Dudley Mudge of St. Paul and others, who have been prominent in former tournaments, again will take the field.

THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION of Greater New York recently advised players who are over fifty years of age and can't putt, not to play the game, on the ground that mental irritation resulting from a miss, counteracts all the benefits of the physical exercise.

This afforded food for the paragrappers, one of whom wrote as follows:

"Much has been written and spoken about the peace that passeth all understanding which one may find while batting the ball around the links, but one is sometimes skeptical. A caddy once confided that he knew a player, a man of some years and understanding, who was given to kicking trees and breaking his clubs on missing a putt and that other members in good standing, under great mental stress attendant upon a topping drive or a trapped ball, occasionally were guilty of uttering the most horrible impieties that shocked even his calloused young ears.

"Such incidents are due, no doubt, directly to the varying fortunes of the ancient and honorable game, but there are other causes contributing to an uneven temper. It was our blessed privilege, some fourteen or fifteen years ago, to attend, as a humble member of the fourth estate, a tournament at a country

club where some half a hundred representative Chicagoans of mature years and wide and varied business interests, yielding rich returns, were deciding some sort of championship.

"While going sneakingly about in our imitation Panama hat and hand-me-downs, gleaning news where the gleaning was good, we chanced to observe two gray mustached captains of industry meet and engage in a moment's conversation on the lawn, in the course of which conversation one gentleman helped himself to a cigar from the pocket of his green jacket and handed its fellow to the other. The recipient of his generosity stood holding the 25 cent panatella gingerly in his hand until its donor had taken his departure in the general direction of the locker room, when he suddenly crushed it to a shapeless mass between his wrinkled palm, dashed the fragments on the ground and trod them into the turf, then turned on his heel and strode away communing with himself in an undertone.

"No putt had been fozzled and no drive into the rough had occurred here to provoke this terrible show of anger. And yet something had happened to disturb the equanimity of at least one old gentleman, the stiffening walls of whose arteries and the uncertain temper of whose stomach demanded only good humor and freedom from passion. It may have been that the donor of the cigar had out-generated him the day before in LaSalle Street and it may have been that he had nicked him for several thousand the week before on the board, or it may have been that he did not belong to the same social circle, or that his daughter had refused to invite the other old gentleman's daughter to her coming out party. We never learned, because we made no effort to learn, but we have occasionally wondered since how such a display of temper could have occurred on a golf course where especially middle aged and older men are said to resort that they may forget the worries and vexations that harass them elsewhere."

There is, however, a serious side to the too strenuous playing by men of advancing years. Mr. Peter J. Peel, professor of therapeutics, who knows something of the strenuous life by reason of being president of the Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago, says he has several patients who have overtaxed themselves.

"Golf is a fine game," says Mr. Peel, "but veterans who are not in

good physical training and who perhaps play only on Saturday and Sunday, frequently let their enthusiasm run riot, and overtax their strength by playing seventy-two holes of golf in two days, regardless of the high marking on the thermometer."

JACK SMITH, the former St. Louis professional, who was at Shaker Heights, Cleveland, last year under Grange Alves, will be professional at the Highland Park Club of Mayfield this year.

THE new Northmoor Club of Chicago, which will occupy part of the property used by the old Evanston Golf Club has engaged George Knox, last year at Kalamazoo, Michigan, as professional. Alan I. Wolff is the secretary. The membership of the New Evanston Golf Club is full and the officials are planning to take in fifty additional members.

SELDOM IN years gone by has Mr. Charles Evans, Jr., gone three months without playing outdoor or indoor golf. The national amateur and open champion has not had a club in his hand for a long time, having been busy in the bond line. "Chick" is inclined to think he will not defend his open title this year at Brae-Burn, but then "it's a long time to Brae-Burn" and the golfing sap still is dormant.

TWO YEARS AGO, when the Oakmont Country Club of Pittsburgh was awarded the national amateur championship, \$20,000 was subscribed by members to improve the course and make changes in the club house. These changes were planned under the supervision of Mr. William C. Fownes,

Jr. Some of the work was done prior to the entry of the United States into the war, but the rest of it will be done before the national event.

THE 1919 Pacific Northwest championship will be played at the Spokane Country Club, but the date has not been fixed. It originally was awarded to the Shaughnessy Heights Country Club of Vancouver, B. C., but that organization found it would be unable to stage it.

MR. WARREN K. WOOD, former western champion, who was a captain in the Red Cross in France, returned to Chicago last month. Mr. Wood was one of the first Red Cross officers to go behind the German lines. With a companion he travelled between 800 and 900 miles in search of American wounded soldiers of whom he found 31. Horse meat and potatoes was the staple diet and found it palatable. Horses were cheap as the German government was selling off to avoid the cost of feeding the animals. In general, the Germans gave them good assistance in locating the men looked for.

LOUISIANA, one of the few states which has not had a state championship tournament, will hold its first one this year. It will be held at the Audubon course of New Orleans, starting May 30.

THE HOUSTON COUNTRY CLUB of Texas, will resume its annual invitation tournament, held from 1914 to 1917, but dropped last year on account of the war. It will be known as the Victory Golf Tournament and will be held March 19 to 22. A special event

for professionals will be staged. The event has been one of the most popular in the southwest, Mr. Charles Evans, Jr., and Mr. Jerome D. Travers having played in it.

MEDICINE HAT, popularly known as a weather course, is a fruitful topic for the paragraphers. A Chicago poet recently contributed a verse, which produced a reply from Mr. R. R. Evans, who forwarded photograph of a tournament held at the Medicine Hat Golf Club, January 25. The Alberta town seems to be vindicated, as the players are far from being under "wraps." Medicine Hat evidently has enjoyed the remarkable weather of the

last few weeks, which has permitted the golfers more outdoor play than they have had for many years, at this season of the year. It has been fine for the golfers, but poor for the ice crop, but after July 1st, ice will not be needed as much as in previous years.

CLUB ELECTIONS

Green Hills G. C., St. Joseph, Mo.—
President, Peter Bastgen; Vice-President, J. W. Mylton; Secretary, E. A. Sanders; Treasurer, B. J. Johnson.

Bemidji T. & C. C., Minn.—
President, H. C. Baer; Vice-President, B. W. Lakin; Secretary, G. H. French; Treasurer, R. H. Schumaker.



Medicine Hat Golf Club