

# OBSERVING THE OPEN

By HAL P. BUERGE

It was early in the morning and the dew was on the ground when Iverson Martin, the pro from Live Oak Golf Club in Weatherford, Tex., stepped up on the first tee, after being announced by the USGA official starter, and hit a beautiful drive down the middle of the narrow number one fairway at Oakland Hills last Thursday morning.

The 51st National Open Golf Championship was in progress and it was nearly dark when the threesome of Tom Strang, Jr., Jack Jones and Mike Pavalla played through the 18th green to finish off the first day's play.

The honor of being the first player to tee off in the open was a repeat performance for little Iverson Martin. Back in 1941 when he was an amateur, he was privileged to hit the first ball in the open when it was played at Fort Worth. Tom Strang had a 77 for his first round at Oakland.

The first big name in the golf world to tee off in the open was Bobby Cruikshank of Pittsburgh. One of the old timers in tournament golf, he received a big hand from the 100,000 fans that were on hand for his early start at 8:16 a.m. He smiled, laid a hook into trouble on the left side of the fairway, but recovered for a par on the first hole.

Everyone was tense as the tournament was getting underway. There was a strict rule against taking a camera onto the golf course and the policemen were watching for people who were carrying one.

Early Thursday morning a fellow watching the players

tee-off in the first tee was carrying a leather case on a strap around his neck. One cop bawled him out a bit, pointed to a sign on a nearby tree forbidding photography and then told the fellow he would have to check it out.

The cop was about ready to get tough when the fellow opened the case and showed him his binoculars.

At 9:04 a.m. Wood, Dutch Harrison and Frank Strang, the Toledo strong boy, tee off and they were the first threesome to command a gallery. However most of the early fans were waiting for Bobby Locke, who teed off at 9:36 with Bob Hamilton and Clayton Heafner.

Locke played badly on the first few holes of his initial round, but rallied on the later holes for an opening 73. He had his first one-putt green on number eight and played better after that. Clayton Heafner had a 72 and Bob Hamilton a 74.

This threesome turned in the best scores of any on Thursday. The gallery that Bobby Locke, who teed off at 9:36 with Bob Hamilton and Clayton Heafner, saw three players have good rounds, so they were well rewarded.

Galleries are fickle and sometimes cheer the darndest things, overlooking a pretty good shot or hole played by a member of the better after that.

The gallery around the first hole Thursday wanted to cheer Bobby Locke, who teed off at 9:36 with Bob Hamilton and Clayton Heafner, saw three players have good rounds, so they were well rewarded.

Chandler Harper, last year's PGA champion, withdrew from the Open early when he hit the edge of the lake on 16 Thursday and was wearing in after it with no success. He took off his shoes and socks, but the character pants he was wearing took a awful beating from the mud and water. His score was ruined on the hole anyway and he decided to call it quits after his first round.

Sam Snead didn't play the 18th hole well Thursday either. The tricky lake hole cost him a par for his first round when he missed up the hole that he had a good chance to hit by getting a bogey five. He hit a tremendous drive to the end of the lake and then threw up an easy iron shot that he usually places near the pin. It caught a trap from where he emerged within four feet of the pin. He missed the easy putt and he finished the first round over.

The first hole and the eighteenth were not damaged much by birds' shooters in the first round. Only one was made on each hole. Tom Blaskovich, pro from Irwin, made the only one on number one. Jim Gantz,

pro from Minosa Golf Club in Margantown, N. C. polished off his round with one on the eighteenth. All it took for him to birdie was the sinking of a putt nearly fifty feet long.

Saturday morning on the first hole, Bobby Locke and Cary Middlecott both hit their drives into sand traps.

"I hope that Locke stays in the trap," said a lady sitting in the large crowd around the first green. After several more loud cracks which all those around her could hear, she finally asked, "Why didn't he stay in Africa?"

Marty Furgal hasn't changed a bit since he played in the Motor City open at Meadowbrook a few years back and won. Lincoln automobile worth nearly five thousand bucks. He entertained the gallery with wise cracks then and he still does. He plays a good game along with it and one of these days is going to take a prominent place in the winner's row. If he does, he will undoubtedly be the darling of the galleries.

Ben Hogan may be all business on the golf course, but even when he played his first two rounds rather badly he didn't show any despair. He talked amicably with the fellow he was paired with and broke a small smile now and then. Finally, when he finished the Saturday afternoon round with a score breaking 67, he took off his hat as he walked off the 18th green and acknowledged the ovation of the large crowd by nodding his head in several directions.

The applause given Hogan on the final hole Saturday after-

noon was possibly the loudest ever given a golfer. The wild applause was partly due to the fact that he had clinched a first round with his master play on the eighteenth and partly because the large crowd was just a little bit more excited than usual. "I don't know if I can stand three more days of this or not," he was not playing well and neither was Ferrier.

John Barnum, pro from Grand Rapids, Blythfield Country Club was the biggest man in the tournament. John is a young pro and hits the ball a long way off the tee. He played pretty well, but one of two bad holes each round kept him in the backround. John is six-foot-six and weighs about 240 lbs.

We heard several instances of players in the Open throwing golf clubs after bad shots, but only saw one. That was by Gene Kansas, pro from Cleveland. He missed a second shot on number 16, the lake hole, and the club got for a sail of about 25 yards. Another few yards and it would have gone into the water.

Sammy Uzzetta, the champion of the United States amateurs, finished third among the amateurs in the open. He felt well enough about his fine performance to give his caddy a set of golf clubs besides his pay.

The galleries griped a bit Saturday because some of the two-ones were not furnished with a score board. Then, too, the ones that were in use were not easy to read. A few of the two-ones on Saturday had two score boards while several went without.

Spectators at the 17th tee on Thursday overheard Lloyd Mangrum and Jim Ferrier. Lloyd was waiting for the threesome ahead to play off the green and was idly flicking his club.

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Little Bob Toak overslept Friday morning, then got tied up in traffic coming from his downtown hotel. He was late on the tee and his regular playing partners had to leave the tee without him. Toak was penalized two strokes by the USGA and started with the first group that had an opening. He played badly Friday and did not qualify for Saturday's play. A bum break for a good little player who shows much promise for the future.

In one of Friday's big galleries we noticed one man carrying a stapler which he climbed to the top of in order to see each shot better. Several patented periscopes were in use each day.

Another amusing incident of Friday's play was the runaway horse. Lloyd Mangrum was behind over a four-foot putt on the 18th green,

when all of a sudden, out of nowhere, the thundering hoof beats of a big plow horse were heard coming over the ridge through the rough between the 17th green and the 18th tee.

The fans started whistling and yelling at him and in his terrified condition he galloped right on over the hill toward the clubhouse. We don't know where he came from or where he went, but it sure was a peculiar sight.

Mangrum walked away from his important shot and watched with the rest of us and as soon as the horse disappeared from view he stepped up and dropped the putt.

Lee Mackey, unattached pro from Birmingham, Ala. and formerly an assistant to Sam Byrd at Plum Hollow and also to Bob Waars at Indianwood here in the district, needed 84 strokes to complete his opening day round.

That was just 20 more than he took last year in the first round at Merion as he set a new one-round record for open play. Lee has been noted for his wide range of scores. He's either very good or bad.

After he used 43 strokes on the first nine Friday, he picked up and withdrew.

## High Twelve Plans '51 Golf Tournament

Edgewood country club will be the scene of the annual High Twelve golf tournament on June 27. Play will be open to members and friends. Reservations must be made before the end of the week with any member of the golfing committee or Harold Genser, chairman.

The tournament will be held during the afternoon with a dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the club house.

## Southfield Board To Discuss Bond For Builders

At the June 26 Southfield township board meeting, supervisors will discuss the possibility of making builders post a bond before starting construction in the township.

The ruling would be made to insure that the areas where construction has taken place are kept tidy. The matter was discussed at the last meeting but tabled until next week.

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