

# Drives and Putts

## Being Gossip About Golf and Golfers

By JOE BUNKER

MANY Philadelphians had hoped that the next president of the United States Golf Association would be Howard Perrin, of the Merion Cricket Club. That seemed to many to be the programme some months ago, but Frank L. Woodward, of the Denver Country Club, will succeed himself. Mr. Perrin will continue as first vice president, and John Reid, Jr., of St. Andrew's Golf Club, as his associate. The Nominating Committee, whose findings are equivalent to an election, headed by Joseph S. Clark, of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, decided upon these other officers: Howard F. Whitney, Nassau Country Club, secretary; Frederick S. Wheeler, Apawamus Club, treasurer; M. Lewis, Brae Burn; Walter B. Smith, Onwentsia; Dr. Walter S. Harban, Columbia, and John S. Sweeney, Detroit, Executive Committee.

The only change is in the treasurer-ship, Percy R. Pyne declining to run again. Milton Dargen, of the Atlanta Athletic Club, heads the new Nominating Committee, and there are two other Southerners on it, so there is a possibility that Mr. Woodward's successor may be a Southerner. For the first time last year the president was selected from a club west of the Mississippi, and as the South has never had the presidency, it may be that the president for 1917 may hail from south of the Mason and Dixon line.

While Philadelphia has been represented either as treasurer or vice president, or on the Executive Committee for many years, the Quaker City has never had a national president. George D. Fowle, of the Philadelphia Country Club, was elected treasurer of the national organization in 1898 and held that office for two years, when Samuel Y. Hechner, of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, succeeded him. He remained as treasurer from 1900 to 1908. Then Joseph S. Clark was elected a member of the Executive Committee, continuing on that body until 1912, when he was made vice president. He was succeeded by Howard W. Perrin, who remained on the Executive Committee for two years. Last year he became the first vice president.

But the presidents have come either from Boston, Chicago or the Metropolitan districts and the great majority of them have been members of the Country Club of Brookline, whose members prefer that you should call it THE Country Club. Laurence Curtis held the office for two years; W. B. Thomas for the same period; G. Herbert Windeler for two years and Herbert Jaques for two years.

It is generally understood that the amateur championship will be played at Merion next year. The consensus of opinion among the Eastern golfers who played at Merion last summer in the Lesley Cup series and among the Western players during the national championship at Detroit was that Merion would be chosen. Mr. Woodward, who is now in the East, had this to say when asked if Merion had been chosen: "All that can be said at present is that the Merion course is one of the three selected for the national amateur championship. The final decision depends upon the way the delegates vote at the annual meeting to be held in Chicago in January. It is true, however, that only the Eastern links have been suggested for the amateur, likewise the women's championship."

He verified a statement made in these columns that there will be no official list rating for golfers next year. The plan of portioning off the eligibility work among the minor bodies will be done in such a manner that every section of the country will be catered for. The two national champions, Jerome D. Travers, the national open, and Robert Gardner, the national amateur champions, will head the list. The rest of the list will be alphabetical. There is a possibility that the new list will contain more names than the old handicap lists.

It is possible to use one set of clubs for several years, for the wear and tear is not hard on them, but golf balls are another thing. Most golf balls will not

average more than a half dozen rounds and look well, so that the cost of golf balls to the average player is quite an item in his golfing expense. There are hundreds of golfers who never think of playing a round without teeing up a new ball. There are many other hundreds who keep using the old balls until they become worn with age. Thousands of them are lost every week during the playing season and other thousands are cut to pieces by unskilled players. Their life is usually a short one and several millions of dollars are spent every year by Americans for golf balls.

The request made to President Wilson through the officials of the United States Golf Association that the Department of Agriculture at Washington be requested to make a study of grasses for fairways and putting greens should result in a lot of good. Much of the seeding on small courses is done in a haphazard way. Sometimes the seed selected shows splendid results and sometimes it seems almost impossible to grow grass on some soils. In some cases the chairman of greens committees depends upon the judgment of the seedmen. This is particularly true in cases of clubs which are constantly having new chairmen.

If the Department of Agriculture will make an investigation of grass growing in the various sections of the country it will prove a big boon to clubs everywhere. Tests of soils will be made and the experiment of growing grasses suitable to these soils will enable clubs in the various localities to select the proper seeds. It will no longer be a question of luck, as it now is. Some of the larger clubs who are in a position to do it have the soils on the course analyzed and find it comparatively easy to supply the elements that are lacking. There are thousands of courses that have never had this done, and are content to let things go as they are. The Southern courses spent thousands of dollars before they found a grass that would stand the blistering heat of summer when golf is impossible, but which would also flourish during the winter months, when the courses are most in use.

Years ago old Ben Savres modeled a driver which he called the dreadnought. It had a large driving face and a famous British amateur was one of the first to use it. He was a long driver and he managed to get some tremendously long balls with it. It took like wildfire and when it came to this country everyone took to it. It had its day and has passed out and you will not see many of them in use in this country.

Not so long ago a new styled mashie and mashie niblick was put on the market. The face was deeply scored and the club was supposed to give the ball a big back spin. For those who could not get the back spin by using the ordinary mashie or mashie niblick it was a very welcome club. It has been so popular that it is impossible at times to get one of these clubs. Other clubs patterned along similar lines have made their appearance and these have had large sales as well. After the player has succeeded in mastering it the new club works most satisfactorily, although there are hundreds who look upon it with scorn. But to many players it has proved a very useful club.

There is a patented sand box made in this city by a local golfer that is somewhat better than anything of the sort ever put on the market. Not only has it had a large sale in this country, but orders from all over the world have been received by the manufacturer. The new style will have small flags on them, the purpose being to show the golfers the direction of the wind so that he can gauge his shots accordingly.

A number of turkey handicaps were played at the various clubs last week. The players paid fifty cents as an entry fee and the sum total was used to buy turkeys. In some cases the lowest net scores won the birds and in other cases the players were divided into classes and a certain number of birds were apportioned to each class, according to the number of entries. It was a speculative way of winning a turkey dinner and most of the golfers are not averse to taking a sporting chance.