

THE GOLF ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA

By Tom Kerrane

HALL OF FAME

William Hyndman, III built an amateur golfing résumé that was second to none for its sheer longevity.

At the tender age of 19, Hyndman became the then youngest winner of the Amateur Championship when he earned the first of three Amateur titles in 1935.

Some 48 years later – at the tender age of 67 – he became the oldest person to win a USGA national championship when victorious at the 1983 U.S. Senior Amateur.

In between, Hyndman won countless other events and played on numerous local and national teams, showcasing his skills and camaraderie around the globe.

Still, throughout such a lengthy and distinguished amateur career, Hyndman may have enjoyed nothing more than his chance to share his passion for the game with others.



E. Harvie Ward Jr., winner, William Hyndman, III, runner-up, and Isaac B. Grainger, USGA president, (left to right), at the trophy presentation for the 1955 U.S. Amateur Championship, which was held at the Country Club of Virginia, (James River Course), Richmond, Va.

Upon his passing in September of 2001, that has become the legacy Hyndman left to Philadelphia golf, the memberships at Huntingdon Valley Country Club, Pine Valley Golf Club and others, and certainly to some of the top amateur players in the area over the past 50 years.

The man born on Christmas Day, 1915, was a true gift to the area golfing landscape. This October, William Hyndman, III will be part of the inaugural class to be inducted into the Golf Association of Philadelphia Hall of Fame.

"If you every played Huntingdon Valley late in the afternoon, you

WILLIAM HYNDMAN, III

had a pretty good chance of running into him," said Jim Sullivan, Jr., the former Amateur and Silver Cross winner who grew up at Huntingdon Valley.

Hyndman, approaching 80 at the time, would often join up for nine-hole matches with Sullivan, who was approaching high school graduation back then.

Hyndman practiced nearly every day and lived across the street from the eighth hole. When a fence was erected to enclose the course, a four-foot gap was left by the green to allow Hyndman easy access.

"I don't know if I ever beat him in any of our nine-hole matches," Sullivan said. "We played for a soda. He never let me give him the soda, but I don't know that he ever had to buy me one."

Here was a man who had achieved nearly everything in amateur golf, yet received no greater pleasure than seeing others develop the love for golf as he had decades before.

"He always made sure to tell you how wonderful the game of golf had been to him," said fellow Huntingdon Valley member Dave Brookreson, whose personal résumé includes Golf Association of Philadelphia Amateur, Middle-Amateur, Joseph H. Patterson Cup, Silver Cross and Senior Silver Cross championships. "He gave back so much to the game. You'd see him out there playing with anyone, and he always offered encouragement.

"He'd never give a lesson, but if you asked him a question, he'd offer a positive comment. Those talks were a tremendous influence on me."

For Hyndman, the turning point in his career may have come at the final of the 1955 U.S. Amateur, when he was defeated, 9&8, by Harvie Ward. Hyndman was then 39, his game only blossoming into form. Prior to that tournament, Hyndman had earned one Golf Association of Philadelphia Amateur Championship, along with four Patterson Cups, three Silver Crosses and two Crump Cup victories at Pine Valley.

It was certainly a tremendous list of achievements. Yet, following that tournament, Hyndman would take home two more Association Amateur titles, six more Patterson Cups, three more Silver Crosses, two more Crumps, two Philadelphia Open titles, two Sunnehanna Amateur Tournaments, a Philadelphia Senior Amateur, a North and South Amateur Championship, and a Trans-Mississippi Amateur Championship crown.

He would be named to five Walker Cup teams, play in nine Masters Tournaments (he is the last Amateur to record a hole-in-one, that being on hole No. 12), reach three British Amateur finals and win two U.S.



Senior Amateur Championship titles, first in 1973 and again in 1983.

O. Gordon Brewer, Jr., who like Hyndman has his name engraved twice on the U.S. Senior Amateur trophy, talked of a conversation he once had with Jack Nicklaus, a two-time Walker Cup teammate of Hyndman. The Golden Bear referred to Hyndman as one of the best

Bobby Jones sees greatest shot

In October of 1958 William Hyndman, III was part of a quartet that represented the United States in the inaugural World Amateur Team Championship at St. Andrews with Bobby Jones serving as the non-playing American captain.

Three plus rounds into the competition, Australia emerged from a tight race with Great Britain, Ireland and the United States - as the likely victor. Hyndman, however, carried America's final hope if he could tally an aggregate seven on the final two holes, including the infamous Road Hole.

The following is an excerpt from *A Centennial Tribute to Golf in Philadelphia* by Jim Finegan.

Jones explained the situation to Hyndman on the tee, As Jones later wrote, "The best that I could tell him was... that I thought he should go for a 4-3 finish, never dreaming that a 3 at 17 was at all possible.

In these circumstances – the climax of an international competition where one man is left out there alone to uphold the prestige of his country; at his side, the game's most revered figure and perhaps its greatest champion; under lowering laden skies with a cold, heavy wind driving across the links – in these circumstances, then, how monumental is the task of playing this terrorizing 446-yard hole in 4, how near to unthinkable the achievement of a 3.

Again in Jones's own words "... I had the night before told our team to take no chance with the road at 17 unless the situation appeared to be dire..."

Hyndman selected a 4-iron and turned toward Jones. There was no choice but to go courageously for the hole, cut some 15 feet beyond the Road Bunker. The shot called for him to assume full risk of that ruinously deep vertical-faced pit on the left, the bank and the road and the stone wall on the right... Jones nodded... Hyndman then unfurled as brilliant a long-iron as that hole – indeed, any hole – is ever likely to witness. With just a suggestion of fade to counter the right-to-left wind – "The ball hung there," Bill recalls, "fighting the wind all the way" – the ball cleared the venomous pot bunker, floated down onto the green, and nearly struck the flagstick as it coasted to a stop no more than six feet past the cup.

"I wanted to aim the putt left to right, but my caddie told me to knock it at the middle of the hole. I did, for 3, then nearly birdied 18. We tied Australia."

In a playoff two days later, St. Andrews was closed on Sunday, the Australians were victorious.

However, when Hyndman returned home he found a framed photo of the 17th hole with the inscription: "The 17th hole, the Road Hole, St. Andrews, where I saw Billy Hyndman hit the greatest shot of my life." Signed, "Bob Jones."

players he had ever known.

"Bill was the leading amateur of his era," Brewer said. "I learned a great deal from him. He just had an ability that was exceptional for an amateur.

"No matter what the shot, Bill had the creativity and the confidence to know he could do it. That's something you see in true champions."

Hyndman, who shot 67 at Huntingdon Valley CC at the age of 76, won his final club championship at Adios Golf Club in Florida, in 1990, giving him the rare distinction of having won clubs championships over seven different decades.

"He just got better with age," Brookreson said. "I used to ask him how. He'd always just say, 'Dave, I'm like a good red wine.' He was." And on Oct. 7 at Torresdale-Frankford Country Club during the Player's Dinner and the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, the current elite of Philadelphia Amateur golf will raise a toast to one of the true champions and true gentlemen of the sport.

WILLIAM HYNDMAN, III RÉSUMÉ

Golf Association of Philadelphia

Amateur Championships 1935, 1958, 1965
 Junior Boys' Championship 1932
 Open Championships 1968-69
 Patterson Cup 1946-47, 1952, 1954-55, 1962-64, 1968-69
 Senior Amateur Championship, 1980
 Silver Cross 1946, 1952, 1954, 1956-58

United States Golf Association

U.S. Amateur Championship

1955 – fell to E. Harvie Ward, Jr., 9&8, in the final at CC of Virginia in Richmond, Va.

U.S. Senior Amateur Championship

1973 – defeated Harry Welch, 3&2, at Onwentsia Club in Lake Forest, Ill.
 1983 – defeated Richard Runkle, 19 holes, at Crooked Stick GC in Carmel, Ind.

Walker Cup (5 – 1957, 1959, 1961, 1969, 1971)

World Amateur Team Championship American representative

1958 – Tied for low amateur at St. Andrews (Old Course) with Charlie Coe, Billy Joe Patton and Bud Taylor
 1960 – Tied for low amateur at Merion GC (East Course) with Jack Nicklaus and Dean Beaman
 Pennsylvania Golf Association
 Senior Amateur Championship (1 – 1978)

Other notable Amateur accomplishments (in alphabetical order)

British Amateur Championship runner-up (1959, 1969-70)
 Crump Cup champion (1952, 1954, 1967, 1969)
 Masters Tournament (7 – top finish 1959 T18)
 Middle Atlantic Golf Association Amateur champion (1966)
 North and South Amateur Championship winner (1961)
 Northeast Amateur Invitational Golf Tournament winner (1974)
 Sonny Fraser Tournament champion (1948, 1952, 1957, 1961)
 Sunnehanna Amateur Tournament for Champions winner (1958, 1967)
 Trans-Mississippi Amateur Championship winner (1968)
 U.S. Open Championship tied for 15th (1957)

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