

# GEORGE WENT NUTTING AND WHOLE HOFFNER FAMILY ARE GOLFERS

By PERRY LEWIS

IT HAS been said that golfers—real golfers—are born, not made. Without any intent to discourage the ambitious one who crosses the palm of a professional for the purpose of annoying him a few hours every day, one is inclined to subscribe to that theory after considering the links accomplishments of certain families.

Only a confirmed dissenter would care to argue that golf is not bred in the Scottish sinews and thews of the Clan Campbell, well represented in this city by that grand veteran of the links, "Jock", who teaches the young golf idea to shoot at the Old York Road Country Club.

Who would care to go on record as convinced that the Hackneys did not absorb much of their golf at the mother's breast? If there be such a pessimist, let him be led to Clarence, or Jim, or Bill, or any one of the other distinguished Hackney brothers—and on his tombstone let it be inscribed: "He died a skeptic".

## GEO. HOFFNER



### Some Golfing Strains

What of the accomplished Leitch sisters, or, if you care to consider the local phase of our premise, the two Platts, the Doyles or the Hoffners—by all means the Hoffners, for ours is the tale of three brothers:

George, Charlie and Bob Hoffner.

We are picking on the Hoffners today because the Hoffner family occupies a unique position in Philadelphia golfdom. Bonnie Scotland has given to the links its Campbells and its Hackneys; England its Leitchs—but Philadelphia has sent to the tee the Hoffners, far and away the greatest homebred golfing family in what someone has facetiously nicknamed the City of Brotherly Love.

The Hoffners are an old Philadelphia family. Pater Hoffner was born and reared in that section of South Philadelphia known as "the Neck," and he knew a lot more about a plow than a niblick. Shortly after becoming a benedict he settled at Fifty-fourth and Overbrook avenue, in a settlement which later became the suburb of Wynnefield.

There George, the first son, was born, twenty-seven years ago. A year later Bob, made his bow to the world, and when Bob was a year old Charlie came to town. Meanwhile the Hoffners had moved to Fifty-second and Viola streets.

### Smoking His First Cigar

The three brothers then proceeded to grow up together and maul each other around as brothers are wont to do. At ten Charlie could beat any boy in the neighborhood at marbles, which may possibly account for his present uncanny accuracy on the greens.

At fourteen Bob was the best pitcher in the gang, and at fifteen George lit his first cigar, and it is rumored he is smoking it yet—a rumor born out by the appearance of the stub George was parking between his lips the last time we saw him.

However that may be, the thought we are trying to put over at this moment is that up to the time George was fifteen, Bob fourteen and Charlie thirteen, they would have fought in a minute if an associate had dared to

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# HOFFNER FAMILY IS LOCAL GIFT TO GOLF

## Three Noted Brothers Are Famous in Philadelphia List of Noted Linksmen

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predict a golfing career for a Hoffner. That's how they felt about the game of golf.

About that time George got himself a burlap bag and went in "the country" after chestnuts. Because of financial reasons he walked out—but he rode back, and therein lies a tale.

George was pretty weary as he trudged along city line adjacent to the course of the Bala Golf Club. He wished he had a nickel to "hop" a car and get home with his chestnuts, both of them, and he leaned against the fence to think it over. At that moment two men carrying what the boy thought were aristocratic shiny clubs motioned the lad to climb the fence and come thither.

"Want to caddy?" asked one.

George was no caddy, but he was as canny as the average small boy and his reply was typical:

"How much?"

"Fifty cents."

### A Youthful Rockefeller

Fifty cents! George thought of the many things this fortune would buy, and a minute later had a bag of clubs over his shoulder and his tongue in his cheek. That night he rode home in state and permitted his two younger brothers to feast their eyes on his silver hoard.

"It's easy," quoth he, "no work at all. You don't have to hit the ball or nothing. The guy who pays you does all the work and all you have to do is carry the clubs."

The next day George reported at the Bala Club early, and tagging along with him was his small brother, Charlie. Both were promptly sworn in as caddies, and a few days later the pair led Hob, the third brother, to this wonderful financial opportunity.

The three boys took to the game like ducks. By the end of the summer all three were showing unmistakable signs of developing into great golfers. Charlie, the kid, was particularly adept, and George Klauder, one of the influential members of the club as well as a crack player himself, took the youngster under his wing.

"Here, Charlie, you can take my clubs any time you want them, and remember me when you become famous," said Klauder.

By the end of the summer the brothers had quit caddying, but they stuck to the game they loved. Bob and George were sent to business college, and eventually they became full-fledged members of the Bala Club. George is still a member of that organization where first he saw a golf stick. Hob is a member at Philmont.

### Youngest Had Bug Bad

Charlie, however, was badly bitten. He couldn't be kept away from the links. When he announced one night that he intended to become a golf professional, there was a ruction in the Hoffner household and Charlie sat on a cushion for a day or two.

With the years, however, his determination increased, but it was with reluctance that his parents consented that he accept a post with the Woodbury Country Club. From there he went to the Country Club of Atlantic City and served two years under that giant of the links, Jack McDermott.

About that time the Philmont Club was searching for a young professional who knew his business, and Charlie Hoffner's name was mentioned to them. To Philmont Charlie went, and there he is today, recognized as one of the leading professional golfers in the world.

The younger Hoffner was good enough to be appointed a member of the United States team which invaded Great Britain last year and brought back the coveted British Open Championship Cup. He has won many district championships in the South, and is a threat to the great ones of the game in every tournament in which he starts. The name "Charlie Hoffner" is one to conjure with wherever golf is played.

George and Bob retained their amateur standing. For a time the latter's status was under a cloud, because of the fact he was employed in the sporting goods department of a big department store, but the ban was soon lifted, and Bob celebrated his reinstatement by going right out and winning the classic Patterson Memorial event at St. Martins, defeating that distinguished golfer, Norman Maxwell, in the play-off of a tie.

The accomplishments of George, the elder, are too well known to bear repetition. Let it suffice to say that he is a Lesley Cup player, three times he has qualified in the National Amateur Championship, is a former Philadelphia champion and runner-up in the Pennsylvania open of 1921. That's how good George is.

Consider the Hoffners—George, Bob and Charlie. Perhaps there are three "home-bred" brothers in America capable of taking their measure, but if such is the case we never heard of them.

George snared only two chestnuts that day in the country, but he wrote the introduction to one of the golf romances in the book of sport.