

Drives and Putts

Being Gossip About Golf and Golfers

By JOE BUNKER

ONE OF the pleasant features in connection with the annual tri-cornered contest for the Lesley Cup is the yearly dinner given to the participants by the association in whose district the contest is held. This year it fell to the lot of the Pennsylvania State Golf Association, and the dinner was held on Friday evening before Pennsylvania and the Metropolitan golfers met in the final. Most of the dinners at the Merion Cricket Club are given at the main club house at Haverford, but as this was a much smaller function than most of the banquets it was thought that the golf club houses would be a more appropriate setting. There was one large table where the various officials sat, but the rest of the diners were grouped at small tables, and a lot of Philadelphia players mixed up with the members of the four teams so that there was plenty of good fellowship and an absence of formality.

Fortunately, in the Lesley Cup series the golfers are well acquainted, and this proved an important factor in making it one of the most enjoyable dinners in the history of the series. By the time the first course had been served the gloom of the day brought on by a continuous downpour had been dispelled.

At the main table sat Robert W. Lesley, donor of the cup; John M. Ward, the veteran baseball player and acting captain of the veterans' team; Findlay S. Douglas, captain of the Metropolitan team; G. Herbert Wandler and Cameron B. Buxton, heads of the Massachusetts and Pennsylvania teams respectively; Frederick Wheeler, Francis B. Warner, Winthrop Sargent, Eben M. Byers and E. M. Barnes, with Howard W. Perrin as the toastmaster. Wirt L. Thompson, the president of the State Golf Association, is ill with typhoid fever, and a toast to his recovery was drunk by the other golfers. C. B. Buxton, acting in his behalf, attended to the arrangements for the tourney.

At the national championship at Detroit there were automobiles for the members of the Executive Committee of the United States Golf Association, which were at their disposal at all times. The local committee went them one better and saw that all the golfers were brought to and from the club, and at all times there were automobiles at their disposal. Another thing that was done which called for much praise from the visiting players was that hot soup was sent out to the tenth and thirteenth tees for all the players during the two days of the tournament. The rain made the tournament play decidedly chilly, and especially on Friday, when the four teams were playing the weather conditions were most unpleasant.

During the course of the dinner Mr. Lesley spoke of the inception of the Les-

ley Cup. It seems that ten or eleven years ago, when the women were having a national tournament at the old Merion course, Mr. Lesley invited the U. S. G. A. officials to his house for dinner and sometime during the evening the cup presentation was suggested. The thought was that it would be a splendid idea to get the best players of Philadelphia, Massachusetts and the Metropolitan districts together once a year for a competitive affair. Clement C. Griscom, whose daughter had won the national championship, had already given the Griscom Cup for tri-city competition, and the plan of having the women of these metropolises to meet had been most successful. One of the speakers of the evening was Fred Herreshoff, who would have been the national champion a few years ago had not Harold Hilton's drive hit a rock in the rough of the thirty-seventh hole at Apawams and bounded onto the green. Herreshoff has not been playing any golf for some time owing to failing eyesight. He was given a royal reception by the diners, nearly all of whom he knows personally.

Mr. Perrin has demonstrated on more than one occasion his powers as an after-dinner speaker and as a toast master he was at his best. There were not many speakers, but there was a lot of singing, and golfers delight in vocal exhibitions. Three of the veterans rendered "The Souse Family," a rather famous drinking song, in rare style, and the chorus singing could not have been better. W. P. Smith, of the Philadelphia Country Club, who was to have captained the veterans, was unable to reach Merion in time, and he explained his absence most satisfactorily to the golfers present.

The veterans' team made a big hit during the tournament and the feeling was general that their presence as the fourth member is the best solution of the problem that has been bothering the Lesley cup members for several years past. Up to this year there has been no opportunity for the winner of the year previous to get practice on Friday while the other two teams were fighting it out to decide which should play the champions the next day. This year, following a suggestion made at the previous Lesley cup dinner, a team, made up of players who had played in other matches but who had not been selected by their own organization, made its appearance; and while the Metropolitan team defeated it, it was felt that in time the veterans will supply a team capable of winning the cup.

One of the diners said that the fourth team should be selected either from Rhode Island, Connecticut or New Jersey, but the general feeling was that it would be better to have the fourth team confined to players who at some time or other had played in other Lesley cup matches. Some were of the opinion that

no one should be eligible unless he had played at least three of these matches, while others thought that the youngsters who had played in but one match was just as eligible as the men who were on the teams when the competition first started.

In order to get the members out during the middle of the week the Country Club of Lansdowne has started a mid-week tournament. Three eights have originated. The match play is on a handicap and the players may play eighteen or nine holes, as they see fit. It is really a nine-hole tournament, but those who prefer to play the longer round may do so. There is one proviso—no matches can be played on Saturdays or Sundays.