



**ROBERT M. CUTTING**

Elected president of the Western Association for 1928

## Average Player in Chicago Improving

By OUR CHICAGO STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The average 1927 golfer of the Chicago district is about four strokes better than in any previous year. So far as can be learned from numerous sources of information, this is a greater average improvement than in any previous year since 1902.

It sounds like a contradiction but is more nearly a corollary of the above statement that not a solitary boy or girl of young 1927 recruits to the golfing ranks gives unmistakable evidence of championship calibre. There are many real prospects from previous years, but only one gained higher rank in 1927 than in 1926. The exception is Miss Jean Armstrong, a 1926 youngster of promise, who defeated Miss Mildred Hackl, defending champion, in the final rounds of the Women's Western Junior championship. Each has another year in the Junior championship. Possibly both will be real contenders in the 1929 Women's Western and the National Women's championship of 1930.

To one whose golfing memories extend back a quarter of a century, there comes a distinct shock when the search proves vain for a prospective champion among the boys of the 1927 group in the Chicago district. A few of the previous prospects have held their standing, but there is not a newcomer in the 1927 ranks. All are holdovers of 1926 or previous years. The largest group of promising youngsters is in the Illinois Juniors' Golf Association, with Sam Gilbert, son of the founder and president, Samuel Gilbert, as the champion and at the head of a half dozen youngsters who shoot consistently in the 70's on any course. But there is not a newcomer in even this select group.

All this sounds somewhat pessimistic. If so, let's have the whole story at once by looking over the field for the possible champions of 1928 who can properly be credited to the Chicago district. Judged by the 1927 and previous records, there is "only one. Yes, of course, you agree, "Chick" Evans. His defeat in the National Amateur at Minikahda was purely incidental to the fact that no player in the entire history of golf has withstood the calamitous, not to say studiously immoral flock of birdies and eagles that Bobby Jones shot at him in the final rounds. I once saw "Chick" himself play an equally inspired round against Bob MacDonald and, to make the tale complete, saw Al. Watrous compile his historic 64 at French Lick, but no man has even seen both players so inspired at the same time.

So far as the women players of

the Chicago district are concerned, the situation is exactly where it was at the close of the 1926 season.

And now comes the more congenial task of portraying the optimistic side, forecast by the opening paragraph. It means much when thousands of players, practically all of them with club handicaps, improve their average game by three or more strokes during a season of play. It means, for instance, that a thousand of these players have improved their games by ten strokes or more. It means that a hundred or more of the thousand have played games that, if duplicated through a tournament, might win a national championship. It means, finally, that there are more potential champions in the Chicago district than ever before.

Barely six months ago I wrote, in GOLF ILLUSTRATED, that the opening of a new golf course in the Chicago district was no longer a matter of general interest; that interest in the new course was almost wholly confined to its membership. With the kind permission of all concerned I now take exception to that statement and call attention to the unique conception of the Blue Hills Country Club in planning a championship course and club house for boy players alone. The entire management, with the possible exceptions of up-keep of the course and club-house, will be by boys. There will be no older members. The boys will elect their own officers and have sole charge of their own events. The elders of the Blue Hills Country club will have their own club house and two courses but they will be entirely separate.

As already announced, the Women's Western Golf Association chose Mrs. Robert M. Cutting as its president for 1928, and Robert M. Cutting has just been elected president of the Western Golf Association. Judge Charles S. Cutting, father-in-law and father, respectively, of the presidents of the two major golf associations of the west, is one of the best executive officials and presiding officers in the Chicago district.

Judge Cutting has been nominated for the vice-presidency of the Illinois Seniors' Association. The only other new-comer on the ticket is Ed. A. Engler, also nominated for a vice-presidency. Oh, yes, there is one other new-comer: James E. Gorman, president of the Rock Island, was nominated as director. The remainder of the old officers, with President Lewis W. Pitcher, G. A. R. veteran at the head, was renominated. The ticket will be elected at the annual meeting, January 11.