

The Senior Championship

By J. LEWIS BUMGARDNER

I see in December GOLF ILLUSTRATED, page 22, among the "Major Amateur Golf Championship Winners," the following United States Senior, Hugh Halsell, Dallas, Texas—158 (36 holes). Mr. Halsell is a magnificent golfer, a congenial and delightful gentleman, and a thorough sportsman, and deserves honor and consideration for successfully leading the competition he met at Apawamis.

Does leading that competition make him, in any sense, the Senior Golf Champion of the United States? The United States Seniors Golf Association is an Association with a limited, restricted and selected membership. As the writer is advised, the membership is restricted to approximately 300. Competition in its annual tournament is restricted to its membership. A golfer may have passed the age limit of fifty-five and be able to consistently shoot in the middle, or high seventies, and, unless he was a member of this limited Association, he would have no opportunity to compete for the Seniors title. This being the condition, it is submitted that the winner of the championship of this private and selective Club tournament has no more right to the claim of a national championship than would the winner of the Lido or the Engineers Club Tournaments, have to the claim of the National Amateur Championship of the United States, had either of these clubs prefixed the name "United States" to their title. The purpose of calling attention to this is not a criticism or a complaint, but is made in the hope of suggesting something that will be constructive.

The United States Seniors Golf Association is the oldest and most successful of these seniors organizations. It is the parent body, and its success has led to the formation of numerous other Seniors Golf Associations, in various parts of the country.

Having led in the organization of Seniors Associations, and by its success having made them so popular, would it not be a graceful thing for this parent body, certainly the most powerful and influential of these Associations, to sponsor and arrange for a seniors' tournament wherein the best senior golfers of the country may participate, and thus crown a real senior champion. The popularity of the idea started by the Senior Association would guarantee, I think, the most cordial support from its juniors in such an enterprise.
