

## New England Affairs

By A. LINDE FOWLER

Brae-Burn Country Club of West Newton, Mass., scene of the next National Amateur, has weathered the winter and early spring in fine style, so that if there is anything wrong with the playing conditions by the time of the championship it will have to be through adverse developments between now and the time of the tournament. All of the committees for handling the championship have been named and some already have done much preliminary work, for it is Brae-Burn's hope to handle the event

in a manner that will equal the best standards of the past and, if possible, set a new mark for efficiency.

The Massachusetts Golf Association has been active for weeks in its preparations for the tournament season and has issued a tournament list which contains no fewer than sixty-three open and invitation events outside of its championships. That is a new record as to the number of events, but logically so, because the State Association now has grown to a membership of 112 clubs. There has been more or less of a hue and cry for some years, more pronounced in British than American circles, against the four-ball, best-ball, as being a style of game which tends to hurt the individual's game by making him too dependent upon his partner. That argument has proven rather a myth; for surely the Americans, much more addicted to the four-ball play than their British cousins, seem not to have suffered in their contact with the latter in the international competitions. As for downright enjoyment, pleasant companionship and good fellowship, the four-ball has proved a blessing. Among the ten or a dozen four-ball tournaments to be conducted under Massachusetts Golf Association auspices there are some strictly medal play, others medal and match. The annual four-ball invitation at the Essex County Club, Manchester, Mass., is scheduled for August 15, 16, 17 and 18, a matter which we emphasize for this tournament has a more widespread interest, outside of Massachusetts, than any other on the State's golfing calendar with the possible exception of the State Open championship. Amateurs from all parts of the country are found in the list of starters in that summer event at the beautiful North Shore course. Another tournament which attracts visitors from other parts of the country is the Jaques Cup, at The Country Club, Brookline, August 2, 3 and 4. Amateurs limited to handicaps of 10 and under in their home districts are eligible.

The State Open championship is to be held at the Wollaston Golf Club, May 23 and 24, making it one of the first of the season's major Open championships in a northern district. Johnny Farrell came over to Boston last year and won it, at the Sandy Burr Country Club, with Walter Hagen as the only other entrant pressing him at all for the honor. Hagen has promised to compete in it again and it wouldn't surprise me at all if a number of the stars from other districts appeared. If Hagen is to play, and keep to the schedule outlined for him abroad, he will have to move lively, for he is booked for an exhibi-



**WHAT DID "WHEEZER" MEAN?**  
When told Linde Fowler was playing Phillips Finlay, this is what he did

tion match in France with Aubrey Boomer, May 15, three days after the British Open championship is completed. One of the reasons why Hagen is coming to Boston, considerably more of a reason than that of playing in the Massachusetts Open, is that he wants another chance to get revenge on Francis Ouimet for the overwhelming victory which the Boston Amateur registered over him at the Sandy Burr Country Club a year ago last fall, when Mr. Ouimet had one of his rarest of scoring streaks. They are to play again at Sandy Burr, probably at the end of May.

Business has had a closer claim upon Mr. Ouimet this spring than ever before, so that he has had little opportunity to play golf; but with the National championship coming to Brae-Burn I have an idea that he is going to put his best foot forward in golf the coming season and try to reach the pinnacle once more. What I do know for a fact is that he has been paying more attention than for some years to the need of fitting himself out with some wooden clubs that are more satisfactory to his feel and his style of hitting than any he has had in a long time. He and a friend named Morton Adams worked on a couple of wooden clubs during the winter which Mr. Ouimet tried out in a round of golf at Wollaston one day in April and, after he had hit a few beauties dead against a strong head wind, he turned to me with eyes fairly dancing as he remarked that they were the best feeling clubs he had had in his hands for several years. They have heads modelled along the lines of a driver he once had which suited him to a dot, the duplicate of which he never has been able to find. Last year he was not hitting the ball nearly as far as two years ago and found himself playing the odd in the company of a number of golfers he used to outdrive. He could not understand why this should be so, for he felt just as strong and knew of no difference in his stroke. Finally he arrived at the conclusion that the clubs must have something to do with it, and his first practice with these new clubs, followed by a regular round, convinced him more than ever that such was the case.

This spring I have watched Finlay play five rounds, and in those five he not only showed hits the like of which I haven't seen in more than a quarter of a century of following the world's greatest golfers, but also many iron shots that matched his driving. Moreover, it strikes me that he is a greatly improved putter over last year, having a smoother stroke on the greens, greater firmness and an air of greater confidence. When Brady was professional at the Wollaston Club he said that some day, with a strong following wind, somebody might drive the fourth green, by hitting a ball up a sort of alleyway to the left of the aforesaid wide bunker and having it run on to the green. I never have seen it reached in any way until the day I was playing with Finlay. Four people were on the green waiting when we reached it and said the ball landed on the center of the green and bounced over, a clean 275 or 280-yard carry!