



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER

THE INSIDE REPORT ON WORLD GOLF

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Dear Subscriber:

REPERCUSSIONS

- April 8-11 The Masters Tournament
- May 20-23 P.G.A. Championship
- June 17-20 U.S. Open
- July 15-18 The Open
- July/Aug. TBD Games of the XXXII Olympiad

Golf's 2021 competitive calendar will be dominated from April through August by the four major championships and then men's and women's golf at the Summer Olympics.

During these consecutive months of major competition, golf's administrative bodies will find it difficult to get a word in edgewise. Therefore, they have used the first quarter of 2021 to announce new policy, hopeful intent, new hires, misguided suggestions, and at least one example of genuine stupidity. We begin with the brainlessness:

Tokyo Olympics Organizing Chief Resigns After Sexist Comments

"The heart of a flea and the brain of a shark"

During the first week of February, Yoshiro Mori, 83, president of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Organizing Committee, commented publicly that garrulous women make meetings "drag on too long". As reported by THE ASAHI SHIMBUN, one of the country's largest newspapers, Mr. Mori, a former Japanese prime minister (2000-2001), was reflecting on his time as chairman of the Japan Rugby Football Union (2005-2015) when he said, "A meeting of an executive board that includes many women would take time. Women are competitive. When someone raises his or her hand and speaks, they probably think they should speak too. That is why they all end up making comments."

The newspaper also reported that Mr. Mori was describing the Olympic organizing committee when saying it "includes about seven women, but they all know how to behave". The committee was apparently debating an increase of female members from 20 to 40 percent.

Mr. Mori, who has sometimes been described in the Japanese media as having "the heart of a flea and the brain of a shark", quickly apologized the following day.

By Feb. 12, the social and Olympic sponsor uproar following Mr. Mori's comments provoked his resignation. "My inappropriate remarks," he said, "have caused chaos, and I would like to apologize to express my deepest apologies to

the members of the council and executive board, as well as the entire community. ... The Games should continue under new leadership, so I'm announcing today that I'm stepping down as president of the organizing committee."

About this same time, Mr. Mori attempted to replace himself with Saburo Kawabuchi, 84, a former president of the Japanese soccer league's governing body, despite the current Japanese prime minister's suggestion that a woman or a younger man take the position.

Events moved swiftly and, following a meeting with the prime minister, Seiko Hashimoto, 56, Japan's cabinet minister for the Olympics, resigned her cabinet position in order to assume the Olympic Organizing Committee's presidency—Mr. Mori's vacated position. Ms. Hashimoto has competed in seven Olympic Games—both winter and summer—as a speed skater and track cyclist.

Olympic medals are expected to be awarded for golf

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competitions at Kasumigaseki Golf Club in late July (men's) and early August (women's).

1900 Paris - Compiègne Club America's First Female Gold Medal in Any Sport

The massive, global production that is now the Olympic Games calls for a moment's pause to recount a calmer, quieter time when competition came together without fly-overs, titanium sneakers, night-glo opening ceremonies, or the monolithic adoration of the organizing committee.

Although the current Summer Games began in 1896, it was not until the 1900 Paris games that women were invited to compete. In addition to golf, women could vie for medals in tennis, sailing, croquet and equestrian competition.

Four nations entered the Olympic golf competition at the Compiègne Club, a 90 minute drive north of Paris. Golf was conducted as an individual stroke play competition in which the men played 36 holes in one day [Oct. 2] and the women played 9 holes the following day.

Eighteen years after these golf competitions, the forest of Compiègne became best known as the place where the signing of the World War I armistice between the Allies and Germany took place in a railway carriage. The armistice went into effect at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918. The signing ceremony is commemorated today at the site by a museum and preservation of the railway carriage.

Compiègne Golf Club was built in 1896 within the horse racing track of the same name. The open and unused infield was an obvious and not unusual place to build a golf course. Other notable courses built within race tracks include Musselburgh and Royal Durban. Compiègne G.C. operates to this day. It is flat with small postage stamp putting greens.

When Margaret Abbot of the Chicago G.C. won the 1900 gold medal for golf, she became the first American woman *ever* to win gold and the second woman, regardless of nationality, to win gold.

Ms. Abbot's mother, Mary Perkins Ives Abbot, also competed and finished seventh with a score of 65. The Abbots were the first and only mother-daughter combination who have *ever* competed in the same Olympic event at the same time.

Although Margaret Abbot's score of 47 was a gold medal performance, she was awarded a bowl rather than a medal—for what reason we do not know. Reportedly, the Abbots never understood they were competing in the Olympics. They apparently thought it was just another

nine-hole golf tournament and went to their graves in ignorance of their accomplishments. Their descendants were informed years later.

The silver and bronze "medals" were also won by American competitors. Pauline Whittier, from Boston, won the silver medal; and Daria Pratt, from New York, took the bronze. Ms. Pratt was the daughter of John Pankhurst, the dominant shipbuilder on the Great Lakes. In 1913, the same year income tax was approved, she married Prince Alexis Karageorgevich, the last claimant from his family to the Serbian throne.

Twenty-two golfers entered the men's competition: 9 Frenchmen, 4 from Great Britain, 1 Greek, and 8 Yanks. The winner of the men's gold medal was Charles Sands from the United States. He was the professional (!) at St. Andrews G.C. in Yonkers, N.Y., one of the five founding clubs of the United States Golf Association.

Mr. Sands' score was 82 in the morning and 85 in the afternoon. Mr. Sands also competed in both the tennis singles and doubles at the Paris games. He had taken up golf only a few years previously.

Mr. Sands' other notable golf tournament entry was the first U.S. Amateur Championship [Newport, 1895] in which he lost in the final, 12 and 11, to Charles Blair Macdonald. It is unclear when Mr. Sands became the professional at Yonkers.

The silver medal was won by Walter Rutherford of Jedburgh in the southeast of Scotland. He finished one stroke behind Mr. Sands. The bronze medal went to David Robertson also from Great Britain.

 • **Michael Whan, 56, has been selected to be the United States Golf Association's eighth**

Executive Director and second CEO. In golf circles, Mr. Whan is well known for his decade-long rebuilding of the Ladies Professional Golf Association. His work history indicates extensive marketing expertise:

1983 graduates Anderson High, Cincinnati

1987 graduates Miami University of Ohio

1987-1994 Proctor & Gamble, branding

1994-1995 Wilson Sporting Goods, marketing

1995-1999 Taylor Made, marketing

1999-2002 Britesmile, marketing

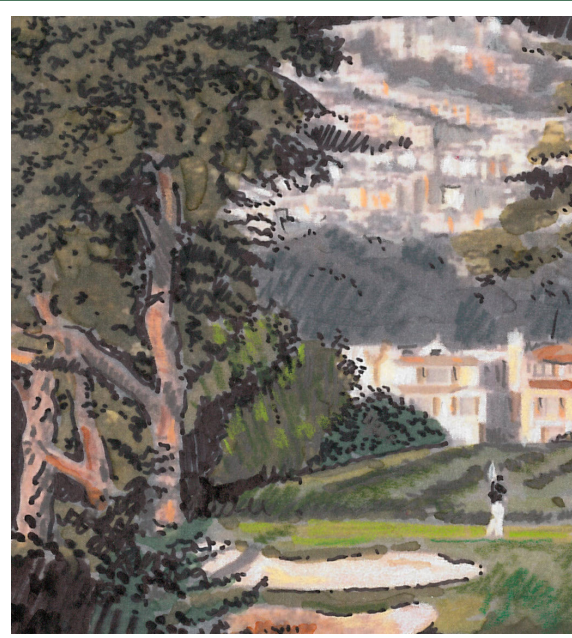
2002-2009 Mission Hockey, sales & marketing

2010-2021 L.P.G.A. Commissioner

Mr. Whan's 2019 salary, as reported in the L.P.G.A.'s

non-profit filing, was \$1,176,119 on revenues of \$126.5 million.

• **2021 U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open Rules Committees** will be limited to professional tour referees and U.S.G.A. staff, with supplemental assignments to members of the Rules Committee [read U.S.G.A. Executive Committee members who also serve on the Rules Committee]. This decision was made “out of an abundance of caution and care for you all”, stated an e-mail to volunteer Rules officials, from which assignments have traditionally been made for the Opens. The message goes on to stipulate that this decision is specific to the Open championships and does not impact invitations previously distributed for 2021 amateur championships. Can the inference be taken that “an abundance of caution and care for you all”, is not necessary in amateur championships; or rather that the more desirable Open assignments are no longer to be shared with the mundane volunteers who have always done the work, performed at the highest level, and paid their own way?



- Removing restrictions from the Rules surrounding competitions such as long-drive events, putting competitions, and skills competitions that are not played as part of a tee-to-hole competition; and
- Eliminating all sponsorship restrictions.

We surmise that the last item addresses complications created by California's FAIR PAY-TO-PLAY legislation that will (beginning in 2023) allow collegiate athletes to acquire endorsements and sponsorships while still maintaining athletic eligibility. In a joint press release, the governing bodies state that “the code must continue to evolve” particularly in relation to the “modern elite amateur game”. THE GOLF LETTER considers the use of the word *elite* as an obfuscated way of bifurcating the amateur game.

Comments will be accepted until March 26 with the new Rules to be adopted on Jan. 1, 2022. Information is available on R&A and U.S.G.A. websites.

NOTE: Yesterday, March 10, the U.S. Justice Department encouraged the U.S. Supreme Court to support the arguments of college athletes who are challenging the N.C.A.A.'s limits on their compensation.

• **Notices of Equipment Testing and Specification changes** were issued February 1 and include:

- A Model Local Rule—another method of bifurcation—available to committees that will permit them to limit the maximum length of clubs, other than putters, to 46 inches. It would be “recommended for use only in competitions limited to highly-skilled players (that is, professional and *elite* (emphasis ours) amateur competitions”. Comment period has ended.
- An updated method for testing golf balls to the ball's optimum launch conditions—“those between a launch angle of 7.5 and 15 degrees, and backspin between 2200 rpm and 3000 rpm, such that the ball's total distance is optimized. This value would be used to determine the conformance of the ball against the limit of 317 yards plus the current testing tolerance of 3 yards.”
- A proposal with an update to the testing tolerance associated with the evaluation of a club's spring-like effect. This would result in the reduction on testing tolerance within the Pendulum Test Protocol from 18 to 6 microseconds.



• **Significant changes to the Rules of Amateur Status** have been jointly proposed by the two governing bodies. The changes will identify only three acts that will result in a golfer losing their amateur status:

- Accepting a prize in excess of the prize limit;
- Accepting payment for giving instruction; and
- Accepting employment as a golf club professional or membership of an association of professional golfers.

To achieve this new approach, the following changes are proposed:

- Eliminating the distinction between cash prizes and other prizes;
- Using the prize limit as the only way an amateur can lose their amateur status through their play (meaning that entering or playing a competition as a professional would not, of itself, result in the loss of amateur status);

New & Renovated Course Work

Fox Chapel, Pittsburgh - Seth Raynor (1925) - renovation by Tom Marzolf & Russell Kirk [Fazio Design] - "We decided to take the Raynor bunkers and slide them down the holes to the modern carry point. This allows the original design concepts to once again be relevant."

Columbine, Denver - renovation by Rees Jones and Greg Muirhead to test the best players in the game - membership boasts 200 single digit players, 20 of whom play off plus handicaps - the P.G.A. Championship was played here in 1967 and won by Don January.

P.G.A. Czech National- 15 miles southeast of Prague - design by Kyle Phillips on the grounds of Chateau Nebrenice - 18 holes built using just 62 acres - environmental model includes drought resistant fairway grasses, wild flower meadows and a large portion of non-irrigated fescue.

Oakland Hills [South] - renovation by Gil Hanse of Donald Ross' original design (1918) - the goal being to come closer to its original design while making it tougher for the best players in the world - in hopes of securing more major championships - opens mid-summer.

Baltusrol [Lower] - another Hanse renovation, this time A.W. Tillinghast (1922) - to bring the course to the highest standards and ensure its recognition as a "premier venue for major golf championships" - expected re-opening in April - renovation of the Upper Course will follow forthwith.

The Nest at Cabot Cape Breton - Nova Scotia - 10-hole par-3 course - designed by Whitman, Azland &

Cutten - sister course to Cabot Links (2012) and Cabot Cliffs (2016) - "The Nest sits on a lofty perch - the highest point of the Cliffs property - and is an interesting combination of open meadow and light coastal forest."

Djursholm G.C. - renovation by Casper Grauballe - nine miles north of Stockholm - 18-hole, 1930s course - reminiscent of New England golf courses that run through forests making the round attractively more private.

Virus Golfer Numbers Sifted by N.G.F. More players but a 25 Year Percentage Decline

Joe Beditz, president and C.E.O. of the National Golf Association, in a Feb. 11 message made the following points about the 2020 increase in new golfers:

The big picture is that last year there were six million new and returning on-course golfers—as opposed to those using just simulators and driving ranges. A net gain of roughly 500,000 players. That influx was offset by a larger than normal volume of golfers who stepped away from golf due to the virus or financial stress.

New players came from overlapping categories as follows:

Youth - plus 630,000
Beginners - plus 570,000
Women - plus 450,000
Non-Caucasians - plus 320,000

The number of traditional on-course golfers today is 25 million, which is the same as it was 25 years ago despite a 25 percent population increase. Therefore, U.S. participation has fallen from over 11 percent to 8 percent.



For Y.M.:



*Some things are too hot to touch,
The human mind can only stand so much,
You can't win with a losing hand.*

Bob Dylan
THINGS HAVE CHANGED [1999]

Yours vy truly,

Gary A. Galyean
Editor & Publisher

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