



Alabama Golf Association

THE FIRST 100 YEARS

by Ian Thompson

The Alabama Golf Association has had a storied past, which comes alive in *Alabama Golf Association: The First 100 Years*. From the early days of the association through almost one hundred State Amateurs, the reader is transported to yesteryear as championships are chronicled, characters introduced, and tales told from firsthand reports and many gleaned from newspaper stories of the day.

State Amateur champions with such memorable names as Files Crenshaw through Smylie Kaufman, and all the champions before, after, and in-between, are learned of here. The two Sam's, Perry and Farlow, stand tallest with four State Amateur wins each, with Glenn Crisman, Scudday Horner, M. C. Fitts, and Jackie Cummings each claiming three titles. And, in more recent times, who could forget Bobby Wyatt's magical 57 in the second round of the 2010 State Junior at the Country Club of Mobile? Without a doubt, one of the very best rounds . . . in the history of the game.

The AGA began in 1915, with the Women's Alabama Golf Association coming along fourteen years later. Eighty-two Women's State Amateurs have been contested with Kathy Hartwiger's ten wins seemingly unassailable, and, who knows, she might just add to her tally. Others dominated their eras including Bee McWane's six titles; Chris Spivey and Virginia Derby Grimes each with five; and June Mayson, Beth Barry, and Jane Reynolds all with four.

These two associations became one in 2010 and that merger has seen both go from strength to strength as one body conducting twelve championships, many USGA qualifiers, and a number of other tournaments.

What does the future hold? The next one hundred years are ready to be written . . .







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By Ian Thompson

Commissioned by the Alabama Golf Association

Pictured on the previous two pages are, top row (L–R), Glenn Crisman, M. C. Fitts, Men’s State Amateur Championship Sam D. Perry Trophy, Miss Chris Spivey, Women’s State Amateur Championship Trophy, Mrs. Kathy Hartwiger. Bottom row are Sam Perry, Sam Farlow, Mrs. Virginia Derby Grimes, Miss Bee McWane, Jackie Cummings, and Scudday Horner.

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Foreword

by Jean Miller

As you probably know, our modern game of golf began in Scotland around 1457. In the United States, the first mention of the game was recorded in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1739, with the oldest continuous golf course noted as Saint Andrews Golf Club in Yonkers, New York, coming on board in 1888. The golf courses were “MALE ONLY.” Our ladies were at home cleaning, cooking, and raising future male golfers.

Around the late 1800s, the ladies caught on to the joy of hitting the little white ball around on beautiful sunny days. By the early 1900s women were seen on the Country Club of Birmingham’s new nine-hole course; long now Highland Park Golf Course downtown. They hosted the Women’s Southern Golf Championship in 1915. Hats, gloves, and long skirts blended together with golf clubs and balls. A true social extravaganza.



Jean Miller

The Great War was over. The Roaring Twenties, the Jazz Age. A decade of prosperity; we had become a fun-loving nation. Golf had become a popular pastime with both men and women. Exciting, enjoyable, and social!

You will be fascinated reading about 5’ 3” “Miss Sadie” Roberts of Birmingham. Her leadership and passion was full-blown when she established the Women’s Alabama Golf Association (WAGA) in 1928. “Southern Hospitality” was her theme as well as “Golf by the Rules.” The first WAGA Amateur Championship was held at the Country Club of Birmingham.

Miss Sadie presided over women’s golf in Alabama until 1956. Some of you may remember “Babe” Zaharias and her visit to Birmingham encouraging women golfers. “It’s not enough to swing at the ball. You’ve got to loosen your girdle and really let the ball have it!” she said in 1948. You, dear reader, will learn of the many dedicated women who championed the game— not all great players, but women who had fallen in love with a game that developed character, integrity, and courtesy.

The next three decades brought expansion and excitement to the WAGA

with the Junior Championship starting in 1961 and the Women's Senior Championship in 1973. Montgomery Country Club hosted the Women's State Amateur Championship for the fiftieth anniversary in 1979. The field was limited to 144 players with a waiting list of sixteen ladies. WAGA championships had become popular events. A full field was the norm.

The WAGA newsletter began to be produced and was later named *WAGA Tales*. It was sent to all member clubs within the state. And, by popular demand, the WAGA began the Stroke Play Championship at Gulf Shores Golf Club in 1991.

It is exciting to see the number of young women who have received a college education from the WAGA Scholarship Foundation Trust (SFT), which was established in 1993 to help and encourage the average young golfer, who was an outstanding student but needed financial assistance, to attend college. Nineteen such scholarships have been awarded.

In the interest of promoting golf for women, several WAGA directors met with the United States Golf Association (USGA) and invited the states of Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee

to participate in a new inter-state match play championship beginning at Shoal Creek. WAGA was the host association and conducted the competition won by Florida. The new event was so successful it was named the Southeastern Women's Amateur Team Championship Association (SWATCA). WAGA was involved until 2011.

You will enjoy reading of the women who thrived on the spirit of competition, as well as the lifelong friendships that were made across many age groups. It takes patience, practice, and courage.

You will learn of the tremendous contributions from the McWane family. The Bee McWane Reid Endowment provided the funding for the WAGA's first salaried executive director.

WAGA joined with the LPGA-USGA Girls Golf Program nationally to support the vision and willingness to help young girls learn this great game of golf. Alabama was one of the key states to support this program and continues to do so at locations across the state.

The "Great Alliance" of the WAGA and the AGA went ahead in March 2010. The WAGA Board felt future accomplishments

in women's amateur golf in Alabama, as well as men's amateur golf, could only go forward as a partnership. Given the economic environment, it made sense that we work under the auspices of another strong and well-established USGA entity to achieve our mission of improving golf for the women of Alabama.

In closing, I concur with "Babe" when she said: "Winning has always meant much to me, but winning friends has meant the most." †

Historical note . . .

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, which has a global membership of roughly 2,400, "voted overwhelmingly" on Thursday, September 18, 2014, to allow female members for the first time in its 260-year history.

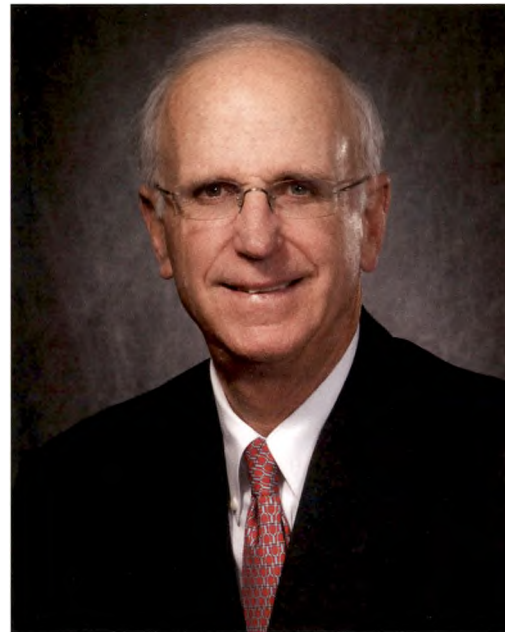
Author's note: Jean Miller is profiled on pages 149–153. She is a true delight and has meant SO MUCH to golf across this state. A heartfelt thank you, Jean, for all you have meant to so many golfers. You have touched many, many lives; more than you could ever know.

Foreword

by Richard Anthony

Some historians have called golf “the greatest game,” and I agree. This belief has been supported in part by interesting stories involving competitive amateur golf at the highest levels. *Alabama Golf Association: The First 100 Years* chronicles the past one hundred years of golf in Alabama, a time frame that begins with the establishment of the Alabama Golf Association in 1915. This century encompasses the performances and work of many fine amateur golfers, administrators, and leaders. Dedicated golfers will find this book to be both highly entertaining and informative. I am indeed delighted the AGA commissioned this book in order to chronicle our impressive history of golf in Alabama.

Serious golfers throughout the state have always governed the AGA. Many of these men and women have been active in tournament play and have an appreciation for amateur golf. These volunteer leaders have contributed time



Richard Anthony

and effort in promoting golf because of their love of the game. One such person was Joe H. King, who led the association from the late seventies through the mid-eighties. Despite the limited resources of the AGA, King’s creative leadership and passion kept the AGA moving forward.

Convinced the association needed a full-time executive director, King initiated the effort to recruit one. In 1985 Buford McCarty began his long and distinguished career leading the AGA into a period of further growth and positive influence.

This book features many distinguished golfers during different eras of our state’s past. Well-known players are Sam Perry in the pre-World War II years, Jackie Cummings beginning in the sixties, followed by Sam Farlow. Hubert Green and Mac McLendon also dominated the amateur scene in the sixties before moving to prominent professional careers. Golfers in Alabama are proud of Green’s two major championship victories and his recognition as a member of the World Golf Hall of Fame.

We are reminded of the United States Golf Association’s decision to conduct its first national championship in Alabama, the 1986 U.S. Amateur at Shoal Creek. Followed by the 2008 U.S. Junior

Championship at Shoal Creek and the 2013 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship at the Country Club of Birmingham, the state of Alabama has now hosted three of the largest amateur championships in the world. Also, strong support of competitive golf has come from many private and public clubs. A great example is the Future Masters, which has been a hugely popular junior championship

The profiles and stories within bring to life interesting personalities and their accomplishments in the game. Avid golfers will enjoy this opportunity to learn and reflect.

for the past sixty-five years at Dothan Country Club.

Alabama Golf Association: The First 100 Years depicts the rich heritage of

amateur golf in Alabama. The profiles and stories within bring to life interesting personalities and their accomplishments in the game. Avid golfers will enjoy this opportunity to learn and reflect. ↑

Author's note: Richard Anthony was president of the Alabama Golf Association in 1985–86. He won the 1976 State Amateur and many other prominent titles.



Barney Lanier, Richard Anthony, and Jim Gorrie were the co-chairmen of the 2013 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship held at the Country Club of Birmingham.

Acknowledgments

My life and career in this country would have not been possible without the tremendous support and love of my parents, Colin and Jane Thompson. Despite the thousands of miles between us, they have always been there for me and have supported me fully in all of my endeavors. It seems far too simple to say, but thank you Mum and Dad for believing in me. Twenty-six years ago they wished their oldest son goodbye at Gatwick International Airport in London as I began this journey, some of which is detailed in the About the Author section.

Other words of thanks, with my apologies to those I inadvertently leave out:

First and foremost to my beautiful and precious children, Brittany and Colin, who I love with all my heart.

To my brother, Neil, truly my best friend in all the world. And I'm now a very proud uncle to your son Remy. Well done to you and Christy!



The author, Ian Thompson, when he was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame.

To Lee Froedje, who has been like a second father to me.

A special word about the late Bill Crawford, who I proudly stood alongside for many years as we worked together on *GolfSouth Magazine*.

To the Alabama Golf Association's staff and directors. Executive Director Buford McCarty has been a great champion of this book and my work on it. Thanks, Buford, for being my "second pair of eyes" as you looked over parts of the manuscript while offering encouragement and corrections; both were needed at times.

Fred Stephens and Larry Kniseley aren't joined at the hip, but it sure seems that way sometimes. Two great Rules guys and even better people who are always there to help.

The Women's Alabama Golf Association joined with the AGA in 2010. Their story is integral to this book and I thank the one and only Jean Miller for her wealth of knowledge and kind words. The same goes for Carol Lell, who was a huge help in getting me photos of so many of the key ladies and took a keen interest in the project.

To all the people I have interviewed for the book . . . thank you. The Alabama Golf Association is special to all of you and



Colin Thompson, Charles Howell III, and Ian Thompson.

I have tried to convey your thoughts as accurately as possible.

To those we have lost, and that it was my joy to know, who have helped shape golf in this state including my dear friend Elbert Jemison, Joe King, Charley Boswell, Jim Spader, and Hall Thompson.

And for the many months spent poring over microforms at the Birmingham

There are so many people who have taken an interest, provided their knowledge and time, and have been a big part of this odyssey . . . thank you one and all.

Public Library, this task was made a good bit more enjoyable by the writings of Zipp Newman, Alf Van Hoose, Pettersen Marzoni, Grantland Rice II, Bob Phillips, Jim Martin, Frank McGowan, Benny Marshall, Jimmy Bryan, Al Burleson, and Gareth Clary among others as I looked over the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, the *Birmingham Post-Herald*, the *Birmingham News*, *Huntsville Times*, *Mobile Press-Register*, and a number of other statewide newspapers as they took me back in time and painted many vivid pictures of golf from yesteryear.

There are so many more people who have taken an interest, provided their knowledge and time, and have been a big part of this odyssey . . . thank you one and all.

Let me say in closing, I am proud to have been asked to write this book. It truly took on a life of its own. I hope you enjoy it.

Ian Thompson
December 2014





MEN'S STATE AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

The Early Days of the Alabama Golf Association and the Start of the State Amateur (1915–19)

In the beginning . . .

During my initial research and according to Alabama Golf Association documentation, I had determined the AGA began life on September 8, 1915, with their initial meeting at what was then called the Beauvoir Country Club (it would become Montgomery Country Club) in Montgomery. However, this proved to be only partially true as a newspaper account in the *Montgomery Advertiser* dated September 5, 1915, which was about the first State Amateur Championship to be played in Montgomery later that week, talked of the Alabama Golf Association being organized in July in Birmingham.

Hence my research led me to the archives of the *Birmingham News*, where I unearthed a story in the paper dated July 18,



The legendary Bobby Jones would have a lot of success in the state, including winning the Roebuck Springs Automobile and Golf Club invitation tournament in 1915.

1915, that the AGA was indeed organized on July 22, 1915, at the wonderfully named Roebuck Springs Automobile and Golf Club. This was in conjunction with Roebuck's second annual invitation tournament and Thursday, July 22 marked the first round of the championship. That very evening the AGA came to life under the eye of John M. "Jock" Inglis, head of the Greens Committee at Montgomery Country Club.

Fast forward to the evening of September 5, after the first round of the first Alabama Championship Tournament (the precursor of the State Amateur), and George Stuart of Montgomery was installed president of the Alabama Golf Association and Inglis was named secretary and treasurer.

The Alabama Golf Association was on its way.

State Golf Title Goes to Jack Allison

A very interesting footnote is that thirteen-year-old Bobby Jones of Atlanta won that Roebuck Springs invitation tournament. Yes, the one and same Bobby Jones who would win what would be called the Grand Slam of Golf in 1930 and go on to form Augusta National and the Masters Tournament. In 1916 and 1920, Jones would also win the Country Club of Birmingham National Invitational, which began in 1913.

1915

The first State Amateur champion was Jack Allison of Birmingham, who was a cousin of the late twenty-fifth president of the United States, William McKinley, who had been assassinated in 1901. Allison worked for his father, Major Charles J. Allison, clerk of the United States Court. He defeated Judge Norborne R. Clarke of Mobile 13 and 12 in the thirty-six-hole match play final at Montgomery Country Club. He held a commanding nine-up lead after eighteen holes and subsequently ran out an easy winner.

The September 12 issue of the *Birmingham News* described Allison as “. . . a clean-cut chap of athletic build and extremely fond of sports.”

The *Birmingham News* recounted friends hearing of Allison’s play: “When the Birmingham friends of Jack Allison received the news that he had obtained the lead on Judge Clarke . . . they became



Jack Allison

wildly interested and The News telephones were kept busy answering inquiries as to the result. When the final result came in and the glad news was handed out it was met with cheers.

“. . . a clean-cut chap of athletic build and extremely fond of sports.”

—Description of Jack Allison by the *Birmingham News* September 12, 1915

“Say, how’d Jack come out?’ was one inquiry Saturday night. The reply that he had landed the bacon brought a volley of cheers which told the large group at the other end of the line.”

Allison was also the medalist with an 81, which according to Bob Phillips, long-time *Birmingham Post-Herald* Sports editor and columnist as well as the secretary of the AGA for many, many years, was “a rather neat score in that day, and he went on to defy the traditional medalist jinx by breezing to a 13-12 victory . . .”

First Lieutenant Jack Stewart Allison, whose life would be cut short just three years later when he was killed in action in France during World War I, was a fine golfer of the day having won the Birmingham City Championship earlier that year at the Country Club of Birmingham.

1916

The State Amateur journeyed to Birmingham for the first time in 1916. It



Dr. A. B. Harris

has been played in the state's largest city twenty-six times and counting; many more than any other city.

Developed in the early 1900s by entrepreneur Robert Jemison Jr. along with the East Lake Land Company, in association with the Roebuck Automobile and Golf Club, Roebuck Springs was the first large residential suburb in Birmingham whose planning and development was tied to the automobile, as well as the first community associated with a country club/golf course development. Roebuck Springs Automobile and Golf Club was the venue before the championship would take a two-year break in 1917–18 due to World War I.

Dr. A. B. "Buck" Harris came out on top, but not until after some mighty battles. It would be the first of his two titles, as he would also win in 1921, also at Roebuck. Thus he became the first of eighteen players to win the State Amateur at least twice and one of only four people to win it at the same venue twice (the other three were Files Crenshaw at Montgomery Country Club and Glenn Crisman and Scudday Horner at the Country Club of Mobile).

He (Harris) became the first of eighteen players to win the State Amateur at least twice.

The format in the early years called for an eighteen-stroke play qualifying round, followed by match play to determine the champion, with the final a thirty-six-hole affair. Qualifying would expand to thirty-six holes of stroke play at a later date, with the champion determined at match play until the format changed to seventy-two holes of stroke play in 1955. It remains this format today, with the State Match Play Championship originating in 2001, which is a separate championship.

E. M. Tutwiler Jr. led qualifying with a 78 and the course record of 76 was in range until a closing six scuppered his chances at the new low. Harris came in with an 81 to sit third behind Tutwiler and Robley C. "Bob" Munger, who returned an 80.

After Harris toppled Munger and Tutwiler did the same to Robert Baugh, it left just Harris and Tutwiler standing.

Harris went on to take the final in decisive fashion by a score of 4 and 3 before a large crowd. A newspaper report of the day recounted Harris's straight driving and the "stymie" rule impacting the match on No. 12 in the afternoon round.

1919

Bob Gregory would triumph over the Country Club of Birmingham in the



Bob Gregory

Gregory proved to be the better “mud horse.”

—*Birmingham Age-Herald*

first of nine visits of the State Amateur to this storied club. The playing of the one-hundredth State Amateur in 2016 will be here, the place it has visited the third most over its almost one hundred years. (It will also be played close by in 2015 at Mountain Brook Club.) The Country Club of Mobile has hosted the State Amateur a record fourteen times, with Montgomery Country Club just one behind at thirteen.

Nineteen nineteen would mark the only playing of the State Amateur at the second location of the Birmingham Country Club in the Lakeview location near downtown, which is now home to Highland Park's Charley Boswell Golf Course. In 1927 the club would move for a third and final time to its current location, which has been modified many times from the original Donald Ross, in Shades Valley. And the original location? That was in North Birmingham from 1898 to 1903,

but did not initially feature a golf course; that would come a year later in 1899.

“Buck” Harris, playing his home course, shot 77 to take medalist honors but did not advance in match play. Two fellow members of the host club, Robert “Bob” Gregory and Bob Brooke, contested the final in driving rain.

Brooke took a one-up lead through the morning eighteen, but Gregory proved to be the better “mud horse” according to the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and came out on top one up in the end. A large crowd braved the miserable conditions and saw that “there was no question that Gregory had negotiated the soggy course like a true champion.” †

The 1920s

1920

Montgomery's Files Crenshaw had turned sixteen just three months before capturing the championship at Montgomery Country Club. He is still the youngest winner of the State Amateur, with Benson Raymond "Mac" McLendon Jr. also sixteen when he won his first State Amateur in 1962. Mac would turn seventeen a couple of weeks later. Charles Mark "Bubba" Major (1969) was seventeen when he won, while Glenn Crisman (1923), Jimmy Hillhouse (1924), Marion "Monnie" Vickers (1953), Marvin C. Fitts (1951), and Frank "Buddy" Gardner Jr. (1974) were all eighteen when they won in the years noted.

Crenshaw was a storied player at Montgomery Country Club, where he was a lifelong member. Thus it was fitting he would claim both of his State Amateur titles at the club, with the second arriving fourteen years later. He would dominate proceedings at one time in the club's invitational, winning it four years in a



Files Crenshaw (*Birmingham News*)

row from 1929 to 1932, and the medalist trophy is named in his honor to this day.

His brother, Jack, was also a noted player, but not to Files's level. They did, however, both play on the early golf teams at the University of Alabama, along with the likes of Glenn Crisman, Robert Baugh, Hugh Morrow, Jack Shipp, Johnny Thames, and Frank Blackford.

Described in a newspaper account as "Frank Sprogell's protégé," Files defeated W. Temple Seibels, also of Montgomery, by 7 and 5. (Sprogell was a teaching professional born in Philadelphia but spent many, many years in Alabama.) Seibels led one up through the morning eighteen, but Crenshaw soon took the lead early in the afternoon eighteen. He was never headed again and ran out a comfortable winner. Former and future champion and the retiring president of the AGA, Dr. A. B. Harris praised the club and Sprogell for his hospitality and management of the tournament.

1921

Dr. A. B. "Buck" Harris, as noted earlier, would claim his second title at Roebuck. A tall man at 6' 4" he would beat a fellow doctor, Dr. L. G. "Leslie" Brownlee, also of Birmingham, 5 and 3 in the final. As the wonderfully named Pettersen Marzoni would write in the *Birmingham News*, Harris "captured it on the very same green [the fifteenth] he did so five years ago."

Marzoni would cover golf for the paper for years and his colorful accounts



Dr. A. B. Harris

always added to the occasion. "From the end of the first nine holes it seemed that Brownlee was facing a hopeless task. He was then five down to the new champion and he was never able to catch up. The champion match followed by a representative gallery of golfers, brought to a close one of the most successful state tournaments ever held."

Marzoni credited C. T. Fairbairn, president of the Alabama Golf Association. "Mr. Fairbairn was busy for weeks with the preliminary work of the tournament and for the last three days he has been helping Bob Andrews, Roebuck pro, in getting the matches away. The gallery Saturday afternoon . . . saw golf that told of the strain of the 108 holes that had gone before. Where Friday they were deadly, Saturday they showed the effect of nerves keyed to top pitch."

The golf in the final was described as brilliant and then erratic at times, but "there was real championship talent contesting for the senior golfing honors of the state."

1922

Henry Seibels, a member at Roebuck, defeated John W. Tullis by 7 and 5 at



Henry Seibels

Montgomery Country Club, the home club of Tullis. At the conclusion of the morning eighteen, Seibels had a healthy five-up advantage, but Tullis had reduced it to three up after five holes of the afternoon round. He would get no closer and Seibels would return to the Magic City as champion.

Defending champion A. B. Harris toppled 1920 champion Files Crenshaw in a tough match, but then lost in the semifinals to Seibels. Both were described

as “seasoned tournament players in their forties.” The match did not disappoint as it was even through eighteen holes before Seibels rolled in a lengthy putt on the first extra hole to advance.

Seibels’s win was extra special for him as he had grown up in Montgomery. A truly multi-sport athlete, Seibels was inducted posthumously into the College Football Hall of Fame (pioneer division) in 1973. He had, in 1898, captained the unbeaten Sewanee football team, as they would win five games in six days without conceding a single point!

Seibel founded a successful insurance business in Birmingham and would go to be a member at Roebuck, the Country Club of Birmingham, and Mountain Brook Club.

1923

Glenn Crisman of Selma would now take over the State Amateur, winning three championships in four years. The oldest of five children of William Otey Crisman Sr. and his wife Hettie, he defeated former champion Bob Gregory at the Country Club of Mobile by 5 and 4. Crisman was just eighteen and soon headed to his freshman year on the golf

team at the University of Alabama. He was aptly described as a “sensational high school student” and was certainly a dominant force in amateur golf for many years to come.

The Crisman family is as storied as there is in Alabama golf. This story is well told, but the first initial of four of the five Crisman siblings spells the word GOLF—as in Glenn, Otey Jr., Lewie, and Frances. Brother Jimmie makes up the quintet. Glenn, Otey Jr., and Lewie were



Glenn Crisman

“... he plays a cool, deliberate game and is deadly with his approach game.”

—Description of Glenn Crisman
by the *Associated Press* July 1934

all champion golfers, with their father also a keen player. Jimmie played sparingly, while Frances never took up the game.

Glenn, who would also win the prestigious Southern Amateur in 1925, was described as follows in an *Associated Press* article in July 1934: “. . . continues to be a threat in every tournament he enters. Slight of stature—like all the Crismans—he plays a cool, deliberate game and is deadly with his approach game.”

The same article described the other two golfing brothers thusly: “Otey plays a bold, aggressive game, takes the breaks as they come and is dangerous under fire. Louis [Lewie] is taller than Glenn and Otey. He is the stylist of the three brothers and possesses a fine match play temperament.”



Jimmy Hillhouse

1924

Jimmy Hillhouse of Birmingham defeated fellow Birmingham native Jenks Gillem at Roebuck. Regrettably this is all that is known of this championship, as all information seems to have been lost in the passing of time. I searched numerous archives to no avail for May–September of 1924. The final margin of victory is unknown.

Hillhouse was a noted golfer of the day, and his overall record appears to show this

State Amateur as his crowning achievement. Gillem may well have been a storied football player and coach as well as a golfer. If so, his full name was Jennings F. “Sam” “Jenks” Gillem. His timeline fits and he played football for Sewanee, the University of the South. He coached at Howard College (now Samford University), Birmingham-Southern College, and Sewanee.

1925

Glenn Crisman won by 10 and 9 over H. M. Woodward of Birmingham. Crisman obviously enjoyed Mobile, as that was the site of his second win, too.

Crisman’s domination was not limited to the State Amateur. He also won the Montgomery Invitational, believed to be the longest-running state golf tournament dating back to 1910, in 1923, 1924, 1926, and 1928. He would have been odds-on favorite in 1925, but it was not played, as this was the year the clubhouse burned down.

(The second-longest running golf event in the state is the Country Club of Birmingham National Invitational, which began in 1913 and was won by none other than Bobby Jones in 1916 and 1920.)



Glenn Crisman

1926

Glenn Crisman became the first player to successfully defend the championship when he defeated Birmingham's Charles Cullom 7 and 5. This time the championship was hosted by Montgomery Country Club.

To date, there have been eleven players to win the championship in back-to-back years: Sam Perry (1941–42); Scudday Horner (1944–45); Gordon Smith III (1948–49); Elbert Jemison Jr. (1958–59); M. C. Fitts (1963–64); Hubert Green (1967–68); Buddy Gardner (1974–75); Sam Farlow (1986–88), who is the only player to win three in a row; Payton Osborn (1999–2000); and Hunter Hamrick (2009–10).

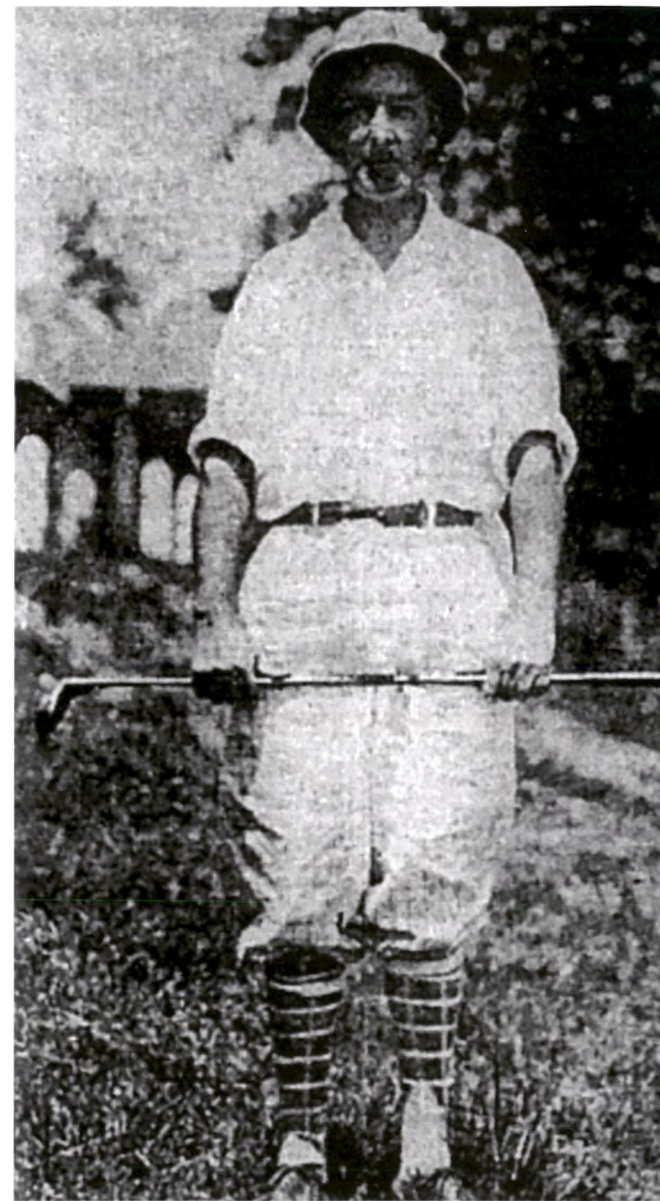
Marzoni hailed Crisman's "superiority as a match player" and he continued, ". . . His imperturbability and absolute sangfroid on fairway and green would be worthy of Walter Hagen. It is doubtful that there is a match player in the South, Bobby Jones not excepted, who can show the utter poise which Crisman's play at all times shows. . . . Particularly at the Montgomery Country Club, where he has won so many matches, it has almost become a custom that would be considered a breach of etiquette if he failed to do so."



Glenn Crisman

Quite the prose, especially as relates to Crisman and Jones, who just four years later would capture the Grand Slam.

This was to be Glenn Crisman's final State Amateur title, but not that of the Crisman family. Younger brother Lewie, some thirteen years his junior, would do so at their home course, Selma Country Club, in 1938.



Bob Munger

1927

Robley C. “Bob” Munger would defeat fellow Birmingham resident Bill Moughon 4 and 3 at the new (Birmingham) Country Club in the year it opened for play. It was simply referred to at that time as the Country Club.

Marzoni noted Munger had set his sights on winning the state title from the very first one in 1915 and that “he achieved that purpose Saturday afternoon when wood and iron and putter answered his touch as though they were bewitched.” Obviously taken by magical prose on this occasion, Marzoni said,

For a time in the morning round, when Moughon’s putter, a truly magic club, was working all the spells and charms, it seemed that Munger’s long delayed wearing of the crown would

“Munger was the master. Not only on the green, but there was magic in his chip shots.”

—Pettersen Marzoni

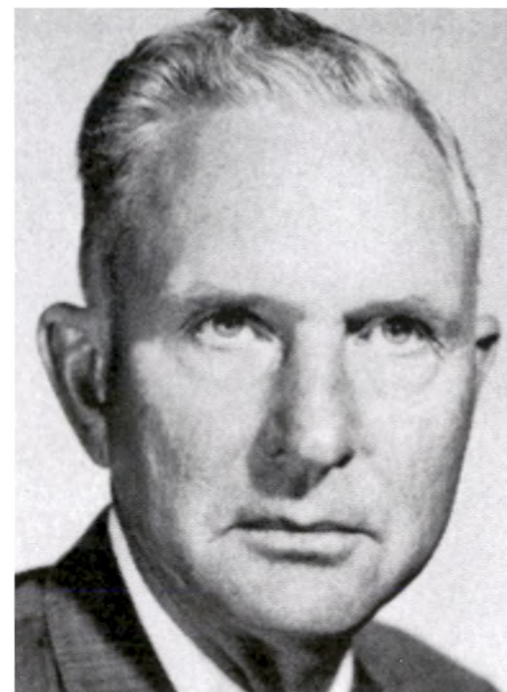
have to be put off another year. But the afternoon brought another story. The long putts, the winning putts, the thrilling putts that dropped at Moughon’s touch switched sides. Munger was the master. Not only on the green, but there was magic in his chip shots.

Even Charlie Hall [long-time head professional at Birmingham Country Club], the world’s longest driver, marveled at the magnificence of the wonder shots that were singing down the fairway.

And so it was that Munger prevailed before a large, appreciative crowd. He was forty-five when he won the championship and is believed to be the oldest State Amateur champion at the time of their win.

1928

Harry Pritchett would become the first state champion from Tuscaloosa and his name remained synonymous in his hometown long after his death. The University Golf Course was built in 1959 and was subsequently named after Pritchett in 1980, who had played for the



Harry Pritchett

Crimson Tide. The course is now gone as it closed in 2003, but Pritchett’s name remains. Also of interest, the State Four Ball Championship Trophy is named after Pritchett. He would win the state title again in 1943 and the fifteen-year interval between wins remains a record margin, with Files Crenshaw one year less (1920 and 1934).

At the time of his first win, Pritchett was a star on the Alabama golf team and

he defeated Mobile's Gordon Smith Jr. 2 and 1 in the final over Smith's home course. The match looked destined to be heading to the thirty-sixth hole, before fate intervened.

Carrying a two-up lead, Pritchett went over the back of the seventeenth green in three, while Smith was on in three and appeared to have a straightforward two-putt for his five. Pritchett proceeded to chip his ball between Smith's ball and the hole and thus Smith was "stymied" and could do no better than six. The hole would be halved in sixes and the title was Pritchett's, who was playing in his first "major tourney" according to Marzoni, who went on to say that Pritchett was "doing some remarkable golf shooting, particularly in view of the fact that this is his first big tournament in which he has ever participated."

The State Four Ball Championship Trophy is named after Harry Pritchett.

The "stymie" rule explained, according to Wikipedia . . .

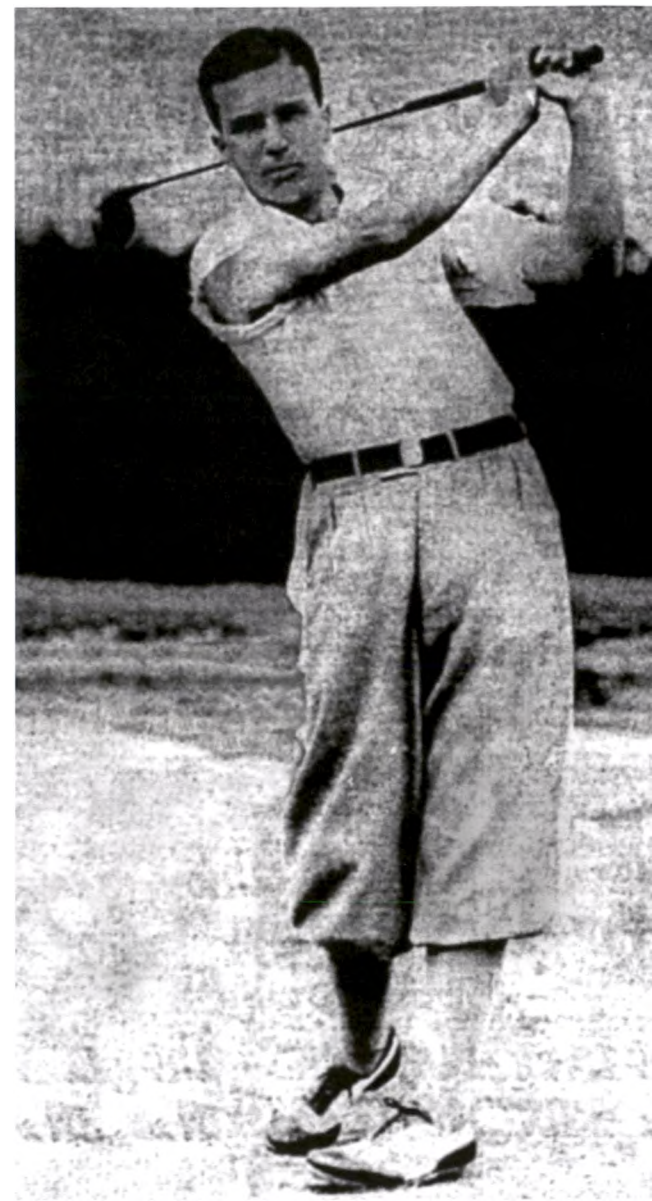
In singles match play, when one player's ball blocked the path of another player's ball on the green, but were not within 6" of each other, the obstructing player's ball was not lifted.

Instead the player who was further away from the hole had to attempt to slice or draw his putt around the obstacle ball. Sometimes a player would even attempt to chip his ball over the opponent's ball into the cup.

If the player failed, even hitting their opponent's ball, his next shot would have to be played from where his ball now lay. If contact happened, the player's opponent, when it was his turn to play, had the choice to take his putt from his ball's original position or its new lie.

Likewise if the player's ball knocked the obstructing ball into the cup, his opponent was considered to have holed out.

Between 1920 and 1941 the USGA modified the stymie rule multiple times. "The stymie was finally removed from the



Sam Perry

He (Perry) would win three more State Amateurs, covering three decades, as well as three Southern Amateurs, also over three decades.

Rules effective in 1952, when the USGA and R&A established a joint set of Rules.”

1929

The last year of the decade would usher in a state champion, who was already widely regarded as the top player of his day. Birmingham's Sam Perry was the reigning Southern Amateur champion when he arrived at Roebuck for the State Amateur. He would leave with the first of his record four trophies; a record he shares to this day with another Sam: Sam Farlow.

The win would mean Perry held the top three area titles of the day, as he had also captured the Jefferson County crown earlier that summer. However, his eventual 4 and 3 victory over J. B. Barfield of Talladega and Tuscaloosa was far from certain as he found himself four down after the morning round. No matter, Perry

reeled off seven straight winning holes to start the afternoon eighteen playing those holes in two under par to turn the championship match on its head.

Both played golf for the University of Alabama golf team at the time and the teammates put on quite the match. However, Marzoni stated that after Perry's strong afternoon start, coupled with Barfield losing his putting touch, it “was a procession.”

Perry would triumph and add another page to his growing golfing lore. He would win three more State Amateurs, covering three decades, as well as three Southern Amateurs, also over three decades, with two of those prestigious titles coming over his home course of the Country Club of Birmingham.

World War II intervened. Perry became a captain in the U.S. Army, but his life would be cut short in late 1944

when his plane was lost over the Pacific Ocean as he headed from New Guinea to Australia.

In his book, *Playback: From Hickory Nuts to Hall of Fame*, Elbert Jemison, himself a legend in the amateur game and two-time State Amateur champion, said: “The golf world, especially in Birmingham, had lost one of its finest. After the war, William McWane, a Birmingham industrialist, led a campaign to create the Sam Perry Memorial Trophy as a permanent trophy of the Alabama Golf Association [it remains in place as the State Amateur Championship trophy to this day]. And belatedly, Sam Perry was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1986.”

He is also in the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame. †

FELLOW GOLF ASSOCIATIONS

As noted, the Alabama Golf Association was founded in 1915 and will celebrate its centennial in 2015. Golf in the United States would begin over twenty years before that, with the United States Golf Association founded in 1894. According to the USGA,

The word “golf” is not an acronym for anything. Rather, it derives linguistically from the Dutch word “kolf” or “kolve,” meaning quite simply “club.” In the Scottish dialect of the late 14th or early 15th century, the Dutch term became “goff” or “gouff,” and only later in the 16th century “golf.”

The linguistic connections between the Dutch and Scottish terms are but one reflection of what was a very active trade industry between the Dutch ports and the ports on the east coast of Scotland from the 14th through 17th centuries. Some scholars suggest that the Dutch game of “kolf,” played with a stick and ball on frozen canals in the wintertime, was brought by the Dutch sailors to the east coast of Scotland, where it was transferred on to the public linkslands and eventually became the game we know today.

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION

The foundation of the United States Golf Association on December 22, 1894, marked the formal organization of American golf, establishing a centralized body to write the rules, conduct national championships, and establish a

national system of handicapping. The USGA also plays a prominent role as the game’s historian

in the United States, collecting, displaying, and preserving artifacts and memorabilia at its museum and archives in Far Hills, New Jersey. According to USGA archives,

In September 1894, William G. Lawrence wins a “national amateur championship” at Newport (R.I.) Golf Club. In October, Laurence B. Stoddard wins a “national amateur championship” at St. Andrew’s Golf Club.

C.B. Macdonald, runner-up in both events, calls for the formation of a governing body to run a universally recognized national championship.

The Amateur Golf Association of the United States - soon to be called the United States Golf Association - is formed on Dec. 22. Charter members are Newport Golf Club, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, The Country Club (Brookline, Mass.), St. Andrew’s Golf Club (Yonkers, N.Y.), and Chicago Golf Club.



SOUTHERN GOLF ASSOCIATION

The Southern Golf Association would follow the USGA’s lead and come online in March 1902. It was “born” in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with representatives from golf





clubs in Tennessee (Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville), Georgia (Atlanta, Darien, Rome, Macon, and Savannah), Alabama (Anniston, Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa), North Carolina (Asheville), and Louisiana (New Orleans) at that first meeting.

The SGA has always had close ties to Birmingham and has been based in the Magic City for many years. Grantland Rice II, a well-known golf writer from Birmingham, ran the association on a part-time basis from 1976 until 1980 and was secretary treasurer for some time. Joe King, originally from Anniston but by then a long-time Birmingham resident, took it on in 1980, also on a part-time basis, until Buford McCarty took over in 1994 combining dual roles as executive director of the SGA as well as being executive director of the AGA since 1985.

The first Southern Amateur was played in June 1902, three months after the start of the SGA. Originally designated as an association for courses "south of the Mason and Dixon line," players from across the globe could now qualify for and play in SGA championships.

WOMEN'S ALABAMA GOLF ASSOCIATION

Mrs. David (Sadie) Roberts Jr. was the driving force behind the formation of the Women's Alabama Golf Association. She started the WAGA in 1929 in conjunction with the first Women's State Amateur, played over the East Course at Shades Valley Country Club, also known as

the Country Club of Birmingham. Roberts would serve as president of the WAGA until 1956.

The initial WAGA meeting was held at 3:00 pm on Tuesday, October 22, 1929, after completion of the first round of the Women's State Invitation Golf Tournament, precursor of the Women's State Amateur, which featured about forty players. Mrs. H. S. "Henry" Geismer, the former city champion, won it four days later by a score of 5 and 3 over Mrs. Carl Hess.

In 2007 it was announced an annual endowment made possible by Bee McWane would enable the WAGA to hire an executive director for the first time in its history. Erica Wein from Atlanta, Georgia, assumed that role beginning in 2008 and she worked out of the AGA's headquarters in Vestavia.

"About 10 years ago Jean Miller voiced the idea at a local golf conference that we needed our own paid employee to run the WAGA if we were going to continue to grow and improve," WAGA President Carol Lell said in 2007. "However, we never had the funds to do anything about it. That changed in 2006 when Jean took a call from Phillip McWane saying his aunt wanted to make a sizable donation to women's golf in Alabama and what could we best use the money for?"

It was agreed by the board of the WAGA that they should press forward with their plan for an executive director and McWane agreed to endow this position for ten years, with an option to endow it



again for a further ten years. It then followed that the WAGA merged with the AGA in 2010, a merger that continues strongly to this day.

AGA-WAGA MERGER

The Women's Alabama Golf Association dissolved in March 2010 with all its assets coming under the umbrella of the Alabama Golf Association. This signaled the end of the WAGA in name only as their eighty-year history will be preserved by the AGA and their five state championships will now be AGA state championships. Carol Lell, president of the WAGA, said in a letter to all WAGA members:

On behalf of the WAGA Board of Directors, I enthusiastically announce, with great optimism, an alliance between the WAGA and the AGA. While recognizing that the WAGA has prospered in the past as an independent entity, the board believes that future accomplishments in Alabama will be that much stronger as a combined entity.

I think we can all agree that the current economic environment demands cost containment and the efficient sharing of resources. Our ability to work under the auspices of another strong and well established United States Golf Association (USGA) entity is essential to achieving our mission of improving golf for the women of Alabama.

In order to combine with the AGA in the most efficient manner possible, the WAGA Board of Directors unanimously approved that the WAGA shall be

dissolved and that its assets shall be distributed to, and administered by, the AGA.

All Alabama Women's Championships, as well as the Scholarship Trust Fund, will continue to be administered in a manner similar to which you are accustomed, but now under the auspices of the Alabama Golf Association.

Lell said she was delighted to secure the long-term future of the WAGA, even though it will no longer be known as the WAGA. "We are now all the AGA."

"We are delighted to welcome the WAGA into the AGA," David Pearce, president of the AGA, said. "When Carol approached [AGA Executive Director] Buford [McCarty] about such a possibility over a year ago she indicated she liked the way the AGA ran championships, plus many other reasons for us to talk very closely about such a joining together."

He pointed out that Lell had been asked to serve on the eight-person AGA Executive Committee, while Lell, Kathy Hartwiger, Sandy Santa Rosa, Lucie King, and Chris Marr have all become AGA board members. McCarty said the joining together had been a long time coming. "The first time the subject was broached was over 20 years ago at a meeting I had with Jean Miller and Patty Faulkner, but neither organization was in a position at that time to begin the process." He added that he and Derrel Curry met with Lell in recent years to talk more about it. "Jean Miller gave me the incentive to approach the AGA and discuss becoming one association," Lell seconded.



BIRMINGHAM GOLF ASSOCIATION



Birmingham Golf Association

serve the junior golfers of the Birmingham metropolitan area. This area includes Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Bibb, Blount, Walker, and Tuscaloosa Counties.

Many years ago, Vestavia Country Club conducted a July 4 Annual Invitational Tournament. During the weekend, the club hosted a past champions dinner. It was a highlight of the tournament for all former champions and was always a memorable occasion.

At the champions dinner in 1962, a discussion evolved that there should be a Birmingham Golf Association with the following objectives: to provide clubs group purchasing for sand, seed, fertilizers, etc. to obtain lower costs per club; to serve as a clearing house for clubs to avoid conflicts of dates in scheduling events; to conduct an annual championship and junior championship; to stage exhibitions for the enjoyment

The Birmingham Golf Association was formed in 1965 to provide contributions to the game of golf and to

of members in member clubs; and to raise funds for worthy causes, especially junior golf.

In attendance at that 1962 dinner (and the year they won the trophy): Press Thornton (1953, 1954), Buddy DeBardleben (1955), Walter Wood (1956), Elbert Jemison Jr. (1957), John Gross (1958, 1962), Jack Vardaman (1959), and Jim Head (1961). Also in attendance were L. J. Griffis, club general manager; Russ Dimick, club tournament chairman; and Jack Murphy, head golf professional.

It was agreed there should indeed be a Birmingham Golf Association. Elbert Jemison Jr. was asked to serve as the first president and to formulate a board of directors consisting of two members from each of the private clubs in the area. It was suggested Joe King and Bob Ramsay represent the Country Club of Birmingham; Jerry Seigel, Pine Tree Country Club; Jim Norton and Russ Dimick, Vestavia Country Club; and Johnny Thames, Mountain Brook Club.

The following year the board of directors decided to create a Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame. The first induction class was in 1965, with the names of the inductees featured on a plaque at the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

The 1930s

1930

Walter L. Cope would win the first of his two state titles in three years as the new decade dawned. A prolific six-time winner in Puerto Rico, the now-Mobile native had his sights on his first Alabama state title at Montgomery Country Club,



W. L. Cope

which he would subsequently win after battling defending champion Sam Perry the whole way to a win on the thirty-eighth hole, the second extra hole.

Marzoni most prophetically wrote:

It was a victory that the new champion can recall through the years to come as a magnificent battle with a title fully earned. And Perry can look back to a game uphill fight from the second hole of the 36-hole match, because it was there he went one down and it was there he lost his title 36 holes later after he had been three down and four to go through the thirty-second hole.

Three victories and a half gave him a new life, and they went to the thirty-seventh hole, where a long putt on the back of the cup for a birdie three and the match hopped out and his four was only good enough for a halve.

Then came the thirty-eighth hole, a par three of 160 yards, which had spelled trouble for Perry throughout.

In this match he had lost twice to Cope by taking fours. His shot to the pin seemed destined to leave him an easy two, but the fast green let it roll well past and the match was over when Cope laid a pitch dead to the pin, missing an ace by mere inches.

Marzoni noted it was a match defined by putting with Cope struggling over the opening eighteen, but “in the afternoon Cope’s putting seemed that of an entirely different golfer.” Cope made a “fine impression in his first state tournament with his ability as a shotmaker.”

1931

Three years after losing to Harry Pritchett in the final of the State Amateur over his home course of Mobile Country Club, Gordon Smith Jr. returned the favor against the same opponent over the same course. Smith Jr. dispatched Pritchett by a score of 9 and 7. It was noted in a



Gordon Smith Jr.

newspaper account of the match that Smith was a remarkable four under par at the time of his win.

Smith took a three-up lead after the morning eighteen. "Smith had been hitting them from the tee at a terrific pace during the entire morning round, his drives averaging about 275 yards while his chip shots were invincible. Pritchett was unable to match drives with the local golfer, but nevertheless was socking them straight and hard down the middle. He seemed to have

a little trouble with his putts and could not get them to drop regularly."

When his son, Gordon Smith III, would win the state title in 1947 (and 1948), they would become the first father-son duo to each win the State Amateur. Remarkably, Smith Jr.'s daughter Carolyn would win the Women's State Amateur, her triumph coming in 1965. The Smiths remain the only father and son to each claim the State Amateur, but a number of siblings have won state titles (see page 130).

1932

The State Amateur would journey out of state for the first of three visits in the ensuing sixteen years to Pensacola Country Club in northwest Florida. The original bylaws of the Alabama Golf Association included western Florida, but were amended in 1955 to include only the state of Alabama. It was also at this time the championship became seventy-two holes at stroke play.

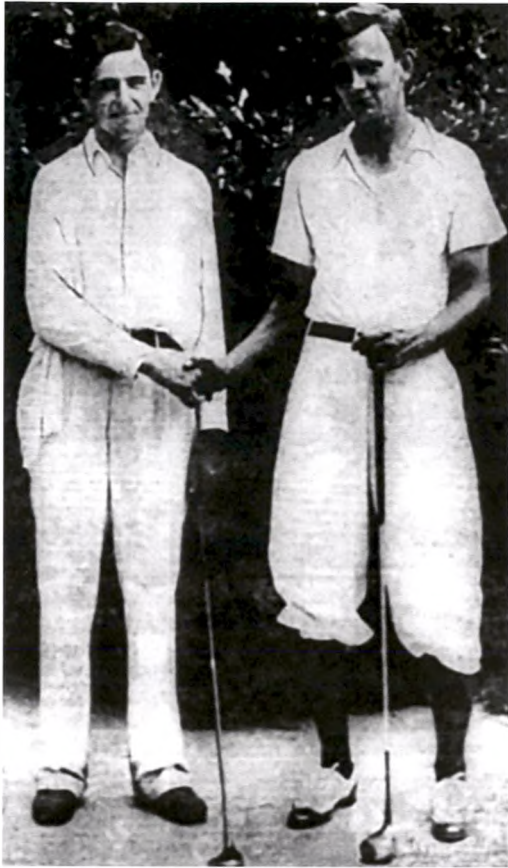
Walter L. Cope took home the title over three-time winner Glenn Crisman by a score of 5 and 4. A newspaper account described events thusly: "Walter Cope, stocky little Mobile golfer, furnished a

sweltering but eager gallery with thrills here Saturday . . . Superior putting of the Mobile golfer . . . was the factor that defeated the former Southern collegiate champion, who once appeared completely unnerved by his opponent's accuracy with the greens club. This was on the thirty-second when Cope sank a 25-foot putt for a birdie, and Crisman, two feet from the pin, missed and thereby increased the Mobilian's lead to four holes and dormied the match."

Time and again, as I researched deep into the night, I was entertained by Marzoni's way with words. Another example: "The Mobilian surveyed the situation and put his putter to the pellet. It veered slightly on a rise in the green to miss the Selman's ball and completed the seven-foot journey into the cup." Just wonderful as he paints a vivid picture for those enjoying his account.

1933

Johnny Thames vanquished fellow Birmingham native Frank Blackford over the Birmingham Country Club 5 and 4. Thames had played in a number of state championships, but this would be his week.



Johnny Thames (left) with Frank Blackford

Our old friend Marzoni wrote: “Thames, 28, had reached the championship point in his career . . . and as is frequently the case, the wide margin of victory does not show the amount of competition that entered into the affair and it seemed a titanic struggle was in the making.”

Thames and Blackford, age twenty-six, were described as a “pair of youthful veterans.” Well versed with each other, there were roommates at the University of Alabama while playing for their golf team. Host professional Charlie Hall looked on as they were both described as “championship caliber players, without previous chance to demonstrate.” The narrative noted that Thames had taken a break from golf to focus on his tennis game and thus his journey to the state title was a little unexpected.

1934

Files Crenshaw’s second state title came at the expense of Dr. Blue Harris, a fellow Montgomery native, by a score of 11 and 10. This was the largest winning score in State Amateur history.

Referred to as “Boy Wonder” after his earlier 1920 state triumph, Crenshaw was back at his best on his home course, Montgomery Country Club. Marzoni noted his play was “a blistering sub-par series of shots” as he swept aside the unfortunate Harris.

It is hard to imagine anyone, unless it perhaps is the immortal

Jones, who could have given Crenshaw a battle Saturday.

The blond champion . . . was exactly five strokes under par for the 26 holes he played and had two putts of about five feet each dropped instead of curling away from the cup, would have produced a string of holes that would have meant a course record.

In such a match, where golf exceeds perfection, there is nothing much to write about. Crenshaw’s tee shots were about 230 yards on the average and a



Files Crenshaw



civil engineer could have done no better for locating the center of the fairway with his transit that Files did with his woods.

Marzoni praised the play of Harris, who he said made a game of the final, despite the final score, but could do little to “stop the onslaught of play as blistering as the sun overhead.”

1935

The very high level of play would continue the next year, as Marzoni reported



Sam Perry

that Sam Perry was also five under the card as he dispatched Gadsden's Frank Sitz in the final 10 and 9 at Mobile Country Club. “Playing the sort of golf that would beat any golfer in America, shattering par by five strokes in 27 holes, . . . in as fine an exhibition of perfect shot making as has ever been seen in the South.”

Marzoni felt, along with the massed crowd, that Perry could not be beaten and he went into lunch with a six-up advantage. He did nothing but increase his lead as the match reached its inevitable conclusion. “A champion took his crown by shooting championship golf” was his summation.

Indeed Marzoni continued: “If there was ever a shot over which Sam Perry did not have complete mastery . . . none of the gallery of 100 or more under a steaming sun can remember it. He was so thoroughly conscious of the perfection of his woods that he did not even look after the ball when he drove.”

His irons shots and putting were equally outstanding.

1936

“Johnny crashes Throne Room on Third Try for Alabama Amateur” was



Johnny Morris

the newspaper headline relating to Birmingham's Johnny Morris winning the state title over Ed Finch by 7 and 6. Jerry Bryan took over the "pen" from the prolific Pettersen Marzoni, but his prose was no less riveting. Finch, the defending junior champion at host Birmingham Country Club, was making his competitive debut in a top amateur event and certainly held his own.

Finch was described as "the dark horse and tournament sensation" while it was noted Morris was not long removed from being a "teenage star himself." Morris took a four-up lead into the afternoon session over the West Course. Finch's iron play and short game stayed with him to keep the score respectable, but his driver had deserted him as he found himself in the woods on too many occasions.

1937

History would be made when the championship returned to Pensacola Country Club as the Alabama State Amateur would be won—as it turned out for the only time in its history—by a Floridian by the name of Duncan

McDavid. Pensacola Country Club had joined the AGA in 1925 and would remain a member until the association became Alabama exclusive in 1955.

The reigning club champion of the host course, McDavid saw off the challenge of Lewie Crisman, who would prevail the very next year over his home course of Selma Country Club, by a score of one up. The final saw McDavid have much the better of the morning exchanges to take a healthy four-up lead as lunch



Duncan McDavid

was served, but the young Crisman, age nineteen, was like a new player in the afternoon session. He squared the match through sixteen holes, only to lose the pivotal seventeenth, and that proved to be the final margin of victory.

Crisman had claimed the considerable scalp of the redoubtable Sam Perry in Friday's semifinal (Perry was also president of the AGA at this time). And McDavid had downed Harry Pritchett, himself a former and future state champion as well.

1938

"Alabama's state golfing crown rested today upon the youthful brow of Louie (Lewie) Crisman, 20-year-old scion of Selma's golfing dynasty, who won a sensational one-up victory over Tuscaloosa's Harry Pritchett yesterday." So read the *Birmingham News* lead paragraph recounting the State Amateur.

Appropriate that it would occur on the Selma course his family had "presided over" and would continue to do so. Selma Country Club and the Crisman family are intertwined in golf history with one another.



Lewie Crisman

In the final the previous year, Crisman had found himself four down after the morning eighteen. Same again a year later, but this time he completed the comeback with a one-up win. After twenty-seven holes he had reduced the deficit in half and kept on going, as he took the lead for good through fourteen holes of the afternoon. Pritchett made saving putts on holes 15 and 16 to maintain the deficit, while Crisman made testing putts the final two holes to keep his lead for good as



Weldon Doe

he joined his older brother Glenn as state champion.

Lewie, age ninety-six, is believed to be the oldest living State Amateur champion.

1939

Weldon Doe, who hailed from Montgomery and played golf for The Citadel, defeated Lieutenant Ken Rogers of nearby Maxwell Field by 3 and 2 at Montgomery Country Club. "Doe used a simple method of winning. He won three

of the first four holes, was four up when he went to luncheon and refused to be caught," Bill Rollow reported. "Doe settled the tournament by the more or less simple expedient of doing nothing but shoot the sort of golf he had to shoot to beat the boys." He had the winning habit and kept it rolling.

It was noted Doe was a "consistent winner on Atlantic shore courses, is making his first serious Summer campaign in these parts. He has done fairly well thus far, winning the Beauvoir invitation and now, the State championship."

Rogers was described as "brilliant at times, but used three putts on eight of the 34 holes" which sealed his fate. †

"Doe used a simple method of winning. He won three of the first four holes, was four up when he went to luncheon and refused to be caught."

—Bill Rollow

The 1940s

1940

The Horner family of Montgomery can lay claim to being the family to beat in the 1940s. Scudday Horner won the state title in 1940, 1944, and 1945, with younger brother Jack making it a family trifecta in 1946.

Scudday Horner had to beat the best in the final as he took down Sam Perry, who would bounce back to win the title the next two years, by a convincing margin of 8 and 6 over Mobile Country Club. Horner was dominant, shooting three under par for the thirty holes played. He was round in 70 and led six up at the break, as Perry did not play his best game, especially struggling on the greens.

“Putting probably provided the payoff” was the alliterative sentence describing the difference as “. . . actual putt scoreage for the match was 47 for Horner and 55 for Perry. The Montgomerian single-putted 14 greens while Sam was able to do only half as well.”

In winning the final, Horner completed “a slam in this tournament as he was also [stroke play qualifying] medalist, winning in a playoff with Hal Williams, and had a spot on the winning Beauvoir Country Club team.”



Scudday Horner

1941

Sam Perry would bounce back from losing in the final the previous year to record a 2 and 1 win over Johnny Thames. He would do so on the State Amateur’s first visit to Anniston Country Club.

It was a blockbuster year for Perry that saw him also win the Alabama Open and the Southern Amateur. “His triumph Sunday climaxed the greatest competitive campaign of his career . . . over Johnny Thames, his friendly rival of oldest vintage.”

Perry staged a comeback after ending the “forenoon” two down to Thames and it took him until the thirteenth hole of the afternoon before he would draw level. He pounced on his opportunity and would win holes 16 and 17 to close out the match.

His title equaled Glenn Crisman’s three state titles, with Crisman, “erstwhile Selman, now a Talladega resident, . . . entering this meet ostensibly to balk Perry’s equaling his record, he declared.”



Sam Perry (Birmingham News dated July 21, 1941)

However, Perry would beat him handily in the quarterfinals, with Thames topping other former state champions Scudday Horner and Gordon Smith Jr. on his way to the showdown with his fellow Birmingham Country Club member.

1942

Sam Perry did not have to wait long to eclipse Glenn Crisman's State Amateur haul, as the very next year he recorded win number four in a 5 and 4 triumph over Mobile's Gordon Smith Jr. Fitting that his record-breaking triumph would come over Birmingham Country Club's esteemed West Course; a course he had played many a round on.

This year's final match was just an eighteen-hole affair, as the semifinal had been pushed to Sunday morning. Thus Perry still had to journey around the course twice on the final day. His semifinal against former champion Weldon Doe was a far tougher test than the final so proved.

Doe pushed Perry into extra holes before the reigning champion prevailed on the twentieth hole with a birdie 3 to place him in the final against Smith, who had beaten Harry Pritchett 4 and 3 earlier in the day. Thus all four semifinalists were former state champions.

The report in the *Birmingham News* said: "Sam Perry demonstrated his usual complacent, unswerving golf game in Sunday's final and after a fast start he played smoothly to keep ahead of Gordon Smith the whole way."

In an interesting aside, it was noted: "For his successful play, Perry collected \$70 in War Stamps with \$50 in stamps for the championship, \$15 for winning the qualifying medal and \$5 for being on the Country Club's winning team."

1943

Harry Pritchett, who was the outgoing president of the AGA, got a winning boost to the last days of his presidency as he took home the state title over Gordon



Harry Pritchett



Famous professional golfer Cary Middlecoff (far right) prepares for an exhibition match in the 1940s.

Smith Jr. Smith had lost in previous year's final as well and had lost years before to Pritchett in the 1928 final. However, he did get his revenge over the same opponent three years later.

Suffice to say, they knew each other's games well. Pritchett would prevail 2 and 1 in the eighteen-hole final over Selma Country Club.

Two new names appeared in the semifinals: Jim Hill, a former Iowa state champion who now resided in Mobile, and Lieutenant C. D. Earley of Selma's Craig Field, a former Massachusetts star. The standard of golf was reported as being better in the Sunday morning semifinals as Pritchett got the better of Hill 2 and 1, while Smith eliminated Earley 5 and 3. "Smith's downfall [in the final] was largely chargeable, aside from Pritchett's steadiness, to a tendency to overshoot the greens. He lost three holes through that failing."

1944

Scudday Horner took his second state title, this coming over his home course of Montgomery Country Club. A sergeant in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Hunter Field in Savannah, Georgia, he was home



The Horner family (L-R): Top, Horace Jr., Jack, Scudday, and Horace "Pop." (Courtesy of the Montgomery Country Club)

on furlough to play in the championship. He took full advantage as he topped fellow Montgomery native Fred Broadway 2 and 1 in the eighteen-hole final. Horner had beaten Captain George P. "Sonny" Swift of Maxwell Field and Columbus, Georgia, and former champion Weldon Doe on his way to the final.

It was noted that Broadway, who was appearing in his first major final, had to "go

a grueling 22 holes in the morning session to beat Claude Moody, also a Montgomerian. Performing before an estimated gallery of 1500, Broadway dropped a 12-foot putt for a birdie on the 188-yard hole." In a somewhat anticlimactic final, Horner did enough to run out as champion.

In a side note, Montgomery's Warren Belser, who is well known to Alabama Golf Association aficionados as the



The Horners in 1947 at Montgomery Country Club. Left to right are Jack, Top, Scudday, and Horace "Pop."
(Collier and Kraus Photography. Courtesy of the Montgomery Country Club)

Old Committeeman having written a quarterly submission for the AGA's newsletter under this name for twenty years, won the consolation flight beating C. T. Fitzpatrick, Montgomery, 3 and 2. "He [Belser] scored possibly the best shot of the tournament with a hole-in-one on the 137-yard second hole."

Belser recounted that Fitzpatrick had the honor and hit his tee shot two feet from the hole. Belser then said he may

as well go to the third tee as he couldn't beat Fitzpatrick's tee shot. However, Fitzpatrick encouraged him to tee off, telling him he'd probably make it. Lo and behold, he did just that!

1945

Regrettably, details regarding Scudday Horner's third State Amateur title and second in a row are sparse. The pressmen at the local papers went on strike in mid-July

for six weeks and the championship concluded on July 23. Thus no newspapers and little information to be found. What is known is that Horner beat Harry Pritchett 3 and 1 in the final at Mobile Country Club and it was back to thirty-six holes after two years at eighteen holes.

Not only did Horner win three Alabama State Amateurs, he also won the 1934 Tennessee State Amateur. His family was living at the time in Nashville and would move to Montgomery shortly after his win.



Jack Horner

In a *Florence (Ala.) Times* article in 1937 it was noted he was twenty-two and was the oldest of four brothers, who were all delightfully described as “capable swatsmiths.” Their father was H. H. “Pop” Horner Sr., with other sons Jack (twenty at the time of the story), Horace Jr. (nineteen), and James “Top” (sixteen).

Scudday Horner would make his home in Montgomery and went on to be the head pro at Montgomery Country Club from 1947 to 1978.

1946

It would now be the turn of the next oldest Horner—Jack—to win the state title, which he did at Anniston Country Club over hometown player Peek Leslie by 2 and 1. The *Birmingham News* article about the final appears under the byline of Bob Phillips, who would lovingly run the Alabama Golf Association for many, many years starting in 1937 as secretary-treasurer while reporting on sporting events of the day.

“Horner’s name is the second to be inscribed on the handsome Sam D. Perry trophy, on display here for the first time. The Perry trophy officially was placed in competition last year but was not obtained



Gordon Smith III

until recently. It arrived here during the tournament. The name of Scudday Horner, winner of the 1945 championship and brother of Jack, will be the first placed on the cup.”

AGA president at the time, William McWane had commissioned the splendid trophy, which is revered to this day and

still played for every year. There was a discussion of such a permanent trophy as a memorial at the 1944 meeting of the AGA, with McWane chairman of a committee to procure the trophy, which was designed and manufactured by an eastern silversmith and cost \$1,500. The massive sterling silver bowl has a circumference of fifty-eight inches and a diameter of 18.5 inches. The bowl weighs ten pounds, and if used as a punch bowl, it would hold about six gallons. Include the base and it weighs thirty-five pounds.

After a well-fought morning eighteen in the final, the match was all even. Many holes changed hands over the afternoon eighteen, with Horner holding a one-up lead with two to play. “Leslie was on the green of the par five 17th in three, about five feet from the cup, with Horner yet to shoot his third, from some 50 feet out. Horner’s chip was bold and he was eight or 10 feet from the cup. But he made the putt and Leslie missed, and suddenly it was over.”

Also of interest, as Phillips is talked about here and many times thereafter, is the State Senior Four Ball Championship Trophy is named after Bob Phillips.

1947

His father had won a state title and lost in three other finals. Now it was Gordon “Buddy” Smith III’s turn and he did not disappoint, pipping Press Thornton Sr. of Dothan by a score of one up in the thirty-six-hole final in the State Amateur’s first visit to Mountain Brook Club. Smith, age twenty, and Thornton, age nineteen, saw that youth was served in the final.

Many will recognize the name Press Thornton as he would start the Future Masters junior tournament just three years later in 1950 at Dothan Country Club and it has been played every year since. Dr. Thornton birthed a junior event that attracts a field from the world over and many noteworthy players have played in and/or won the Future Masters.

Heading into the semifinals the possibility existed for a Smith vs. Smith, father vs. son final. Buddy made it to the final, but Gordon Jr. lost 7 and 5 to Thornton. However, Buddy was able to uphold the family honor and came away with the trophy.

The closing hole was quite dramatic. Holding a one-up lead heading to the dogleg par 4 last, Smith popped up his tee

shot, while Thornton smashed his drive into pole position.

Alf Van Hoose reported in the *Birmingham News*: “Gambling to save the hole, he [Smith] drove a 225-yard spoon shot over a clump of trees and a gaping 20-foot ditch which guards the green to the apron of the final hole. Sadly viewing that great shot, Thornton pushed his chip shot over the green and pitched back badly. The holes was halved with bogies after Smith cautiously played it [his chip shot] safe.”



Gordon Smith III

To all who have played the closer at Mountain Brook, you can appreciate the difficulty of Smith’s second from long range and it truly must have been a shot fit to win a championship.

1948

Smith enjoyed his win so much the year before, he repeated the feat the very next year on what would be its final visit to Pensacola Country Club. He defeated fellow former champion Weldon Doe 2 and 1.

In a back and forth final, Smith took charge winning holes 33–35 with a run of par-birdie-birdie to close out the match. Bob Phillips noted in the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, “Poor chipping was the principal weakness of the champion’s game. Doe chipped and putted much better but his tee shots lacked consistency, particularly in the late stages of the match, when it was obvious that he was getting tired. Doe is 30, having reached that age only Thursday. His opponent is 21.”

Smith wasn’t the only multiple winner that week as “the Smith win was also a repeat for H.J.B. Farragut Jr., known as preacher, 32-year-old Negro who caddied for the defender. Preacher toted the clubs

of Duncan McDavid, of Pensacola, when he won the last State held here, in 1937.”

1949

Gardner Dickinson Jr. would close the decade with his first appearance in—and subsequent win of—the State Amateur beating Nelson “Buddy” DeBardeleben, a collegiate golfer at Auburn, in the thirty-six-hole final at Montgomery Country Club by 5 and 4. Dickinson was on the LSU golf team at the time and had moved



Gardner Dickinson Jr.

back to Dothan from Macon, Georgia, a year or so before.

After eighteen holes of the final, Dickinson was one up in a high-scoring match. Over the second eighteen the standard, particularly Dickinson’s, improved and he ran out a comfortable winner. Bob Phillips noted Dickinson’s iron play was far superior and he would have won by a wider margin had his putter behaved.

Although his first Alabama State Amateur, Dickinson was already a storied player having captured some twenty-eight tournaments, according to Phillips’s report at the time. He would go on to a noted professional career and is an inductee in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

Dickinson was perhaps best known as a student of Ben Hogan and crafted his swing in the Hogan tradition. He even wore a flat cap like Hogan. While at LSU, he, Jay Hebert, and the rest of their team won the national title in 1947.

Dickinson would turn pro and enjoyed a long and successful career on the PGA Tour winning seven times between 1956 and 1971. He had an incredible Ryder Cup record, playing on the 1967 and 1971 U.S.

*“They say golf is like life,
but don’t believe them.
Golf is more complicated
than that.”*

—Gardner Dickinson Jr.

teams, going 9–1–0, including winning five team matches with Arnold Palmer. He was also one of the founders of the Senior (now Champions) Tour.

A great quote attributed to Dickinson: “They say golf is like life, but don’t believe them. Golf is more complicated than that.” †

The 1950s

1950

Jim “Jimmy” Ryan of Greenville would begin the second half of the century by capturing the State Amateur at a soggy Gadsden Country Club by a score of 6 and 5 over Elbert Jemison Jr. Alf Van Hoose takes up the story: “It rained intermittently throughout the four-day tournament. The rain was 36 days under Noah’s record, but



Jimmy Ryan


four days over par for most golfers liking. Ryan, a 22-year-old University of Alabama student, admitted he liked to play golf in heavy going. The champion did just that, playing 31 of the scheduled 36-hole final in two over par figures.”

Captain Jemison, who would come good in the championship later in the decade, was on leave from the National

Guard encampment at Fort McClennan. But it was Ryan’s championship as he was never behind in the final and took a two-up lead after eighteen holes, which he had doubled after twenty-seven holes. The end was soon in sight as the rain continued to fall.

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GIVE
TO CONQUER
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(L-R) Herschel Spears, Paul Stapp, Elbert Jemison Jr., and golf legend Ben Hogan prior to teeing off in a 1951 exhibition at Roebuck Country Club.



1951

Marvin C. Fitts of Tuscaloosa would leave Selma Country Club with the first of what would become three state titles in a closely fought battle against hometown player and former champion Lewie Crisman. M. C., as he would commonly be referred, won by a score of two up.



Marvin C. Fitts (right) with Lewie Crisman

The stymie rule would have a significant part to play in the final outcome. According to Alf Van Hoose of the *Birmingham News*: “One down after 31 holes, M.C. Fitts laid Lewie Crisman two dead stymies in the last five holes. One stymie preceded a Crisman three-putt from nine feet, which evened

a give-and-take battle. The next block closed Crisman’s path for a seven-foot birdie try on the 35th hole that would have evened the match. Neither dormie was intentional. They were just the breaks of the game which golfing folk of Alabama saw for the last time. The stymie rule becomes obsolete Jan. 1, slightly over four months too late for Crisman.”

Crisman was magnanimous in defeat: “Crisman, a 32-year-old engineer, did not alibi in defeat. He admitted the block-putts hurt but he also added: “Two stymies don’t win a golf match. That wasn’t all that beat me.””

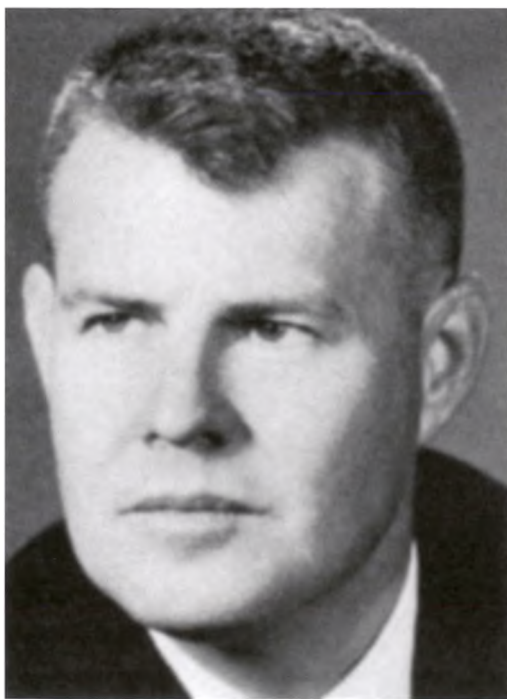
Fitts, age nineteen, said: “I never was certain about winning but I sure was hoping to.” That he did as his putting prowess came to the fore in the final, which was deadlocked after the morning eighteen. The match would tip back and forth all afternoon before Fitts took the lead for good with a birdie on the thirty-fourth hole.

1952

Pat Poyner III would dominate proceedings over his home course, Dothan Country Club, as he ran out a

very comfortable winner of the state title over former champion Jack Horner 10 and 8. Poyner, a twenty-six-year-old banker, would better par by four strokes as he closed out Horner on the twenty-eighth hole. His golf was simply too hot for Horner to handle.

“Poyner played steady, sub-par golf, having his entire game in cool control all the way. Horner, on the other hand, had a bad day, especially on the green



Pat Poyner III

where he blew hole after hole by missing short putts.” The win was Poyner’s first noteworthy one in the state golfing scene.

1953

A battle of teenagers saw a rousing finish as eighteen-year-old Marion (he was known by both Marty or Monnie) Vickers defeated Frank “Sonny” Holt by draining a twenty-five-foot putt across the final green at Mobile Country Club to win one up.

“The stocky, dead-pan Vickers jumped for joy after his tap on the last hole started out slowly, picked up speed as it ran around a slight mound and literally leaped into the cup,” Alf Van Hoose regaled his readers in the *Birmingham News*. “Before Vickers came down from the air he was mobbed by the vanguard of a modest gallery of 1000.”

Think about that for a moment. A crowd of one thousand was described as modest. Times change, but the final group of the modern State Amateur might attract twenty to thirty spectators at the conclusion of play. “The new champ, the youngest wearer of a state golf crown in 25 years, had tears in his eyes after he finally



Marion Vickers

escaped the crowd and hustled for the shelter of the golf shop.”

The final was even after eighteen holes and the afternoon’s play saw a lot of lead changes as Vickers was two up after twenty-seven holes, but then one down after thirty-three holes as Selma’s Holt came to the fore. Holt was left to rue a three-putt from long range on the thirty-fourth hole and remained one up. Then Vickers won the thirty-fifth hole with a par, before his last-hole heroics.

Holt would have to wait a little longer for his state title, which would come two years later.

1954

In the final State Amateur to be played at match play, Tuscaloosa's Billy O'Connor triumphed over his good friend and fellow



Billy O'Connor

Tuscaloosa native Tommy Nicol by a score of 2 and 1 at Anniston Country Club.

"When it was over, and the big Sam Perry trophy accepted for a year's custody, O'Connor credited his short game, his pitching and putting department, for his steady move through the top players in the state. 'That's the strongest part of my game and it held up well here.'"

Indeed it did as the "good-looking Irishman" claimed his first major trophy and he made it a big one.

Reigning champion Monnie Vickers could not defend his title as "he was out to sea on an ROTC cruise."

"The only dark cloud on an otherwise perfect day for O'Connor was the thought that it had to be Nicol to lose in the finals. 'Tommy wanted to win so badly,' the champ said, 'that I feel a little guilty in having beaten him. But don't get me wrong: I wanted to win mighty badly too.'"

1955

The stroke play era began in 1955, but the tradition of thirty-six holes on Saturday continued. Thus, the final day was a long one for all concerned, with Frank "Sonny" Holt coming out on top after shooting 283 for the four rounds to win by one over M. C. Fitts.

Holt, a twenty-year-old pre-dental student at the University of Alabama and a member of the Crimson Tide golf team,



Frank "Sonny" Holt

started Saturday afternoon's round two back of Fitts, but his closing round of 70 proved plenty good enough as Fitts stumbled to a 76. In fact, Holt shot a pair of 70s the final day over host club Montgomery Country Club to claim the state title.

As Grantland Rice II said in the *Birmingham News*: "Anybody who can finish this course three over [the par of 70] for the four rounds has done a masterful job, and Holt did just that."

Author's note: Holt, who turned eighty late 2014, is still fit and active in the game. He holds the record of playing in the State Amateur in the most decades, having done so from the 1940s through the 2010s, with his first as a fourteen-year-old in 1949 and last in 2011. Holt estimates he has played in at least forty-five State Amateurs spread over an amazing eight decades. The 1985 champion, Tom Jones, is believed to have played in the most consecutive State Amateurs, thirty-one straight from 1971 to 2001.

1956

Birmingham's Nelson "Buddy" DeBardeleben ran away with the title at Tuscaloosa Country Club as he took the



Nelson DeBardeleben (right) with Elbert Jemison Jr. (Tony Falletta)

lead with an opening round of 70 and never looked back. He posted a three-under-par total of 281 and won by eight over home club golfer Tommy Nicol.

DeBardeleben credited getting his old woods back in his bag as key. He had sold the ten-year-old clubs a few months previously, but was not getting on

with their replacements, having trouble keeping his drives straight.

Grantland Rice II noted: "And his old woods were deadly. He hit 49 of the first 54 greens in regulations figures. In the final round, tiring under the near 100-degree heat and 36 holes in one day, he missed six greens."

No matter as his short game prevailed and the thirty-year-old Birmingham banker ran out an easy winner.

1957

Elbert Jemison Jr. used his home course advantage to good measure as he distanced himself from the rest of the field at Mountain Brook Club shooting three-over-par 287 over the par 71 course. He left his fellow competitors trailing in his wake, as Huntsville's Bob Lowry Jr. was six back in second. It would be Jemison's first of back-to-back state titles.

"I had respect for this course and decided early to just try and keep my tee shots in the fairway and shoot for the middle of the greens. You might say I played it conservatively all the way. I never did get aggressive against the course," Jemison told Grantland Rice II.



Elbert Jemison Jr.

Insurance man Jemison, age thirty-six, had waited awhile for his first state title and he wasn't about to let it slip through his fingers. He was the only player without a double bogey over the seventy-two holes—quite a feat given the nimbleness of tricky water hazards across the course—and played the final fifty-four holes in a very solid two under par.

Jemison came in on good form having already won the Vestavia Invitational and Birmingham National Invitational. He called his final round of 69 his “finest

final tournament round I have ever played” and it allowed him to overtake Lowry who started the final eighteen one ahead, but stumbled to a closing 76.

Also of interest is the State Mid-Amateur Championship Trophy is named after Elbert Jemison Jr.

1958

Elbert Jemison Jr. successfully defended his state title when it headed south to Mobile Country Club. It was a closer affair than the previous year as he had to go to an extra hole, defeating Tuscaloosa's Dick Pride with a par on the first hole after both had finished tied at 299.

Jemison took a two-shot lead into the final round over Pride, who played golf for the University of Alabama as would his son, Dicky. At the time of the final Dick Pride was a twenty-year-old senior at the Capstone.

However, a triple bogey 7 on the fourth hole by Jemison wiped out his lead and the back and forth battle was on. Pride held a slender lead until a bogey on No. 17 left them even. Jemison just missed a birdie putt on the final hole and they were off to a sudden death playoff.

Pride pushed his tee shot in the playoff and could not recover. Jemison reached the green in two and his two putts from thirty feet were enough to top Pride's ensuing bogey. “I felt like I was fortunate to win the State for the first time last year, and even more so this time. I knew after I had that seven that I couldn't afford to lose any ground to par from there in,” a humble Jemison told Grantland Rice II.

1959

A comparative newcomer to the state, Art Gleason Jr. wasted little time in introducing himself to the State Amateur as he won the first one he played at Gadsden Country Club. A Florida native, who had won numerous events in the Sunshine State and North Carolina, he moved to Selma after he married Rosemary Henry and began work for her family's brick business.

The State Mid-Amateur Championship Trophy is named after Elbert Jemison Jr.

Gleason and fellow Selma resident Frank “Sonny” Holt distanced themselves from the field and it became a two-horse race for the title. Coming down the stretch, Gleason, age twenty-three, and Holt, age twenty-four, each had their



Art Gleason Jr.

chances, but it was really Gleason’s to lose as he held a three-shot lead as he strode to the thirteenth tee. Bogey for Gleason and birdie for Holt cut two shots of Gleason’s lead and it was game on.

Another bogey-birdie exchange on No. 14 saw Gleason fall a stroke behind and so it would stay as they headed to the closing hole. However, Holt’s drive found trouble and he made bogey to Gleason’s par and it was off to a playoff.

They both hit poor tee shots, followed by excellent second shots. “The greens were very bumpy and we both had pretty short putts for birdie. We said good-good and moved to the next tee. Bob Phillips had a fit as it was a stroke play playoff, but there was nothing to be done,” Holt recalled.

The championship was over on the hole after Holt missed the green on the par 3 and could not get up-and-down to save par. Both players ended the championship on 284, five clear of Birmingham’s Walter Wood in third.

Gleason would remain a fixture in the state golf scene for many, many years, taking a particular interest in the State Junior Championship. Due to his

The State Junior has been played for the Art Gleason Jr. Memorial Trophy since 1999.

involvement, the State Junior has been played for the Art Gleason Jr. Memorial Trophy since 1999 and he was always present at the State Junior until his death in August 2006.

Gleason chaired the State Junior Committee for twenty-plus years. He also served as an AGA director from 1981 onwards and was AGA president in 1991. †

The 1960s

1960

Bob Woodfin Jr. would usher in the '60s with a championship record of 280, eclipsing Buddy DeBardeleben's 281 shot in 1956. "Woody," as he was nicknamed, matched the par of 280 at Selma Country Club, his home course, with rounds of 67-74-69-70 to win



Bob Woodfin Jr. (*Birmingham News*)

by four from Birmingham's John Gross, with defending champion and fellow Selma member Art Gleason Jr. a further stroke back. It was noted by *Birmingham News* sportswriter Grantland Rice II that Woodfin had set himself a 280 target and this proved to be prophetic.

Woodfin looked good for a runaway win, as after eleven holes of his closing round he was four under par for the round and had a big lead. However, he dropped five shots in five holes to allow the chasers hope, but they could not capitalize as they ran into trouble too.

"I just seem to have those bad stretches in every tournament," Woodfin said. "And it takes me four or five holes to come out of it." That he did, but a birdie on No. 17 calmed his nerves and he ran out four shots to the good.

1961

Tuscaloosa's Jackie Cummings would win his first of three State Amateurs in an

eleven-year span when he took the honors at Birmingham Country Club. It proved to be a high-scoring championship over the always challenging West Course layout.

In the *Birmingham News*, Jim Martin skillfully compared Cummings and his chief challenger fellow Tuscaloosa native M. C. Fitts to Gary Player and Arnold Palmer in



Jackie Cummings (right) with M. C. Fitts. (*Robert Adams*, *Birmingham News*)



Elbert Jemison Jr., Buddy DeBardleben, Arnold Palmer, and Paddy LaClair

that year's Masters in his final day story. At the Masters, Player had beaten Palmer, but not before much drama. Likewise, "little man" Cummings toppled "big man" Fitts. Cummings closed with a final round 80, but Fitts, who appeared to have the championship in hand, stumbled to a triple bogey 7 on the

seventeenth, allowing Cummings to win by one with a four-day total of 297.

It was a struggle all-final round for Cummings and his overnight lead evaporated. Numerous three-putts were almost his downfall, as he tried to hang on and shoot his "target score of 75."

That came and went and Fitts took the lead after fifteen holes, but he couldn't stand the prosperity as he found tree trouble multiple times on the seventeenth, while Cummings pulled himself tougher to make par. Cummings then closed with a par to take the spoils. "You know, though," Cummings told Martin, "I feel like Player, but I've always liked that Arnie cat."

1962

Benson Raymond McLendon Jr., universally known as "Mac," stepped forward at just sixteen years of age to claim the first of his two State Amateurs. The Montgomery youngster became the second-youngest winner behind fellow Montgomery junior Files Crenshaw, who had taken the title over the same Montgomery Country Club venue forty-two years earlier.

McLendon learned the game at Bonnie Crest Country Club. He finished five clear of second placed Ed Brown, also a member at Bonnie Crest. McLendon shot 283, which was the same score he shot earlier that summer in also winning the Montgomery Country Club Invitational. Indeed he was having a banner summer.



B. R. "Mac" McLendon Jr.

The State Amateur was his sixth title of the year, and he wouldn't turn seventeen for almost another month.

Heading into the final round, McLendon trailed Dick Pride by a shot. However, he caught him on the third hole and kept on rolling, while Pride shot a 77 to McLendon's 71.

Already well used to the winner's circle at such a young age, McLendon had already won more tournaments (seventeen) than his age (sixteen), with

a highlight capturing the 1961 Future Masters. "I thought that Future Masters victory at Dothan last year was something, but that was nothing compared to this," he told the *Birmingham News* Jim Martin. Martin made a point of describing his iron shots as particularly special.

With his win assured, despite a couple of slips coming home, McLendon finished in some style ramming in a forty-foot par putt on the home hole, much to the delight of the watching crowd.

1963

M. C. Fitts had won the State Amateur twelve years earlier when it was still played at match play and would do so this year at stroke play, thus becoming the only person to win the championship at both formats. In an incredibly tight contest, he shot 280 at Anniston Country Club to win by one over fellow former champions Bob Woodfin and Sonny Holt. Fitts fired a championship-low closing round of 67, while Woodfin had 68 and Holt 69.

Fitts's closing round was a beauty made up of fifteen pars and three birdies, with not a bogey in sight. Frank McGowan of the *Birmingham News* called it thusly:

"Out in 32, Fitts had passed Holt who turned the front in 35, as did Woodfin. Holt caught Fitts with back-to-back birdies on 12 and 13 but Fitts refused to wilt, canning another birdie on 14 that put him ahead of the Army dentist from Selma. But he didn't have much time to gaze around and when he did here came Woodfin like a locomotive. After losing another stroke with a bogey on 10, Woodfin rammed home birdies on 13, 15, 16 and 17 and was right on Fitts heels and tied with Holt."



M. C. Fitts (Birmingham News dated July 29, 1963)

“... here came Woodfin like a locomotive.”

—Frank McGowan, *Birmingham News*

Woodfin ran out of holes as his long birdie try on the final hole came up a foot short and the stage was set for Fitts and Holt. Both faced birdie chips from the fringe, with Fitts going first and ending up a foot away for a tap-in par. Holt's chip looked for all the world to be going in and thus forcing a tie, but it lipped out as a large crowd gasped. McGowan called it a “game of inches” as Holt made the short comebacker for a par.

1964

The venue was different (Huntsville Country Club), but the winner (M. C. Fitts) and winning score (280) were the same as the previous year. Only two players would break 292, with Billy Hamilton, on 288, and Fitts distancing themselves from the field.

Tuscaloosa's Fitts fired a championship-low 66 in the opening round to open up a four-shot lead and he did more than maintain his position with rounds of 71-68.

Even though he stumbled to a closing round of 75, he had plenty of cushion.

About the only thing left for Fitts to play for in the final round that he began with a nine-shot lead was a new State Amateur scoring record, but a triple bogey on No. 3 derailed him. “Fitts, admitting that he had eyes on a new stroke (play) record, ‘never could concentrate after that seven [on No. 3]. I hate to play as sorry as I did. Anyone could have beaten me today. I believe I would have played better if someone was pushing me.’”



M. C. Fitts

1965

Weather plagued the 1965 State Amateur, but Tuscaloosa's Jackie Cummings didn't mind as he won by two shots from Mobile's John Lamey at Mobile Country Club. Thursday's play was washed out, reducing the championship to fifty-four holes, with more bad weather meaning Sunday's final round had to be pushed to a Monday finish, which was also weather-affected.



Jackie Cummings



B. R. "Mac" McLendon Jr.

Cummings, in the midst of a great year of golf including wins in the Selma, Tuscaloosa, and Vestavia Invitationals, coped best with the delays shooting rounds of 77-69-75. He obviously had an affinity for Mobile Country Club, having won their invitational twice.

Frank McGowan reported an amusing aside: "When the Sam Perry trophy was late getting to Mobile from its year's resting spot at Tuscaloosa's Indian Hills Country Club,

one of Cummings fellow Tuscaloosans told the committee 'Just leave it in Tuscaloosa; Cummings is going to win, anyway.' It was a good prediction with the little man taking care of the matter in good style."

1966

It looked like a lost cause for Mac McLendon as he entered the final round of the State Amateur trailing defending champion Jackie Cummings by seven



The AGA Golden Anniversary Program was put together by Bob Phillips.

DR. PHILIP “BUDDY” MOSS (1966)



"Buddy" Moss, AGA President, 1966

I studied medicine at UAB [University of Alabama Birmingham] and was invited to come to Selma a few years later. I'd only had a passing interest in the game of golf, but was introduced to the Crisman family and that changed things.

My wife, Nell, and I struck up a friendship with Otey, who made his famous putters, and his wife. We'd go to Augusta for The Masters with them. Fun times . . .

Bob Phillips asked me to get involved with the AGA, which I did. There were maybe eight of us (active directors) back then. I suppose I was a better than

average player. I'd work at the State tournament in the morning, helping set up the course, and then play the championship in the afternoon. I, alongside Elbert Jemison, Bob Lowry Sr., Harry Pritchett, Joe King, Tommy Nicol, Albert Elmore, Gordon Smith Jr., Newton Allen, and some others, we'd all pitch in and help Bob Phillips.

I was president (of the AGA) in 1966, the year we celebrated fifty years. We had a big celebration for the golden anniversary.

Bob Phillips was quite something. He'd literally keep the records (of events) on the back of envelopes and carried around a briefcase with them all in. He'd also write up a story each day for the paper. Boy, have things changed . . .

Dr. Moss, AGA president in 1966, passed away in 2014.

shots, especially as the championship was being played at Cummings's home course of Indian Hills Country Club. However, McLendon steadily chipped away at Cummings's big lead and the Montgomery golfer and LSU star had gained four shots as they made the turn. He kept the pressure on as he played flawless golf and overhauled Cummings, who struggled.

McLendon closed with a one-under-par 70, the best final round by three shots. He dropped only one shot—at the closing hole—as he played it safe for a bogey to protect what was now a two-shot lead. Cummings's final par meant the final margin was one shot as McLendon shot 288, with Cummings and Huntsville's Bob Lowry Jr. one back.

McLendon described his finishing round as "probably the best round I have ever shot," while Cummings lamented that "I just didn't play well at all" as he stumbled to a 78.

1967

Hubert Green would claim the first of his back-to-back State Amateurs at Dothan Country Club. Already a well-known name in amateur golf circles, he



Hubert Green, Birmingham

had won the Southern Amateur the year before. Green would go on to a World Golf Hall of Fame career including two major titles and is undoubtedly one of the finest players of the game to hail from the state.

Green grew up in a home adjacent to the twelfth hole on the West Course at the Country Club of Birmingham and quickly took to the game. He would leave his home state for college, however, heading to play golf at Florida State, which is where he was a student when he teed it up in Dothan.

He took a healthy six-shot lead into the final round over defending champion Mac McLendon, but it was down to just a solitary shot after McLendon made up a lot of ground. However, Green pulled away with a peerless 32 on the homeward nine and would win by five over McLendon and Dick Pride.

Indeed, Green really liked the back nine as he played it in a combined ten under par, compared to three over for the front nine. This left him on 281. "I still felt like I would win when we teed off on No. 10 with me still a stroke ahead of Mac and Dick. I always have played the back nine better," Green said.

1968

Hubert Green journeyed to the northwest part of the state to Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club in Killen to win his second straight State Amateur. Once



Hubert Green

again the winning margin was five shots as he finished four rounds in 285, with home club member Bill Ray Roberson second on 290.

Dick Pride entered the final round one ahead of Green and Opp's Craig Clemons, but Clemons was a non-factor as he ballooned to a final round 80. Pride also

struggled in the closing round with a 79 and finished in fourth. Bob Lowry Jr. was third, a shot ahead of Pride.

It was no surprise that Green, who had a closing round low of 71, would come through. "I think I'm hitting the ball better this year but I'm not putting as well. I believe I may have slipped a bit in my putting." He also noted the course played a lot longer (in the final round), "but it was not as impossible as I had thought it might be." One of Green's main amateur challengers, Mac McLendon, did not play as he had turned professional. Green would do so in 1969.

1969

Charles Mark Major, widely known by his nickname of "Bubba," became the third-youngest winner of the State Amateur at just seventeen years of age. He smashed the previous state scoring record by nine shots shooting an astounding 271 at Selma Country Club.

The previous stroke play record had stood at 280 from when Bob Woodfin Jr. (1960) and M. C. Fitts (both 1963 and 1964) had shot that mark, but it stood no longer thanks to Major's major

*"... he's a real fine boy,
with lots of personality ..."*

—Description of Charles "Bubba" Major
by Jon Gustin



Charles "Bubba" Major

domination. Bubba's rounds of 67-70-67-67-271 left him nine under the par 70 layout and ten clear of runner-up Richard Anthony, also of Birmingham.

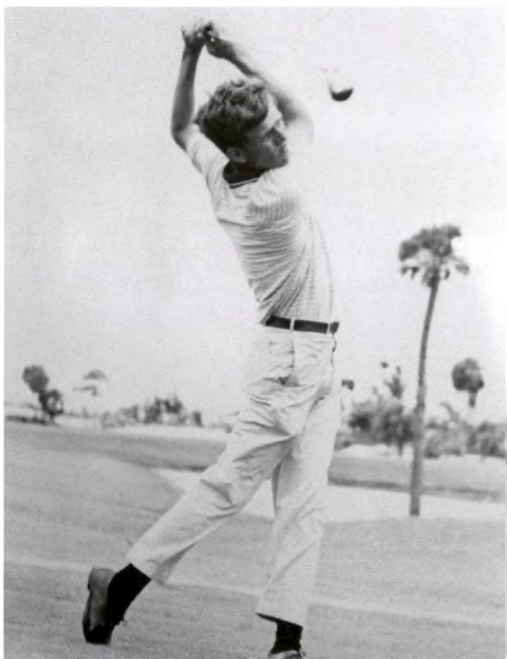
Major burst onto the state scene that summer in the State Amateur as he had won a junior tournament at Pine Tree Country Club earlier in the summer, but he had won no other events. A senior at Mountain Brook High School, he only began to take the game seriously in recent years, and his family had moved back to Birmingham from Miami, Florida, a couple of years before.

Major credited Birmingham Country Club head pro Jon Gustin with helping him refine his game. "I don't know how much I had to do with it," Gustin commented. "He's a good player. Bubba hits the ball a long way, and he's real strong with his irons. He has a good attitude. He's not excitable, and he's a real fine boy, with lots of personality. He has sort of played around before, but this year he has gotten real interested in the game." ↑

The 1970s

1970

Craig Clemons took home the first state title of the 70s when he shot 290 at Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City to hold off Montgomery's Layne Wallock by a shot. Clemons, who played golf for Auburn and hails from



Craig Clemons

Opp, also had to hold off Selma's Mike Smith, who ended up on 292.

Two-time former champion Jackie Cummings took the lead heading into thirty-six holes on the Sunday, but faded with rounds of 80-76 to finish fifth, with Huntsville's Rick Sirmon a place better. Clemons came out on top after a final day showing of 76-71, with Wallock shooting 72-73 and Smith 78-70.

Clemons spent the previous winter in California after finishing school at Auburn as his wife took a teaching job there, but he returned triumphantly. He established his place on top of the leaderboard with a three-under-par 33 on the Sunday afternoon front nine. He found trouble on the tricky par-3 thirteenth as his tee shot ended up in Lake Martin, which allowed Smith to get within two. A grandstand finish was assured when Smith eagled No. 17, courtesy of a thirty-yard chip in, to pull within one of Clemons as they headed to the final hole.

However, when Smith three-putted the last hole, Wallock was already in the clubhouse one better than him, and Clemons two-putted for the winning par. "My game is just now beginning to come around," Clemons told the *Birmingham News* Jimmy Bryan. "I made some drastic changes in my swing (over the winter). I was messed up badly for a while, but it's coming around now."

1971

Jackie Cummings took his third State Amateur title at Vestavia Country Club by three shots from Mike Smith and Charles Krenkel. Cummings ended up at five-under-par 283 over a layout he professed to always enjoy. "This time I played the best I've ever played here. This course has always been good to me."

He was the model of consistency firing rounds of 70-71-72-70, but began the final round a stroke back of Krenkel, who had upped his lead to two as they



Jackie Cummings

made the turn. However, Cummings came flying through the back nine, while Krenkel faltered. Cummings didn't need a second invitation on a course the "mighty little man" had won three Vestavia Invitations on, as well as being runner-up earlier this year.

Smith came in on form having earlier in the year won the NJCAA individual national golf championship while playing for Brevard Community College (now known as Eastern Florida State College).

His team also won the national title the same year.

1972

He'd finished second the year before, but Charles Krenkel went one

better winning the State Amateur at Montgomery Country Club by three shots from Greenville's Phillip Hancock, former champion Bubba Major, and Mike Smith. In a championship shortened to fifty-four holes due to heavy rain, Krenkel shot



Jack Nicklaus (lower left) prior to a Charley Boswell Blind Foundation fundraiser in the early 1970s at Vestavia Country Club. Others, crouching next to Nicklaus, include (L-R) Mason Rudolph, Doug Sanders, and Elbert Jemison Jr. Some of those standing include Chuck Jones, Ben Wilkerson, Walter Wood, David Graham, and Ed Pascoe (not in order).



BOBBY McNEELY (1970)

Having spent my teenage years living adjacent to the eighteenth fairway at the Country Club of Mobile golf course, caddying and playing, I learned to enjoy and appreciate the game of golf. While caddying, I also learned a few new words of profanity.

My first introduction to the AGA was when the State Junior was played on our course in 1948 and 1949. The fact I won both of these at match play and then played four years on the University of Alabama golf team gave me some name recognition throughout the state. Mr. Harry Pritchett was still coaching the UA team my freshman year, and he took the team to three invitational tournaments: Birmingham CC (a real treat) and Anniston CC and Selma CC (great fun, too).

Mr. Gordon Smith Jr. was the first golfer from Mobile who played well enough to take his game "on the road." He played many matches with and against Harry Pritchett and Sam Perry. He and Sam Perry were runners-up in the final of the Southern States Four Ball played at East Lake GC in Atlanta in October 1938. It was quite an honor just to be invited to play in this tournament.

When Mr. Gordon announced to the AGA board his desire to become inactive, plus the fact that his son Buddy, AGA State Amateur champion in 1947 and 1948, was not interested in replacing him, Elbert Jemison approached me in 1965 about coming on the board during the State Amateur at the CC of Mobile.



Bobby McNeely

If we hadn't been sitting down, you could have knocked me down with a feather. I was shocked! My wife was not pleased that I had accepted before consulting with her. I felt it was a natural for me except that I did not feel qualified as a replacement for Mr. Gordon. I knew Elbert and many of the other AGA directors looked up to him. Mr.

Gordon was very supportive and on several occasions invited me to accompany him during the State Amateur. My only regret is I failed to get him to relate to me some of his golf competition experiences.

In 1965 there were only twelve active directors, so I felt then, as now, that I was in elite company. My wife, Sally, always enjoyed socializing with the other wives.

I first met Joe King playing in invitationals and was, at first, a little turned off by his flashy, "hot shot" style. However, shortly after I came on the board I learned he was the workhorse of the organization.

Also, he could beat me on the golf course.

Knowing and working with Mr. Bob Phillips was a real treat. He once told me he wanted me to win the State Amateur because he had a really good picture of me he could use. Near the end of my term as AGA president he wrote: "You have been an on-the-ball President from my point of view." Of course, coming from him, that was greatly appreciated. He knew the Rules of Golf inside out and was very strict in enforcing them.

For about fifteen years I had the pleasure of playing lots of golf with Buddy Gordon III. One of the stories he liked to tell about his father was as they played together one time, Buddy hit a mulligan on No. 1. Mr. Gordon was quick to say, "You can't set the course record now!" My good friend Buddy Smith died in December 2013.

67-71-72 to finish at even par. Troy's Mike Griffin began the day one back of Krenkel, but a closing 76 saw him fall into a tie for fifth with Sonny Holt.

Krenkel took advantage of some slips from Griffin, combined with his own strong play, and he took a six-shot lead midway through the back nine. Even a triple bogey 7 on his penultimate hole couldn't stop him. Krenkel, who played golf for St. Bernard College, won in what was only his third and final State Amateur as he planned to turn professional and try his hand at the PGA Tour.

Jimmy Bryan noted that Albert Elmore, a fine player from Huntsville at that

time and later Montgomery and future AGA president in 1983-84, was high on Krenkel. "I think Krenkel is further along than Hubert [Green] and Mac [McLendon] were at this stage. Green and McLendon of course, were amateurs who dominated their era as Krenkel has his. Both are now established on the tour."

1973

Greenville's Phillip Hancock produced the lowest score in relation to par (at that time) with a fourteen-under-par 274 at Burningtree Country Club in Decatur. Bubba Major had shot a lower overall total in 1969 when he shot 270 at Selma



Charles Krenkel (center)



Phillip Hancock (*Buster MacGuire*, Montgomery Advertiser dated July 7, 1974)

Country Club, which equated to ten under par on the par-70 layout, while Hancock's masterpiece was crafted over the par 72 Burningtrees. Hancock, age nineteen and a University of Florida star golfer, crafted rounds of 67-71-67-69, with Tuscaloosa's Barry Mullins running him close with rounds of 69-67-69-71 to finish just two back.

David Ferrell came firing through the field with a final round of 64, the lowest score in State Amateur history (to that date). The Mobile native could have gone one lower, but he three-putted the final green. He finished in third on 277 and his closing round featured an eagle, seven birdies, and a lone bogey. The top three players were all collegians, with Hancock attending Florida, Mullins at the University of Alabama, and Ferrell the University of Texas.

Hancock took his second-place finish in the previous State Amateur as inspiration. "I've really thought a lot about this tournament since last year," he told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*. "It's been a goal of mine since I finished second. That gave me the confidence I knew I could do it." He also

pointed to the confidence he had at the venue, having won the State Junior there three years earlier.

All added up well for Hancock, who was pushed all the way by Mullins. He played a solid closing round and an outstanding championship to claim the state crown.

1974

Youth was served once again when Auburn rising sophomore Buddy Gardner, age eighteen, took home the state title over the West Course at Birmingham Country Club, which played very tough. Not a single round was recorded in the 60s, with Gardner shooting 71-75-72-73—291 to hold off Richard Jeffers III, who was playing his home club, by one

"It's been a goal of mine since I finished second. That gave me the confidence I knew I could do it."

—Phillip Hancock as reported by Jimmy Bryan in the *Birmingham News*



Buddy Gardner (left) with Walker Reynolds and Richard Jeffers III.

shot. In subsequent years, Jeffers moved to Mobile. Gardner, who grew up in Montgomery, became a member of the Country Club of Birmingham.

On a packed leaderboard, Bob Dumas, an Auburn teammate of Gardner's,

finished third, a shot back of Jeffers. Final round overnight leader Bob Lowry Jr. slipped to a closing 79 to finish fourth, three back.

Jeffers had a chance, firing a final round 71, but was left to rue a closing bogey. Gardner, who drove the ball beautifully on such a tough driving course, stood on the final tee and did what he had done most of the round, he split the fairway. Head pro Jon Gustin noted it was the longest drive he'd ever seen on the challenging finisher.

Gardner took dead aim with his wedge second and ended up eleven feet from the hole. Mistakenly informed by a crowd member that he had two putts for the title, he rammed the putt in regardless, only to find he had needed to hole it to edge out Jeffers and avoid a playoff. "All I was thinking was give it a good stroke to the hole," Gardner told Steve Fox of the *Birmingham News*. He was left to savor a fine victory, one he had worked very hard for with up-and-downs on his previous three holes after some wayward iron shots.

1975

Buddy Gardner would journey to Olympia Spa Resort and Country Club in Dothan as the defending state champion and he would leave this monster golf course as the defending champion once again. Rounds of 71-73-74-76—294 saw him home four clear of his Auburn teammate Bob Dumas. No one else broke 300 on the par 72 challenging course.

Still a teenager when he won his second title, he did not turn twenty until the month following the championship,



Buddy Gardner

he achieved a feat never replicated before or after his back-to-back wins: winning the state title twice as a teenager.

Gardner's closing round of 76 was his highest of the week, but so was Dumas's 78, thus he put little pressure on Gardner down the stretch, with Gardner's two-shot overnight lead becoming four shots at the close of play.



Richard Anthony

1976

Buddy Gardner was gunning for a record third straight title, but had to settle for second place to Richard Anthony, who shot 71-67-72-74—284, four under par at Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club in Killen. Gardner finished four back of the Birmingham-based banker, age thirty, who grew up in Andalusia.

It was a family affair through three rounds as Anthony's younger brother, Bill, just fifteen, was only one back heading into the final round. He was scuppered by a closing round of 79, but still finished a very commendable third. Bill Anthony lamented a poor back nine in his final round, "But I'll take third and I'll be back," the youngster said.

Richard Anthony had a relatively stress-free final afternoon with Gardner matching his closing 74 and thus he remained four back, just like he had started the day. "I'm not surprised I won," he told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*, "and I don't mean to sound boastful. I hit the ball solidly all day. I was striking it well, better than at any other time during this tournament. I was confident I would win all the way."



Ronny Mobley

Richard Anthony noted that winning the state championship was a goal of his and it was the biggest event he played in all year. He would later lead the AGA as president in 1985–86.

1977

A playoff was needed over host course Mobile Country Club to decide the 1977 State Amateur, with Troy's Ronny Mobley winning with a par over Don Shirey. Mobley, who had played for Troy State and helped lead the Trojans to two Division II national championships, shot rounds of 75-75-72-73—295, eleven over par, to tie Auburn junior Shirey, who fired 73-74-75-72. Defending champion Richard Anthony finished in solo third, just one shot out of the playoff.

Shirey trailed Mobley by two shots with four holes to play but was able to make up the deficit. Both players had to hole par savers to reach the playoff. However, Shirey's putter let him down on a six-footer on the first playoff hole, leaving the stage clear for Mobley to make his own four-footer for the title.

1978

Huntsville's Steve Goldstein, playing his home course of Valley Hill Country Club, ran away with the State Amateur by six strokes from runner-up Valley Head's Tom Jones. Despite closing with a final round 77 over the par 73 layout,

Goldstein had lots in reserve as he ran out an easy winner with a four-round total of 288, four under par. Lee Mackey, Cecil Ingram III, and Jud Stockard tied for third, a shot back of Jones.

Goldstein, age twenty, was a rising senior on the golf team at Middle Tennessee State. "I'm very, very happy," Goldstein told *Birmingham News* reporter Jimmy Bryan. "It'll probably hit me later,

B. R. "BILLY RAY" ROBERSON (1976)



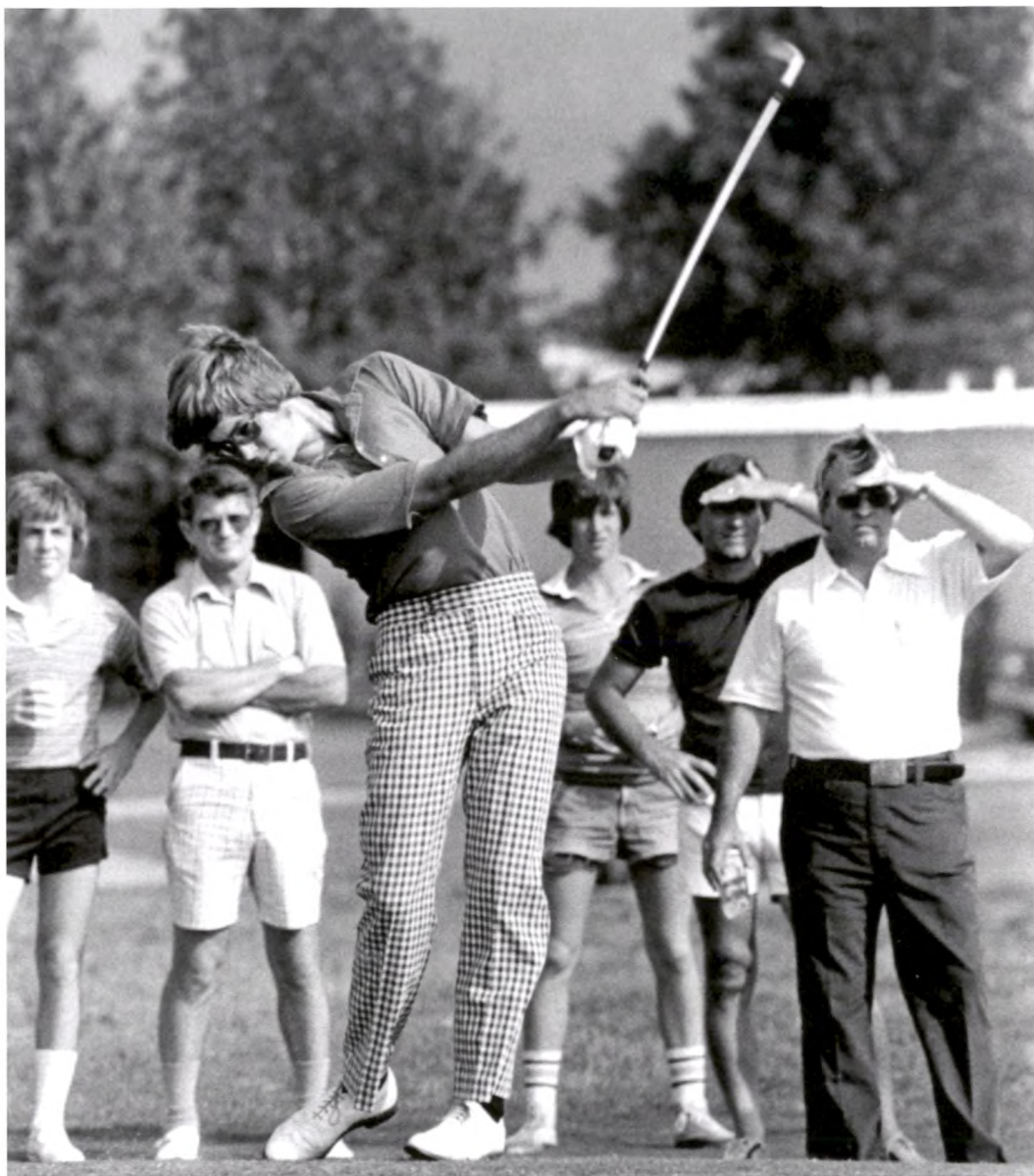
B. R. "Billy Ray" Roberson

Bob Phillips literally ran the AGA out of a briefcase . . . records, numbers, etc. Boy, have things moved on from then.

During the 1976 State Amateur, when I was AGA president, Bob came to me and said he was retiring. He asked me to keep his decision to myself. It was time for a new regime so I talked to Elbert Jemison and Joe King. Joe agreed to take it on, to be followed by Buford McCarty.

Other states were going the same way regarding the executive director position and it was time for us to get onboard with computers, etc. Making a real and proper job of it.

I also remember when Elbert was working with the USGA. He got the Members Program started and he kicked it off at the White House! I had to pinch myself because here I was having breakfast in Washington, D.C., with President Gerald Ford, Arnold Palmer, and Elbert Jemison as they launched the program (which is still ongoing to this day).



Steve Goldstein

and I'll feel some stronger emotion. But the way I won it, the feeling had kinda settled in while I was out there. I didn't feel I could lose when I teed off, and by 14 I knew it was over. I didn't make a birdie today, but I wasn't looking for one. If birdies came, fine. But I was just keeping the ball away from trouble and playing for the middle of the greens."

Job well and truly done.

1979

Florence's Jud Stockard only led the State Amateur when it mattered . . . at the very end. He won the title on the second playoff hole from Montgomery's Emile Vaughan after they had both shot 290 for the championship at Saugahatchee Country Club in Opelika.

Heading into the final hole of regulation, Stockard was one back of

"I didn't feel I could lose when I teed off, and by 14 I knew it was over."

—Steve Goldstein as reported by Jimmy Bryan in the *Birmingham News*



Jud Stockard

“This is absolutely my biggest golf accomplishment ever. I’ve won lots of tournaments in North Alabama, but the State Amateur is something different.”

—Jud Stockard as reported by Jimmy Bryan in the *Birmingham News*

Vaughan, but his par was enough to force a playoff as Vaughan made bogey. Birmingham’s Cecil Ingram III had a chance to make it a three-way playoff, but he also bogeyed the closing hole to fall one short. Ingram led after the first three rounds, but two double bogeys on the back nine, coupled with his closing bogey, left him on the outside looking in.

Vaughan also struggled on the final back nine shooting four over par, while Stockard made up a lot of ground with a one-under closing stretch, including a birdie-birdie-par finish, while Ingram missed a five-footer on the home hole that would have won it. Stockard rode the momentum into the playoff, winning it with a par on the second hole.

“I can’t believe I won it,” the thirty-one-year-old told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*. “I didn’t think I would ever win this tournament, unless

it came back to Turtle Point, my home course. When I won third in a playoff last year, I thought that would be as close as I would ever come. This is absolutely my biggest golf accomplishment ever. I’ve won lots of tournaments in North Alabama, but the State Amateur is something different.”

And to think, Stockard almost withdrew as he was still suffering the affects of “mono” and admitted to being very weak. “Being weak might have helped me. My philosophy was not to hit the ball long, but concentrate on staying in the fairway.”

What’s that old adage about beware of the injured or ill golfer . . .

The 1980s

1980

The headline read: “Ingram reaches manhood, sweeps State Amateur.” And what a finish Birmingham’s Cecil Ingram III conjured up at Riverchase Country Club to take the State Amateur as the new decade dawned.

Jimmy Bryan most expressively told the readers of the *Birmingham News* that Ingram had begun the final round of the State Amateur as a twenty-year-old boy and had ended the day as the champion and a twenty-one-year-old man. As he strode to the sixteenth tee, the seventieth hole of the championship, he approached the time he had been born twenty-one years before. Karma took over as ten minutes later he had holed a forty-five-yard wedge shot for an eagle 3 and had gone from being tied for the lead with Ken Postlewait to three ahead as a stunned Postlewait three-putted for a bogey 6.

For good measure Ingram added a birdie 3 on the next hole, just as his

watched ticked to 6:30 pm and thus he turned twenty-one exactly. “I was 20 when I made eagle on 16. When I made birdie on 17, I was 21.”

The final margin was two shots as Ingram shot rounds of 68-72-73-74—287, with Postlewait on 70-69-73-77—289. The



Cecil Ingram III

University of Alabama golfer felt like he willed himself to the win and credited his never-say-die attitude.

And you might say winning the State Amateur was like the “cherry on top” for Ingram. Earlier in the year he played in The Masters having qualified to play at Augusta National by making it to the semifinals of the 1979 U.S. Amateur Championship at Canterbury Golf Club in Cleveland, Ohio. Ingram lost to John Cook in the semifinals, with Mark O’Meara beating Cook in the final.

1981

Green Valley Country Club’s Steve Lowery, already a top player for the University of Alabama, followed his destiny and won the 1981 State Amateur at Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City. At age sixteen he had won the State Junior and he was eighteen when he won the Southern Junior. His State Amateur triumph kept up the two-year increments as he won it as a twenty-year-old.



Steve Lowery

Lowery defeated reigning champion Cecil Ingram III and Tom Jones of Valley Head by two shots shooting 71-73-72-74-290. Ingram and Jones shot final rounds of 75 and 77, respectively.

“Winning the State Amateur was my goal for the summer,” Lowery told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*, who described Lowery as a strapping lad. “And the only way I know to describe my emotions at the moment is I’m real

happy. I wanted this more than any other tournament. I hit the ball well for the four days and I figure I deserved to be there. I didn’t win by much, but it was enough. I didn’t back in.”

He also talked about the dynamic of playing with his Alabama teammate Ingram. “It’s tough when I’m playing with Cecil though. We grew up together. It gets to be a me-you thing whether you want it to be or not.”

1982

John Fridge III froze out the opposition in the State Amateur played at Dothan Country Club, with the Mobile native winning wire-to-wire. He shot 69-72-75-76-292 to beat Auburn golfer Walton Ashwander by 3 and 4 over Greg Chandler of Huntsville Country Club.

Fridge, age nineteen, had just left Wake Forest after one year on the golf team and he would subsequently attend Auburn to play golf. His opening round of 69 was the only sub-par round of the championship as all players found the Dothan layout tough to conquer. “As I’ve said all week, I’ve been playing real strong this summer. I just haven’t won.

To win this tournament on this course feels super.”

He could afford a sloppy bogey-double bogey finish as his lead was significant. All players talked about how thick and tough the rough was, so it was no surprise that Fridge’s winning score was eight over par.

Chandler provided his closest opposition, but could never catch Fridge to put enough pressure on him. “John is



John Fridge III

such a great player and worthy champion. He outplayed everybody this week and deserved it," Chandler said. "The best man won."

1983

Nineteen eighty-three would mark the beginning of Sam Farlow's domination of the State Amateur as he would go on to



Sam Farlow

"I see some mighty good names on that trophy . . . so I put my name in some good company. I can look back in 20 years and be proud it's there."

—Sam Farlow

match Sam Perry's record haul of four wins, and he would do it over a six-year period. And his first victory could not have been any closer as he came to the closing hole at Pine Tree Country Club level with young John Sadie, a schoolboy from Montgomery.

Farlow, who had starred for the University of Alabama and then turned professional, had just got his amateur status back three months prior to the State Amateur. He came in playing well, having won the Vestavia and Musgrove Invitationals.

Back to the closing hole, Farlow had a one-shot lead leaving the seventeenth green. His approach on the par four ended up eighty feet away, while Sadie hit his second just six feet from the cup. A playoff loomed. After Farlow hit his first putt to just outside six feet, he was adjudged to still be away. He calmly slotted home the putt for par and was round in rounds of 75-73-71-73—292.

Sadie needed his birdie putt to force a playoff, but it slid by to the left and thus he came up one shot short with scores of 77-74-69-73—293. Walton Ashwander finished a shot further back in third.

"It's great to win this championship on one of the top three or four courses in the state against the best players in the state. Pine Tree separates the men from the boys," Farlow said. "I see some mighty good names on that trophy . . . Gardner Dickinson, Mac McLendon, Hubert Green . . . so I put my name in some good company. I can look back in 20 years and be proud it's there."

Certainly, as history shows, the name of Sam Farlow would very much belong on the trophy too.

1984

Montgomery's Talbert Griffin III certainly used his home course knowledge to good effect as he won the Montgomery

Country Club Championship and Invitational and State Amateur in the summer of 1984. In a championship reduced to fifty-four holes due to heavy rain, Griffin ran out a one-shot winner on even-par 210 over Greg Jones of Mobile and Scott Warzecha of Montgomery.

Griffin took a five-shot lead into the closing round and he needed every one



Talbert Griffin III (Joe Songer)

of them. "I never got the feel of it [in the final round]. I wasn't consciously trying to play defensive golf, but with the big lead I had I wasn't going to throw it away by being too aggressive. I found myself playing to the safe side of the greens and fairways."

Griffin struggled to his closing round 74, but it was just enough to hold off the hard-charging Jones, who shot 67, with Warzecha shooting a very solid 69. The adversity, Griffin said, made it sweeter. "When you have it, lose it, then get it back, it makes you appreciate it more. I had a chance last year, so I knew about the frustration of coming close."

As noted, Griffin's win completed a trifecta of wins at Montgomery Country Club. He played flawless golf for the first eight of the nine rounds and played in the three championships breaking 70 in all eight of those rounds, slipping a little in the final round. No matter . . . he was still



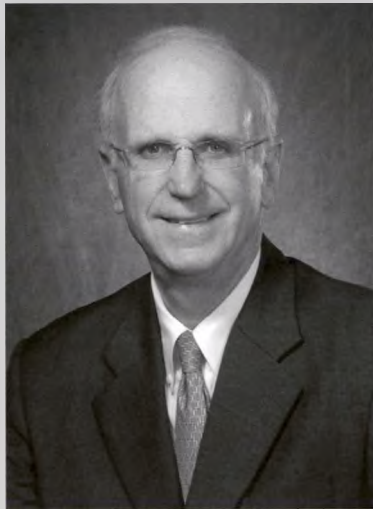
Tom Jones

crowned state champion. "I had never won any of those tournaments before and now I have won all of them this summer. When you reach your goal like that, you have to feel good."

1985

Valley Head's 6'5" Tom Jones made his name playing basketball, not golf, for the University of Alabama, starting for the team in the mid-60s. He had come close to the state title on more than one occasion, so his relief at capturing the 1985 championship at Turtle Point Yacht

RICHARD ANTHONY (1985–86)



Richard Anthony

As I reflect on my term as president of the Alabama Golf Association in 1985–1986 I think of several important individuals. The one that stands out first is the late Joe King who ran the AGA for many years. The AGA had limited resources and revenues but Joe provided outstanding leadership to the association because of his skills and love for the game of golf. He was magnificent in managing the championships, keeping our affairs in order, and communicating with AGA directors and the Alabama golfing public. I have great memories of Joe and his interest in providing service to the great game of golf.

In the middle of my term, a significant decision was made that has positively impacted the AGA's succeeding years. Joe felt the time had come for a full-time leader to take the AGA to even greater heights. He had a name and proposed Buford McCarty with great enthusiasm. I knew and respected Buford. Joe and I worked together to recruit Buford to the job as our top executive. The scope and influence of the association has greatly expanded under Buford's leadership. We are financially much stronger, the number of championships has increased, and Alabama golf has been strengthened. Buford is well known and respected all over the country for his expertise in golf administration.

I am grateful Joe and Buford have both served us in an exemplary manner and that I was able to work with them. The AGA has meant a great deal to me personally for many years.

and Country Club in Killen was palpable. He made a short putt on the closing green to seal his win by a shot from former champion John Fridge III and fellow Mobile resident Greg Jones. So ended an odyssey for the thirty-eight-year-old banker Jones, who had tried for twenty-plus years to win this championship.

Tom Jones tallied rounds of 71-76-71-77—295. Fridge closed with a 72, while Greg Jones was six strokes higher. It was definitely a case of “keeping up with the Joneses” as Birmingham’s Darrell Jones finished in fifth, with Chris Gustin a place higher. Three Joneses in the top five, but none of them are related.

“Winning the State championship has always been a goal of mine,” Tom Jones told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*, “and this is very satisfying. I’ve finished second twice, but nobody remembers who finishes second. Put your name on that trophy and everybody knows it.” He didn’t make a birdie in his closing round, but was still able to pull out the victory. He made five birdies in Saturday’s round, but said: “Par is such a good score on this course.”

So it proved, with his closing par the sweetest of all.



Sam Farlow (Bernard Troncale)

1986

The Sam Farlow era well and truly began in 1986 when he won what would be the first of three consecutive State Amateurs, with this one coming over NorthRiver Yacht Club in Tuscaloosa. Rounds of 71-70-67-71—279 saw Farlow well clear of runner-up Darrell Jones, also of Birmingham, by six shots.

Farlow spread-eagled the field in the third round as his 67 took him from one to seven clear and allowed him to enjoy Sunday's closing round coronation. "I knew if I didn't develop a serious oil leak out there I'd be hard to catch," Farlow said. "My thought was not to make anything worse than bogey. I had not played in a tournament with a seven shot lead in a long time. You want to be aggressive, but it's hard. I was trying to psych myself up to shoot 63 and beat Bubba's [Bubba Major] scoring record of 271. That's what he shot in 1969 in Selma, and that's by far the best score in the State Amateur."

Major's record would remain safe, but the State Amateur would be heading back to Birmingham with Farlow. He would not relinquish his hold on the title for quite a while.

1987

A different venue but the same result as Sam Farlow successfully defended his State Amateur title, this time at Opelika's Saugahatchee Country Club. Rounds of 70-73-70-71—284 saw him home by three from John Sadie, who shot 69-72-68-78—287, for his second runner-up finish to Farlow.

Farlow's rounds may have looked more consistent than anyone else in the field, but it was a roller-coaster ride for the champion golfer. He started the championship with a triple bogey 8, had another triple in the second round, concluded it with a double bogey 6, but he sandwiched an extraordinary twenty-one birdies in the seventy holes in-between. Sadie started the final round four ahead, but the University of Arkansas



Sam Farlow

All-Southwest Conference star couldn't back up his superb third round and limped in ten shots higher in the closer.

"This one is more special because it's happening right now," Farlow told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*. "All three of them [his state titles] have been so different. Last year I was way ahead, this year I had to come from behind. And the first one, at Pine Tree in '83, wasn't decided until the final putt. But they're all special. Winning the State Amateur will never be ho-hum if I win 50 of them."

1988

The Country Club of Mobile was the venue, but the champion remained the same. Sam Farlow became the first (and only) person to capture three State Amateurs in a row.

"Winning the State Amateur will never be ho-hum if I win 50 of them."

—Sam Farlow as reported by Jimmy Bryan in the *Birmingham News*

Rounds of 71-71-73-71—286 saw Farlow come from behind to win. Richard Jeffers III had begun the final round one ahead, but faded to a closing 77 to finish third on 290. Fellow host club member Joey Dzwonkowski closed with a 69 round to finish second on 288.

It was Farlow's title . . . again.

"Relieved, kind of," Farlow told Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News*, "but more excited. It hasn't sunk in yet. I think it's something I'll look back on 15 years from now and it'll mean more. When my son [three-year-old Bo] starts playing, it'll be special to show him my name on the championship trophy three years in a row. But it's special now. A lot of good golfers have played in these over the years and no one has done that. If someone had told me three years ago this would happen, I would have laughed. Heck, I just wanted to win one."

As the championship celebrations wound down, Farlow was getting ready to drive back home to see his wife, Susan, due any day with their second child. "She may have gone into labor," Farlow joked. "She was really excited. You can't believe how much she wanted



Sam Farlow

to be here. She was too scared to call, so I had to call her."

He was also being asked about his chances of four in a row, especially as the final State Amateur of the decade would be at his home course, the Country Club of

Birmingham. "I'll be there," he promised as he drove away. That he would be . . .

1989

All eyes were on Sam Farlow as he went for an unprecedented four-peat, but it was not to be as Gulf Shore's John Wright would defeat Farlow and Opelika's Will Blackmon by a shot over the West Course at the Country Club of Birmingham. Wright's rounds of



John Wright (Joe Songer)

75-73-72-72—292 left him eight over par, with Farlow firing 70-76-73-74 and Blackmon 75-70-74-74 to both fall an agonizing shot short of forcing a playoff. "This is by far my biggest win," Wright said. "I've qualified for the National Amateur the past two years and this is right up there with it as far as the thrill is concerned."

Weather had intervened on a thrilling final day, as lightning fizzled overhead and the black sky made for an eerie afternoon. Indeed, play was delayed for an hour after Wright hit his tee shot on the final hole, which must have seemed like an eternity to the Auburn University golfer.

After the weather cleared, he returned to par the hole. The stage was set for Farlow and Blackmon in the final group, along with overnight leader T. J. Jackson who faded to a closing 77. That left him tied for fourth with Birmingham's Jim Lovette and Huntsville's Spike McRoy.

Both Farlow and Blackmon faced lengthy birdie putts to catch Wright, with Farlow coming oh-so close. Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News* described the action: "His curling 30-footer grazed the hole and the defending champion fell backwards on

"I've qualified for the National Amateur the past two years and this is right up there with it as far as the thrill is concerned."

—John Wright

the green and lay there a few seconds in disbelief that he hadn't made the putt."

What a run he had had and what a final try to pull even. Farlow said: "The putt on 18 was as good as I can hit one. But it just wasn't my time to win. When it is, those kind of putts go in."

The champion's run had come to an end . . . but not without quite the fight. ↑

The 1990s

1990

Robbie Cotten rode a blistering second-round 63 at Valley Hill Country Club in Huntsville all the way to victory in the 1990 State Amateur. Rounds of 72-63-70-73—278 left him ten under par and four clear of Spike McRoy and Shaw Pritchett, with young Florence High School student Stewart Cink in fourth.



Robbie Cotten

Cotten mistakenly was told that McRoy, the Huntsvillian University of Alabama golfer, had shot a final six-under-par round. Cotten figured they were tied as he faced a fifteen-foot birdie putt. He rolled it home to win, but it turned out McRoy was around in two under for a six-under final total and hence the four-shot margin of victory.

The twenty-four-year-old from Brewton, a former All-American at Troy State, was able to hold off Greenville's Pritchett, a junior on the golf team at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, as well as McRoy. An anticipated charge from four-time champion Sam Farlow failed to materialize and he finished seven back.

Pritchett got within a couple of strokes on multiple occasions, but never could seem to rattle the very steady Cotten. "This is the biggest thing that has happened to me in golf," Cotten said. "It's the top of the mountain, so to speak, at least in the amateur ranks in Alabama."

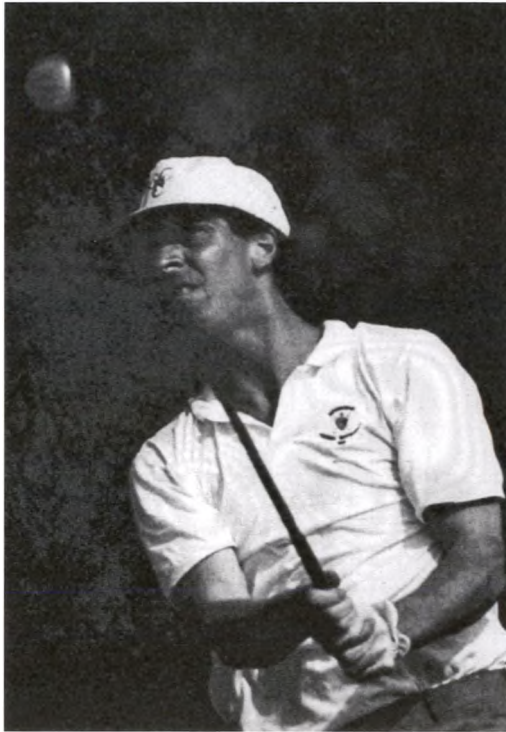
1991

Huntsville's Winston Walker held off legendary Sam Farlow in the 1991 tilt at Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City. Both ended regulation tied on two-under-par 286, with Walker shooting 72-72-72-70 and Farlow 71-73-73-69.

Walker, the self-admitted underdog, won with a par 5 on No. 1, while Farlow struggled to a 6. Jimmy Bryan of the *Birmingham News* recounted: "Can you believe this?' Walker kept saying to anyone who'd listen. 'I just don't how it feels other than I'm tickled to death. I've never won anything in golf.'"

A long-time hockey player, the twenty-six-year-old Walker had played hockey for the University of Alabama-Huntsville. Hockey had been his game since he was a young boy and he came to the State Amateur with little thought of contending, let alone winning.

Thomasville's Joey Davis had begun the day with the lead, but fell to a 75 and ended



Winston Walker (Steve Barnette)

up two back in third. Walker played a fine fairway bunker shot on the closing hole of regulation to ensure a par and found himself head-to-head with the maestro in Farlow.

But the playoff was anti-climatic as Walker reached the 527-yard hole in two, while Farlow was just over in three. He could not get up-and-down to save par and Walker took the three puts he had to win. "Sam made it easy for me. I was trying

to hit it on and make four. I figured Sam would make four, but he got unlucky with his drive [which was just two inches into the rough and meant he had to lay up]."

Farlow had an eight-footer for birdie on the final hole to win it in regulation, but narrowly missed. "Hey, I shot 69," Farlow said. "That's not exactly folding in the heat. But this one wasn't meant to be. Winning No. 5 is my goal every year, but I don't feel any more pressure to win than I did the first one."

1992

Weather delayed the final round of the 1992 State Amateur at Cotton Creek Club in Gulf Shores, forcing a rare Monday morning finish. When all was said and done, twenty-year-old Stewart Cink had claimed the title after rounds of 68-67-74-68-277, eleven under par and four clear of local resident and former champion John Wright, 66-73-71-71-281, with Rusty Stephens of Huntsville and the University of Montevallo in third. Cink, who was born in Huntsville and grew up in Florence, played on the golf team at Georgia Tech.

When play was called due to the weather on Sunday, Wright led Cink by a

shot with ten holes remaining. However, Cink came out firing with a tap-in birdie on No. 9 and picked off three more birdies on the back nine to run out the comfortable winner.

"It was a rocky road," Cink said. "This is my fifth State Amateur, and it's great to win. I got a taste of it five years ago when I was 15. I was in contention then at Mobile Country Club. I've wanted it since then. Actually all the pressure was gone this



Stewart Cink

morning. I was trailing by a stroke and had nothing to lose. The pressure was all on John, the leader. Today was like a new round.”

He certainly played without a care and holed three key, long putts of holes 13–15; one for par and two for birdie. “It’s a real thrill to win this. It’s the best amateur competition you can find in Alabama and I’m a native Alabamian. I’ve lived here all my life. It’s just an unbelievable feeling.”

1993

Stewart Cink was back in the frame the very next year at Green Valley Country Club, but he could not match Selma’s Bob Frazer who took the title. Frazer, whose uncle Bob Woodfin Jr. of Selma won the 1960 State Amateur and started his nephew in the game, matched fine closing rounds of 68 with Cink and ran out a one-shot winner.

A very close contest, there was never more than a shot in it the whole way, and they were tied playing the fifteenth hole. The one-shot final margin occurred on the sixteenth when a Cink three-putt proved decisive. They both parred the closing two holes, so Frazer won by one.



Bob Frazer

Frazer, age twenty-two, had just concluded his collegiate career at Auburn and fired rounds of 72-72-67-68—279 to finish nine under par, while Cink, a rising junior at Georgia Tech where he made second-team All-American, shot 70-70-72-68—280. Host club member Max McLain finished tied for third with Jim Fullington. “Right now it’s hard to stop smiling,” Frazer said. “I’ll probably sleep with a smile on my face tonight.”

The contest became a two-horse race and Frazer and Cink did not disappoint. Each went to the turn in 33 and came home, via two birdies and a bogey each, in 35. “There wasn’t time to think about choking,” Frazer said. “We were both hitting good shots. It was more like, ‘If you can do that, I can do better.’ This is the best four rounds I’ve put together in a tournament this big.”

DR. BENJAMIN C. DOWDEY (1993–94)



Dr. Ben Dowdey

Very active in the game, both playing and administratively with the Alabama Golf Association and the United States Golf Association in the 1980s and 90s, Dr. Ben Dowdey plays the game socially, but not competitively anymore.

He won the State Four Ball Championship four times with Joe Frank Terrell in the 1980s. They were also the runners-up one time. He was Alabama Amateur of the Year in 1987 and played in four U.S. Amateurs, four British Amateurs, three U.S. Mid-Amateurs, and a U.S. Senior Open.

He played a key role administratively on the AGA Board of Directors from 1980 to 2001,

including being on their Executive Committee for eight years, and remains a director emeritus to this day. He was president of the AGA in 1993–94.

Dowdey was involved with the AGA and the USGA during the same time frame, being on the initial USGA Mid-Amateur Committee for eighteen years. During that time he served as a Rules official at numerous U.S. Opens, U.S. Amateurs, and U.S. Mid-Amateurs. He helped found the State Four Ball and State Mid-Amateur Championships and had many other key roles within the AGA for twenty-plus years.

He is a true student of the game and is a member of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews and Royal Dornoch Golf Club, also in Scotland. He has also been a member of many area clubs through the years, including an extended time at Shoal Creek, and is currently a member at Pine Tree Country Club.

A graduate of the University of Virginia and the University of Alabama School of Medicine, he attended Ramsay High School. He was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2013.

Cink enjoyed the day too, just not quite as much as Frazer. “Today was fun. The tournament was won by Bob, not lost by me. I’m not at all sorry I did not repeat . . . Bob is a good friend and you like to see good friends win.”

1994

After heavy rain washed out Thursday’s first round at Burningtrees Country Club in Decatur, the players were forced to play the final thirty-six holes on Sunday. No matter to Anniston’s Eric Hamilton, who fired stellar rounds of 68-67, adding to his opening rounds of 70-70, to shoot a thirteen-under-par total of 275. This was good for a five-shot win over Huntsville’s Rusty Stephens.

Hamilton donned a pair of blue shorts with white polka dots for the final-day finale. Matched with his white golf shirt with the Auburn logo on it (he played for Auburn), the thirty-year-old banker stole the show with his golf and his attire.

Four-time champion Sam Farlow remarked: “Playing 36 holes and shooting 9-under, that’s pretty strong.” Indeed it was. “As far as the things I wanted to accomplish in golf, it’s the last piece of the puzzle. It feels special for me to win.”

Stephens tried to stay in touch, but, despite shooting a closing round 69, he lost touch. “He [Hamilton] made the putts I couldn’t make,” Stephens said. “He played one of the best games I’ve seen.”

Hamilton credited his putting as getting him over the finish line. “I’ve been hitting it well the last six or seven months, but I



Eric Hamilton

hadn’t been able to get my putter rolling . . . I just made the putts today.” Farlow finished in third alone, seven shots back.

1995

Decatur’s Jason Brown toured Pine Tree Country Club in rounds of 69-73-67-69—278 to finish ten under par and hold off Auburn University’s All-American Iain Steel (70-72-69-69—280) by two shots. Defending champion Eric Hamilton was in third, a further six shots back.

Brown, age twenty-three and a graduate of the University of South Alabama, matched everything Steel threw at him in what was effectively a match-play situation as the two vied for the title. The final day, Steel showed no let up in his chase, with fifteen pars and three birdies, but could not gain any ground on Brown, who had twice as many birdies but also threw in a bogey and a double bogey.

“Everybody wants to win the state’s championship,” Brown said. “I won the state high school championship, but never won a college tournament. I finished second seven times, including losing to Iain in the Alabama Collegiate in a playoff. I’ve put myself in position [to win] before



Jason Brown (*Wendy Gardner*)

many times. That’s called experience. You have to have it. I expected Iain and Eric to under par. I had to take care of business. It was quite an adventure, but I got the job done. I believe when it’s your time to win, you win.”

TIM TURNHAM (1995–96)



Tim Turnham

I served on the board of the AGA for about twenty years. I served on the Executive Committee and as president in 1995–96. I was very active for all those years and attended most of the tournaments around the state. One thing I am proud of is being responsive to our board's request and direction to become more active in junior golf. One of our board members and my good friend, Art Gleason, was very active in our State Junior tournament and served as its chairman for many years. He had a special place in his heart for junior golf and along with some other board members challenged our board to do more. We talked about how we could bring a new dimension to high school golf in

Alabama. With our expertise in tournament management, rules, technology, etc., we felt high school state events could become very prestigious and would challenge the programs to want to make it to the state championships.

After discussions with Executive Director Buford McCarty and Rules chairman Fred Stephens, we went to work. The first order of business was securing sites. We had to have a thirty-six-hole facility in order to have the girls and boys championships at the same time. I contacted the Robert Trent Jones folks in Montgomery and explained what we were trying to do for the high school golf programs in Alabama. They were all for it. They have been so gracious to allow these championships to be conducted at their facilities on a rotating basis each year. Now with the site problem solved we had to present our ideas to the executive directors of the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) and Alabama Independent School Association (AISA). We met with the AISA folks in Montgomery at their offices at Huntingdon College and we were well received. Next was a meeting with Dan Washburn with the AHSAA. We met at Hoover Country Club along with a representative of Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Dan was very receptive as well and we were ready to move forward. With the organizational skills of Buford McCarty things fell into place and a new era began for the State of Alabama High School Golf Championships.

1996

It looked for all the world that Sam Farlow would capture his illusive record-breaking fifth State Amateur title at Saugahatchee Country Club in Opelika, the site of his third title, but a final-round collapse saw him finish one shot short of a playoff between John Coles III of Moody and Lanet's David Stanfield, who both ended seventy-two holes of regulation in

285, three under par. Coles won the title on the second playoff hole with a par, after the players had both parred the first.

Thus Coles's closing round 71 was good enough to tie Stanfield and beat both Farlow and former champion Eric Hamilton by one. "I played a solid round and Sam didn't," Coles said. "I feel sorry for Sam and David, but I really like it for me." Two years earlier, Coles, who



John Coles III

originally hailed from Michigan before moving to Birmingham, won the Country Club of Birmingham National Invitational.

Coles understood his win would be remembered as much for Farlow's fall to a closing round 78. "I know. It's not so much I won as Sam lost. I certainly didn't expect a 71 to win it. In my mind I was aiming at 68 or 69 and hoping the others came back a little bit."

Coming to the final hole, Stanfield, Coles, and Farlow were all tied. All three struggled with Coles making his first bogey of the round, three-putting from long range, while Stanfield had tree trouble off the tee and also made bogey. Farlow went one worse and ended with a double bogey, knocking out of contention.

"It was just one of those days," Farlow said. "I could feel it slipping away on the back nine. I didn't handle the pressure very well. Obviously I'm very disappointed at not winning. Golf is a cruel game. Like Greg Norman said at the Masters, the sun will come up tomorrow . . ."

1997

Richard Jeffers III had been after the State Amateur crown for twenty-plus



Richard Jeffers III

years before finally snagging one over his home course, the Country Club of Mobile. Rounds of 74-72-69-72-287 saw him home by shot over fellow host club member Forrest Crabtree. Jeffers had finished second to Buddy Gardner all the way back in 1974 and came close again in 1988, finishing third behind Sam Farlow.

“That was the most nerve-wracking thing I’ve ever been through.”

—Richard Jeffers III

“That was the most nerve-wracking thing I’ve ever been through,” Jeffers said. “I had been hanging in there really well through 14 holes. I was two-under and leading by four. Then I made bogey on 15 and triple bogey on 16.” However, he was able to gather himself and reestablish his lead with a flawlessly played seventeenth hole with a birdie from ten feet. He then played a rock-solid closing hole to hold off Samford University signee Crabtree by a shot.

“I was running out of time to win this thing,” Jeffers said. “My days were numbered. I’m 42 and my game is not what it used to be. I’m getting shorter off the tee, but I can play well at times.” He admitted to surprising himself with the win. “I didn’t feel the way I was swinging I had much chance. But my short game was wonderful all week.”

Jeffers, who grew up in Birmingham and played golf for Florida State, moved to Mobile many years ago.

1998

Fort Payne’s Scott Weatherly completed a rare hat trick of state titles when he captured the 1998 State

LUTHER B. “BARNEY” LANIER (1997–98)



Barney Lanier

I have been fortunate to be involved with amateur golf my entire life. Getting encouragement from my father and grandfather, I began playing at age six. The Alabama Golf Association has been part of my life since competing in the Boy's Junior Championship at Florence Country Club in the mid 1960s. Since that time I have hit a few good shots and made a lot of bogeys.

While competing in many AGA events over the years, Richard Anthony and Joe King asked me to consider becoming an associate director of the AGA in 1984. There have been many milestones the AGA has passed since those

early years. Many championships have been added along with administration of the USGA GHIN handicap system as well as course rating.

For myself, the most gratifying accomplishment over those many years has been the successful merger of the Women's Alabama Golf Association and the AGA. There were many great ladies and men who felt, correctly so, the combination of these two organizations was certainly the best path for amateur golf in Alabama.

The AGA has provided me an opportunity to play competitive golf, make many lasting friends, and to be able in a small way to help contribute to the promotion and success of amateur golf in the state of Alabama. The original secretary of the AGA, Mr. Bob Phillips, and Joe King, the first executive director, would be proud of the organization they originally developed.

Amateur. He had already won the State Junior and the State High School tournaments . . . twice each. His five-shot win at Riverchase Country Club was fashioned after rounds of 71-67-69-70—277, eleven under par, to finish well clear of defending champion Richard Jeffers III, Birmingham's Jeff Fisher, and seventeen-year-old Daniel Ozley of Trussville.

Weatherly, a twenty-year-old sophomore on the golf team at Auburn, started the final day tied with Ozley, but the youngster dropped three shots in the first three holes to give Weatherly a lead he would never relinquish. “This means a lot,” Weatherly said. “It's the biggest tournament I've won in my short career.”

After a two-under-par front nine, Weatherly had established a nice cushion. He had a blip with a double bogey on No. 12, but bounced right back with a birdie, followed by a fine par save from a bunker. Another birdie allowed him to coast home in style, savoring his win, with his granddad alongside him as his caddie driving the cart.



Scott Weatherly and Tom Jones

1999

Payton Osborn didn't anticipate playing golf—let alone winning the State Amateur—but that's what happened to the Birmingham native at the 1999 state championship played at Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club in Killen. You see, Osborn was a baseball player at Mississippi State before nerve surgery on his right elbow in 1998 meant baseball was done for this athletic young man, and he transferred to play golf at UAB. Golf



Payton Osborn (Nick Nunnally)

was never his first love, but his natural athletic ability came to the fore. Not that he excelled that first year (1999) on UAB's golf team and he was far from certain he would continue playing the game.

His first State Amateur was the year before and he came to Turtle Point far from one of the favorites. No matter, he shot two-over-par 290 and finished tied for the lead with Willow Point Golf and Country Club's golf course superintendent Cole McInnis, who, at forty, was twice as old as Osborn.

A multi-hole, cumulative playoff (a State Amateur first) followed. On holes 1, 2, and 9, Osborn went par, par, birdie, while McInnis had par, bogey, par. Osborn took the title with a one-under-par playoff total. "This is a big steppingstone for me," Osborn said. "I don't know what I'm going to do, I don't know what doors this will open, but I know it's changed my attitude towards golf."

It certainly steered him back towards golf as he had been considering revisiting baseball. "This is like winning the World Series for me. I'm excited."

Osborn had closed the door on the millennium and would begin the next century in the same vein as he would capture his second State Amateur in a row. Not bad for a somewhat reluctant golfer . . . †

"This is like winning the World Series for me. I'm excited."

—Payton Osborn

The 2000s

2000

Payton Osborn became the first player since Sam Farlow (in 1987 and again in 1988) to successfully defend the State Amateur after he fired a final round of six-under-par 66 to win by one shot from Nick



Payton Osborn

Rousey over the Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City.

Osborn of Birmingham had rounds of 73-68-72-66—279 for a nine-under-par total. Rousey of Alexander City was tied for the lead going into the final round and added a 68 to his previous rounds of 70-71-71 to finish at 280.

Joey Holley of Troy, who was also tied for the overnight lead, had rounds of 71-71-70-69—281. Joey Dzwonkowski of Mobile was fourth (71-75-67-69—282) and David Miller of Daphne was fifth (75-72-72-69—288). With the five leading players all breaking 70, it was a day of high drama highlighted by the play of Osborn and Rousey.

“When I made the turn I said to my caddie [Tyrol Auret, a fellow golfer at UAB] that I needed to shoot four or five under to win,” Osborn said. It turned out he shot six under with birdies on Nos. 10, 11, 12, and 15 and an eagle on 17. His front nine was all pars except for a birdie on No.

7 and a bogey on No. 8. “On the back side I putted the way I should have all week. All the six and eight footers went in and then on 17 my putt was about 70 feet. It was up a slope and I couldn’t see it go in, but I knew it was in.”

Was the win sweeter the second time around? “For the most part I’ve not played well this year for UAB, so I wanted to do well coming here. For some reason, I seem to play better when the summer hits. During school my game seems to regress.”

Rousey had birdies on Nos. 9, 10, 12, 15, and 17 against a lone bogey on No. 2. He came to the back nine one ahead of Osborn and one behind Holley, played it in 32, yet still lost by a shot. “What can you do?” Rousey said. “Things just didn’t work out. How can you beat a 30 on the back nine? You can’t really. I just got outplayed by Payton. All you can do is shake his hand and congratulate him.”

Rousey had one of the most successful junior college careers ever playing for



(Seated L-R) Weldon Doe, Sonny Holt, Elbert Jemison Jr., Art Gleason Jr., Jackie Cummings, and Bubba Major. (Standing L-R) Buddy Gardner, Steve Goldstein, Cecil Ingram III, Sam Farlow, John Wright, Bob Frazer, Eric Hamilton, Richard Jeffers III, and Payton Osborn.



Central Alabama Community College, winning eleven out of thirteen junior college tournaments, including the National Junior College Championship in back-to-back years. He would then head to the University of Alabama.

2001

Tyler McKeever came to the final hole of the State Amateur on the West Course at the Country Club of Birmingham tied for the lead with Nick Rousey. Then fate took over.

After Rousey had hit his second shot twenty-five feet from the hole, McKeever stuck his pitching wedge approach just two feet from the cup and made the putt to win. "I was 130 yards out and that's a perfect pitching wedge for me. In the practice round I had holed my second shot from exactly the same yardage. That gave me the extra confidence that I could hit a good shot. I tell you, that two feet was the longest two feet of the tournament."

McKeever's rounds were 71-73-67-75—287, followed by Rousey (73-71-71-73—288). Talbert Griffin III (72-73-73-71), Robbie Cotten (75-70-74-70), and Lee Williams (74-72-71-72) finished tied

for third on 289. Two-time defending champion Payton Osborn fell back into a tie for sixth after a final round 77.

McKeever, age eighteen, is from Auburn and plays for Georgia Southern. He was the Freshman of the Year in the Southern Conference this year. (McKeever would play for Georgia Southern from 2000 to 2002 before transferring to Auburn and playing for his hometown university from 2003 to 2005). He made

birdies on Nos. 7 and 18 against bogeys on Nos. 6, 11, 15, and 17 and a double bogey on No. 2. What made his win even more remarkable was this was his first time to play in the State Amateur and he had to qualify just to get into the field.

2002

Will Swift grew up in Selma and played for Auburn University. In 2002 he became the undisputed State Amateur champion.



Tyler McKeever (Charles Nesbitt)

The previous August he had won the inaugural State Match Play Championship; then in June 2002 he added the State Amateur hosted by Hoover Country Club to his resume. But it didn't come easy.

In a day of multiple lead changes, there were five players at one point tied for the lead. However, it was Swift left holding the trophy after he defeated overnight leader Mark Donnell in a four-hole playoff. "For some reason I was real calm out there," Swift said. "I wasn't sure I was even going to play this week, so I didn't have any great expectations. Playing in college there's a lot of press. Starting out the week I just wanted to stay around par. The longer the tournament went, the harder and faster the greens got. Par continued to be a good score."

Swift's round of 71 was good enough to force the playoff with Donnell who followed up his record-breaking 62 in Saturday's third round with a three-over-par 73. They finished one clear of hard-charging Ryan Cabbage, whose 67 was the low round of the day, but he bogeyed the last two holes to fall out of the lead.

After Swift birdied No. 16 he had a two-shot lead over Donnell and defending

champion Tyler McKeever. But Swift bogeyed the last two holes to open the door for Donnell. McKeever had his chances too, but he four-putted the final green to fall into a three-way tie with Tim Mitchell.

Donnell came back from a quadruple bogey 8 on his fourth hole to play the last fourteen holes in one under par, but he ran out of steam in the playoff. Swift played Nos. 12, 13, 17, and 18 in one under par to Donnell's four over par to coast to victory in the cumulative playoff.

"I don't know what it was, but mentally I wasn't in it in the playoff," Donnell said.

"I definitely lost it between the ears. If you'd have given me second place before we started the tournament, I'd have taken it. It's disappointing to lose, but I'm still pleased with my performance."



Will Swift

2003

The 2003 State Amateur, played over the Cotton Creek Course at Craft Farms Golf Resort in Gulf Shores, went to a playoff for the second year in a row. Clark

Brown, a freshman on UAB's golf team, took the title in the multi-hole playoff over Scott Weaver of Madison.

The pair finished at eight-under-par 280, three ahead of Patton Kizzire of Tuscaloosa. Brown had rounds of 72-69-70-69, while Weaver closed strongly with a final round 66 added to his previous rounds of 71-72-71. Kizzire, age seventeen, shot 68-71-74-70—283 to finish third.

Rounding out the top six were Robbie Cotten of Brewton (72-69-70-73—284), Tyler McKeever (73-70-72-70—285), and Lee Williams (74-74-70-68—286). Both

McKeever and Williams were on Auburn's golf team. The third-round leader was Ryan Cabbage, the assistant men's golf coach at Auburn.

Brown holed a ten-foot putt on the seventy-second green to force the playoff, but at the time had no idea where he stood in the championship. "I just wanted to put a good roll on it and it went in. All day I kept focusing on shooting a good number. It feels great, so awesome to win. This gives me a lot of confidence."

In the playoff Brown birdied No. 16 from twelve feet; he followed that with a two-putt birdie on No. 17 and parred the

eighteenth. Weaver parred all three of the playoff holes.

On the final day, which consisted of thirty-six holes due to Friday's rainout, Brown bogeyed the par-3 sixteenth hole both rounds. But when it really mattered in the playoff, he hit a 4 iron on this 207-yard hole within birdie range and calmly holed the putt to get the upper hand.

Brown, age eighteen, played on UAB's traveling team all year with his best finish coming at the Conference USA Championship where he finished twenty-first. He is from Navarre, in the Florida Panhandle, and his father, Steve Brown, carried his bag all thirty-nine holes for him.

Weaver, twenty-nine and a three-time winner of the State Mid-Amateur, made quite a run, culminating with a chip-in birdie on No. 18 to post his 280 total. "For the first three rounds I played very conservatively. In the final round I let it loose. I felt very comfortable on this golf course. I went out in 31 [five under] and knocked the flags down on the back nine, but couldn't get anything to drop [on the greens]. I got beat in the playoff. I didn't play bad and Clark beat me."



Clark Brown (G. M. Andrews, Mobile Register)

2004

Lance Goodson of Hoover fired the low final round of the day—a 69—in the State Amateur to give him a one-shot win over 2002 champion Will Swift. Goodson’s four round total was four under par over the Graveyard-Brook combination. The championship being played at Bent Brook marked the first time in its history it was played at a purely public golf course.

After a two-hour rain delay, Patrick Levio held the lead at six under par with five holes left to play. Swift was at



Lance Goodson (*Jerry Ayres*)

five under, with Goodson at four under. Goodson turned out to be the only one to hold his position as he finished birdie, bogey, birdie, bogey, while Levio fell away with four bogeys in his final five holes. Swift bogeyed Nos. 14 and 18 to finish one short. Overnight leader Andrew Medley also fell back with a final round 76 to finish tied for third with Levio on two under par.

“I honestly didn’t think I could win before play started, not without some help anyway. I was five back of Andrew [Medley], but coming in for the rain delay I saw where I was now only two behind and was beginning to think I could do it. Par started to look better and better,” said Goodson, who played for Hoover High School and just completed his junior year on the golf team at Vanderbilt. Goodson cited the experience of playing for Vanderbilt in the NCAA National Championships as a great help.

He had his putter to thank for the victory as he holed a thirty-foot putt on 15 and one almost twice that long on 17 for birdies. However, he feared his three-putt on the final hole may have blown his chances. “I thought I needed that putt [on 18] to get in a playoff, but it ended up being good enough. I think my Dad [Lance



Will Swift (*Jerry Ayres, Birmingham News*)

Sr.] gets more nervous than I do. He was jumping around all over the place.”

As Swift stood over his putt for the tie and a playoff, Goodson figured he would make it. “Golf is a gentleman’s game. You don’t pull against your opponents. I had a putt there too that

didn't go in on the same green. It ended up being my week. The putts fell for me and I guess it was meant to happen."

2005

Will Swift proved to be much too swift for the rest of the field in the State Amateur. A final round of 67, combined with his previous rounds of 69-67-72, led to a nine-under-par total over the par 71 Limestone Springs in Oneonta, which more than stood up to the best amateurs across the state in very wet conditions.

Swift, who also won the State Amateur in 2002, won by three from Auburn freshman Patton Kizzire, who also closed with a 67. Kizzire finished at six under par, with Alabama freshman Gator Todd, who shot 69, the only other player to finish under par for the championship.

Taking a three-shot lead into the final round, Swift was never really challenged as he played nearly flawless golf. Six straight pars to start his round, then birdies on Nos. 7, 8, 11, 13, and 15 didn't give Kizzire or Todd the chance to make up ground. A final hole three-putt bogey did little to tarnish his third Alabama Golf Association title (he also won the

2001 State Match Play Championship, also played at Limestone Springs).

Kizzire came the closest to pushing Swift with birdies on Nos. 9 and 16 and an eagle on No. 13. "I just couldn't get close enough to him to put any real pressure on him," Kizzire said. "I expected maybe a mistake some place, but he played flawless golf."

Swift felt like No. 8 was the hole that really put him in control. Playing extremely long, this hole is normally a par 5, but the AGA chose to play it as 492-yard par 4. With soaking wet fairways it played more like a par 5 for most of the field. Swift blistered a drive and a 3 iron to twelve feet and his putt fell for the

BILLY WOOD (2005-06)



Billy Wood

My association with the Alabama Golf Association has meant a great deal to me for as long as I can remember. My dad, Walter Wood, won the first AGA State Junior tournament as well as many other tournaments around the state and Southeast. Tournament golf was engrained in me at a young age and I remember so many wonderful experiences going to AGA junior events as a kid growing up. My friendship with many of the AGA board members developed on some of these trips around the state playing golf tournaments.

My involvement with the AGA administratively was a result of my love for participating in the AGA events every year. It was truly a great honor to have been elected president and serve this outstanding organization. To be able to serve and work alongside Buford McCarty was not only fun but very much a learning experience as well.

AGA'S RV



Alabama Golf Association Executive Director Buford McCarty was reluctant to use the term trailblazers, but that is undoubtedly what the AGA is

to fellow state golf associations. Attend or play in one of their state championships and you'll see exactly why. The tournament headquarters is like no other across the land in that it is on wheels. Gone are the days of hauling all the related paraphernalia needed to conduct a golf tournament in a trailer behind McCarty's SUV. In 2005 they invested in a Fleetwood Pace Arrow, a thirty-six-foot, twelve-ton recreational vehicle. This "mobile command unit" is the hub of all tournament operations from the minute they roll onto a site.

McCarty could orchestrate a tournament from the RV and never set foot outside its confines. Of course that's not the case, he has to eat after all, but it is fully equipped with a dazzling array of electronics, laptops, weather prediction systems, wireless Internet, etc.

The AGA also has a management contract with the Southern Golf Association, running their three major championships. In addition, they also run the two state high school championships and three college tournaments.

The AGA provides real-time scoring, which is displayed both onsite and online. Spectators can follow the action on a plasma screen TV while they take a break for lunch in the clubhouse and then go back out on the course fully apprised of the scores. If they have to leave to go back to their office they can follow the action online. This is facilitated by scores being turned in to a volunteer every three holes, who in turn radios the mobile HQ. They are entered in real-time going immediately online. What an advance this is, as people across the world can track the scores if they so wish.

A major driving force behind these AGA advancements has been Derrel Curry. Curry is a certified public accountant by trade, but volunteers countless hours to assist the AGA, serving as chairman of their finance and rules and competitions.

Curry really pushed for the RV and helped make it a reality. "This [the RV] seemed like a good idea to all of us and we did a lot of research on the subject," McCarty said. "It is doing all we hoped it could do and so much more. We are delighted with it."

birdie. "I bet I would have won a skin on that hole! I'm not sure what it is about this course, but I've made a lot of birdies on it."

Swift graduated from Auburn in 2001 and works full time, playing mainly weekend golf. He has had a lot of success as an amateur. Has turning professional ever crossed his mind? "I'm very comfortable where I am right now. I don't want to live out of a suitcase and the only thing I miss from college days is playing more golf. The pros play at a totally different level and I love being able to grind it out with these college guys."

2006

Ben Moody began the final round of the State Amateur at NorthRiver Yacht Club in Tuscaloosa with a one-shot lead after three successive rounds of 69. A superb closing round of 66 left all his challengers in his wake as he ran out a six-shot winner over Daphne's Mark Ogren.

Moody's 273 total left him eleven under par. Ogren had rounds of 69-71-68-71—279 to take second by a shot from last year's runner-up Patton Kizzire (74-67-70-69—280). Defending champion Will Swift put up a strong defense to



Ben Moody (*Steve Barnette*, Birmingham News)

finish tied fourth with Gator Todd and Daniel Creel on 281.

But the day, and the championship, belonged to Moody, who had his father, Rick on his bag all four rounds. Both knew the course like the back of the their hands, as the senior Moody is the former women's basketball coach for the University of Alabama. His son played two years at Troy University, but chose to transfer to Alabama.



Garrett Osborn

"I knew where to hit it, but you still have to execute. I did that well all four rounds. The difference was today [in the final round] a few more putts went in."

2007

The first State Amateur of the new millennium belonged to Payton Osborn. Seven years later it would be the turn of his younger brother, Garrett Osborn. The brothers played golf for UAB.

TRAVIS "TAB" HUDSON II (2007-08)



Tab Hudson

starting as early as thirteen years of age and on to the age of fifty-nine, and being exposed to these standards, played a huge part in how I learned to play the game. Trying to name and thank all of the individuals who played a part in this over the years is impossible. They know who they are and how much of their time they donated.

From a director's standpoint, led by Buford and several key directors, establishing the Player of the Year point

Having been asked to reduce to a few words what this association has meant and has done for me is a huge task, but one I'll gladly undertake as the AGA is such an important institution.

First, the AGA established protocol of the excellence it expects from participants and from its board long before I became a member. Having the privilege of playing in AGA events

system was extremely satisfying. I truly believe this saved the invitational circuit as it brought more top players to smaller towns and gave all the members great golf to watch. As directors we laughed, argued, had to DQ players, ate many great meals, and sometimes enjoyed a cocktail together.

As president my greatest pleasure was being elected by my peers to lead this group. Working on the dream of Golf House Alabama was exciting, even though the economy of 2008 derailed the passion we all had to establish this place for our history and our future.

As a player I have always been proud to say I played out of Alabama. The AGA, under Buford's leadership, ran some of the best tournaments in the country. This is verified by the fact the Southern Golf Association selected our group to run their tournaments as well. Helping reestablish the Southeastern Challenge Cup Matches, as a player and a captain, will also always be a special memory for me.

Thanks to the presidents and directors before me and to Buford and his staff for all the great events over the years. The AGA has been such a positive to me and I can never say enough thanks to all before and after me for their efforts and mutual love of such a great game. Also, a special thanks to Fred Stephens for his years of effort in taking our events to another level.



Will Wilcox (Frank Couch)

Garrett Osborn won by one shot from Florence's Daniel Creel in a closely fought contest at the Country Club of Mobile. Osborn closed with a final round 67, but could never shake University of North Alabama product Creel, as birdies flew back and forth between them on the closing nine.

Osborn led by one playing the final hole, but his second shot to this par 4 found a greenside bunker. Faced with a tough stance and an awkward shot to the three-tiered green, he splashed his shot to four feet and made the putt to seal the victory.

2008

Will Wilcox's journey to the State Amateur was a challenging one at times,

but that made his eventual title event sweeter. He shot thirteen under par for the four rounds at scenic Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City to win by a shot from Cole Willis.

A highly decorated junior golfer, Wilcox comes from a golfing family in Pell City. Wilcox won numerous junior tournaments and headed to UAB to play golf but left due to personal issues. He got a second chance at Clayton State University near Atlanta and took that with both hands and became one of the top college players in the game.

At Willow Point he shot ten under par over the final two rounds to come past overnight leader Kyle Sapp, with Willis also very much in the mix. After Willis stunned the watching crowd by draining a forty-foot putt for eagle on the final hole, Wilcox was left with seven feet for his par and the win. He calmly made it to emerge as state champion.

2009

Hunter Hamrick tamed a challenging Founders Course layout at Greystone Golf and Country Club to win what would turn out to be the first of back-to-back State Amateurs. A sophomore at the University

“I like the frame of mind that I was out there chasing all day.”

—Hunter Hamrick

of Alabama, he shot a closing round 67 in the rain-plagued championship to come from behind to win by five from former UAB golfer Kaylor Timmons. Fellow UAB golfer Blake West led going into the final round, but a 77 saw him drop to third.



Hunter Hamrick (Jeff Roberts)

DAVID PEARCE (2009–10)



David Pearce

I'd played golf as a boy growing up at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas and then Arlington, Virginia. We moved a lot and I went to high school in Huntsville where I was on the same golf team as Rick Sirmon (who would play golf for the University of Alabama and won the Alabama Open, along with some other tournaments).

Later on, I started to make my way as a catfish farmer and have lived in Browns, close to Selma, since 1971. It was tough to leave the (catfish) farm and for most of my twenties and thirties I didn't play much golf.

In more recent years I've somewhat semi-retired and have had a lot more time for golf. Art Gleason got me involved in the AGA. He encouraged me to do so, which I did and I'm very glad to have done so. I knew the AGA first through my boys playing in the State Junior.

You know, Selma, per capita, has been quite the hotbed for state championship golf with the Crismans (Glenn and Lewie), Bob Woodfin, Sonny Holt, Art Gleason, Bob Frazer, and Will Swift all winning State Amateurs. With Glenn winning three and Will two, that's a total of ten. It's quite something they all came out of Selma.

You've also got Mike Smith, who won the State Junior two years in a row and went on to play professionally. The Burns family has meant so much to Selma golf including Bud and Tommy at Selma Country Club. Donnie Blanton played for Alabama and has won a lot, especially as a senior. Frank Cochran Jr. won the national amputee title twice.

And the Dixie Junior has been a fixture at the club since the early 60s when Bud Burns got it going.

Yes, Selma has a lot to be proud of in statewide golf.

Hamrick said he liked chasing the lead. "I play golf every Sunday. I might as well go out there and make birdies. I like the frame of mind that I was out there chasing all day."

Both Hamrick and West hail from Montgomery. West and his twin brother Adam had tasted state success by winning the State Four Ball in 2008 and again in 2009. †

The 2010s

2010

Hunter Hamrick successfully defended his title in the State Amateur, but it was a lot closer than he wanted or anyone expected. Taking a six-shot lead into the final round at Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club in Killen, he looked odds on to repeat with ease, but right from the start of his final round he struggled.



Hunter Hamrick

When all was said and done, he shot a two-over-par 74, good for a one-shot win over Dothan's Glenn Northcutt, who closed with the day's low round, a five-under-par 67. Cory Gilmer shot 69 to finish two back of Hamrick in solo third.

Hamrick, who hails from Montgomery and just finished his sophomore year at the University of Alabama, shot an imperious

"I'm very proud to have hung on to win. It was a real struggle."

—Hunter Hamrick

64 in Saturday's third round, but the old adage that it's tough to follow up a really low round with another one held true as he struggled to a 74. "I was hitting my drives everywhere . . . right, left, right and I couldn't find the fairway. It was a struggle from my very first swing. I needed every one of my [six-shot] lead. I'm very proud to have hung on to win. It was a real struggle."

The hole that won it for Hamrick was the par-5 seventeenth. A snap hook left off the tee and a pitch back out into the fairway left him with a wood for his third shot. He pulled it way left too and faced a next to impossible up-and-down from the trees, off the pine straw to a raised green. He played a miraculous lob wedge to twenty feet and

drained the putt to maintain his one-shot lead over Northcutt. "I'd say I might get that shot up-and-down maybe twice in 50 tries. I could not have played the pitch any better."

Hamrick was able to get himself together to hit a solid tee shot on the last hole and made a routine par to win. "I think this win means more than last year as I came from [five] behind in the final round last year. This year, to shoot one-under on the back nine when I was hitting it everywhere . . . I couldn't have done that [mentally] last year. "

"My whole goal [in the final round] was to go out there and give it everything I had. I'm thrilled with my 67. I'd struggled in the third round, but closed with two birdies and that gave me a little something to work on," Auburn graduate Northcutt said. "I knew where I stood all day and was pleased to make a lot of key putts to keep my round going. I take a lot of good things out of this week." Northcutt's five birdies and thirteen pars pushed Hamrick the whole way.

2011

In a day of multiple lead changes, Smylie Kaufman of Vestavia took control of the championship at FarmLinks Golf



Smylie Kaufman

Club with key putts on Nos. 13, 14, and 15. He closed out the championship with a two-shot win over Bobby Wyatt and by three from overnight leaders Hunter Hawkins and Will McCurdy.

Kaufman, who just completed his freshman year at LSU, shot rounds of 67-66-72-67—272, sixteen under par. He started the day five back of Hawkins, who struggled on the greens the final day and shot 75, to finish thirteen under par. Wyatt, the four-time reigning State Junior champion and a sophomore-to-be at Alabama, also shot 67 to finish one better on 274. McCurdy closed with a 68 to finish tied third with his first cousin Hawkins.

Kaufman went from leading by five after ten holes of the third round to five behind Hawkins at the conclusion of the third round. He was determined to get off to a good start in the final round. "I've never been so upset as when I left the course [Saturday], but a lot of people



(Birmingham News)

GEORGE WALKER (2011–12)



George Walker

I was privileged and pleased to serve two one-year terms as president of the Alabama Golf Association from 2011 to 2013. This was a very important period in the growth of the association, since it was the early period of the assimilation of the Women's Alabama Golf Association into the Alabama Golf Association. This was a consolidation that was long overdue, and I take great

pride in the fact that much of the important early work was done while I was president.

The ease with which the assimilation of the WAGA into the AGA was accomplished was primarily the product of strong leadership in the WAGA that the AGA was fortunate enough to inherit. I was very fortunate to have Carol Lell serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the AGA during both of my terms, and the association greatly benefited from the work, wisdom, and dedication of our first five women AGA directors: Carol, Chris Marr, Lucie King, Kathy Hartwiger, and Sandy Santa Rossa. The AGA directors considered ourselves very

astute in the areas of conducting championships and running a handicap system; we became very enlightened on topics such as fundraising, scholarships, and tournament organization once we welcomed our new women directors onto the board. The consolidation of the WAGA into the AGA was, by far, the most important activity I oversaw during my terms as president.

The other two important items addressed during 2011–13 were sponsorship and Golf House Alabama. The directors of the association had been discussing sponsorship opportunities for a couple of years before I took over as president, and it continued to be a topic of substantial, but not fruitful, discussions during the two-year period. I am certain that in the future, the Alabama Golf Association will have separate sources of income from sponsors; unfortunately, that progress was not fully achieved during my tenure.

Likewise, substantial progress was made, but not completed, toward a location for and construction of Golf House Alabama during my terms. A number of different sites were considered, and some were very well liked. However, it was recognized that Golf House Alabama was a long-term project requiring long-term and substantial funding. Our efforts in this regard from 2011 to 2013 were dedicated more toward supporting the Sustaining Members Club as a source for that funding. I am certain, in the future, there will be a Golf House Alabama, and I hope the hard work of the directors who served during my tenure will be recognized as a part of what led to the creation of that facility.

“It’s been a lot of hard work to get to this point.”

—Smylie Kaufman

texted me and called me and told me I was still in it if I could get off to a good start [Sunday].”

He did so, reaching the turn in two under par. At that time he was one behind Hawkins and Wyatt who blitzed the front nine in 31 to catch Hawkins, who played it two-over.

The back nine belonged to Kaufman, who played it three under par to pull clear. He made birdie on the reachable par-5 tenth, followed by solid pars on Nos. 11 and 12. He then dropped three fifteen-foot putts in a row for birdies on Nos. 13 and 14 and a key par save on No. 15. Kaufman made a routine par on 16, before an eight footer for par on 17. He then played the closing par 5 conservatively and made par, which was good for his two-shot cushion.

Hawkins, a redshirt sophomore for the UAB Blazers, led outright after eleven holes on fifteen under par, but bogeys on Nos. 12 and 15 left him three back. At the same time Wyatt went bogey, bogey on

13 and 14, before rallying with birdies on Nos. 16 and 18 to claim second.

Wyatt looked to be the man with all the momentum heading to the back nine, but he left his greenside bunker shot in the bunker on No. 10, which led to a par when he was looking for birdie, and he seemed to be not quite as sharp after that. “I did what I wanted to do on the front nine to put some pressure on Hunter, but I lost my swing on a couple of holes [on the back nine] and that cost me the tournament.”

But it was Kaufman’s day. Watched by his grandfather Alan Kaufman, who is the men’s golf coach at UAB and thus coaches Hawkins, he more than made up for his poor finish to his third round. “I saw the lines so well on the greens this week. It’s been a lot of hard work to get to this point.” His father, Jeff, caddied for him; it was a true family affair.

Kaufman’s winning total of sixteen-under-par 272 (matched two years later by Michael Johnson at Hoover Country

Club) is one of the lowest seventy-two-hole totals in the history of the State Amateur. Charles “Bubba” Major’s 270 total at Selma Country Club in 1969 still stands as the lowest total ever.

2012

Torrential rain washed out all but one hour and twenty-five minutes of play in the third round of the State Amateur at Kiva Dunes in Gulf Shores. It didn’t get any better on the final day as less than an hour of play was possible early that morning before play had to be called, and thirty-six-hole leader Andy McRae was declared the champion (70-67–137).

The former Samford golfer won by two over defending champion Smylie Kaufman of Vestavia Hills and LSU, who shot a 68 to go along with his opening round of 71 for a total of 139. Auburn golfers Will McCurdy of Fort Payne and Cory Gilmer of Hoover also shot 68, are on 142 and 143 respectively, and were the only other players to finish under par.

The last time the State Amateur did not complete all seventy-two holes was 1984 when Talbert Griffin III won at Montgomery Country Club after only



Andy McRae

three rounds could be completed. “The way I look at it everyone played the same 36 holes in similar conditions,” McRae said. “It would be easy to second guess or put an asterisk next to my name I suppose. This is not how I wanted to win, but that can’t be helped. I wanted to

“All I ever want is to be competitive and be in contention.”

—Andy McRae

play in the final group with the leading players and test those waters as I felt I had a really good shot, but the weather just didn’t let that happen.”

McRae, who is thirty, is an accountant and plays golf at Hoover Country Club. He has never had a low finish before in the State Amateur. “I played really, really solid for the two rounds we were able to play. All I ever want is to be competitive and be in contention. I very much wanted to play all four rounds, but it turned out that all we could get in was two.”

2013

Michael Johnson won the State Amateur over Hoover Country Club with rounds of 69-67-69-67—272 for a sixteen-under-par, seventy-two-hole total. He bested overnight leader Robby Shelton IV by two shots as the seventeen-year-old University of Alabama signee from Wilmer shot 68-67-68-71—274. Alabama sophomore and Mountain Brook resident Tom Lovelady was third after rounds of 68-71-70-72—281.

Johnson, who just finished his sophomore year at Auburn and was a former Spain Park Jaguar, started the day two back

JOHN MILLER (2013–14)



John Miller

I was asked to join the board of directors of the AGA in 1999 by my friend Cody Wesley, who is a director and current vice president of the AGA. I was introduced to the AGA many years before through Harold Wesley, president of the AGA in 1972 and father of Cody Wesley. Harold encouraged the junior golfers in Brewton to participate in junior tournaments around the state and specifically the State Junior. The first AGA event I played in was the 1984 State Junior at Bonnie Crest CC in Montgomery. That was the first of many junior championships I would play in during my teenage years. The AGA afforded

me the opportunity to meet others from around the state of Alabama and sparked friendships that have lasted for thirty years. I got involved with the AGA because I wanted to give back to the organization that had given me many great memories and friendships.

Today, the AGA continues to be a source for building new relationships and gives me the opportunity to test my golf game through the various AGA championships I play in. Having been a board member of the AGA for the past fifteen years, I have met many great people from all points of Alabama. Being on the Executive Committee and being president has really allowed me to see from the inside what a great, well-run organization we have and how fortunate we are in the state of Alabama.

“It means a lot to win the State Amateur.”

—Michael Johnson

of Shelton, but instantly took control of the championship and was two clear after just three holes. After they both parred the first, Shelton found the water on the par-3 second hole and his double bogey, combined with Johnson’s par, meant they were tied.

Johnson then hit a big drive and 5 iron to eight feet on the par-5 third. The resultant eagle putt fell and he had a two-shot lead. More magic was to follow as he chipped in for birdie on No. 4 to pad his lead to three shots. But then Shelton methodically pegged Johnson back courtesy of birdies on Nos. 6, 8, and 9. Johnson also made a two on No. 8, but he made his only bogey of the day on No. 9. They made the turn tied at fourteen under par.

However, there was another two-shot swing on No. 10 when Shelton three-putted and Johnson almost holed his pitch shot for an eagle, leaving a tap-in birdie. Shelton was undeterred and birdies on Nos. 12 and 14 saw him close the gap again

as standing on the fifteenth tee they were tied at fifteen under par.

A poor iron from Shelton meant he missed the green and could not get



Michael Johnson

up-and-down to save par. His bogey, combined with a Johnson approach to within inches, meant the lead was back to two and would stay that way the rest

of the round. A short rain delay delayed the proceedings, but Johnson made par on the final three holes, while Shelton made bogey on 17 and birdie on 18.

The win became Johnson's second Alabama Golf Association state title as he also won the 2011 State Match Play. "It means a lot to win the State Amateur. It's always nice to win at home. It was a really good battle [between Robby and me]. I was very comfortable starting the round and got off to a fast start. This is a special win for me."

2014

Will Cannon was two back at Lakewood Golf Club's Dogwood Course in Point Clear with four holes to play. Ryan Benton bogeyed three of the last four holes and Cannon parred in to win the State Amateur.

Cannon, a former Hoover High School golfer and UAB golf team sophomore, shot 68-70-69-73—280, eight under par. Dothan's Benton, who is a redshirt sophomore on the golf team at Auburn, had rounds of 72-68-66-75—281, seven under par.

Former University of Alabama golfer and Birmingham resident Clint Provost shot 69-72-70-72—283 to finish tied third with Pinson resident and University of

"It's one of the very best tournaments I play in and was at a great venue. I'm proud to have done it, to have won this championship."

—Will Cannon



Will Cannon

Cincinnati golfer John-Michael O’Toole, who shot 71-70-71-71.

“This is a huge honor,” Cannon said. “It’s one of the very best tournaments I play in and was at a great venue. I’m proud to have done it, to have won this championship, and I could not have done so without the help of my Dad [John Cannon, who caddied all four rounds for his son], my swing coach, Eric Eshleman, and my UAB golf coach, Alan Murray.”

He admitted he did a poor job of focusing on his own game and on one shot at a time, which had been his mantra the first three days. “I did a bad job regards my focus for the first 13 or 14 holes. Then I told myself to forget where I was, what was going on and just try to play golf. I knew we [Benton and Cannon] were close, but I wanted to focus better on what I was doing and managed that on the closing holes.”

That he did as he parred all four and it proved to be good enough. †





WOMEN'S STATE AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

Sadie Roberts Begins the Women's Alabama Golf Association

Mrs. David (Sadie) Roberts Jr. was the driving force behind the formation of the Women's Alabama Golf Association. The initial WAGA meeting was held at 3:00 pm on Tuesday, October 22, 1929, after completion of the first round of the Women's State Invitation Golf Tournament, the precursor of the Women's State Amateur.

Roberts was a busy wife and mother of three teenagers and was very involved in the game of golf. She was women's chairman at Roebuck Springs Automobile and Golf Club and conducted the state's first women's invitational. She was a director with the Western Golf Association and president of the Women's Southern Golf Association. These experiences taught her how to run tournaments. After much discussion, she was bound and determined to have an Alabama state organization for women and an annual championship similar to the men's Alabama Golf Association.

Roberts toured Alabama towns promoting a state golf association. She talked with clubs in Gadsden, Anniston, Huntsville, Selma, Montgomery, and Mobile and all agreed to join. "The Country Club of Birmingham was most generous and cooperative. In 1929 the club held and financed a tournament for the purpose of founding a State Organization. The tournament was successful, the women enthusiastic, and the State Association was founded. I was elected president," Roberts said in an oral history regarding the early days.

Roberts would serve as president of the WAGA until 1951 for a remarkable total of twenty-two years! She lived a full and rewarding life, continuing to take a keen interest in the WAGA, passing away in April 1988, just two months short of her one-hundredth birthday. The WAGA would be run independently until it came under the auspices of the AGA in March 2010.

1929

In the inaugural Women's State Amateur Championship, held at Birmingham Country Club, Mrs. Henry S. Geismer beat favorite Mrs. Carl Hess by a score of 5 and 3 in the scheduled thirty-six-hole final. Both ladies hailed from Birmingham, with Mrs. Geismer a former city women's champion while Mrs. Hess was the reigning Hillcrest Country Club champion. Hillcrest was the forerunner of today's Pine Tree Country Club.

A newspaper account of the day said: "Mrs. Geismer has swept past her foes by long margins through her campaign drive and her steady game against Mrs. Hess earned her a victory in the finals." She held a three-up lead through the morning eighteen and was never bested.

"Both finalists have carried the dope through true and took each of their [semifinal] matches by a decisive margin,"



The 1929 champion Mrs. Henry S. Geismer (second from the left) with other participants in the inaugural Women's State Amateur, including Mrs. David (Sadie) Roberts (second from right) and host professional Charlie Hall (center).





Mrs. H. S. Geismer

MRS. GEISMER WINS STATE GOLF MEET

**Mrs. Hess Defeated 5 And 3
In First State Tourney For
Women Golfers**



Bob Phillips said in the previous day's *Birmingham Age-Herald*. (Author's note: obviously a different meaning back in 1929, as "dope" meant story back then.)

Mrs. Geismer defeated Mrs. Victor Shewbert 7 and 6 and Mrs. Hess downed Mrs. Carl Liebold 3 and 2. Mrs. Hess was medalist with a 92 to lead qualifying with Mrs. Geismer in second after a 95.



Mrs. Carl Hess

1930

Mrs. Carl Hess, the beaten finalist the previous year, resided in the winner's circle the very next year as she defeated Mrs. Frank Barnes at Anniston Country Club two up.

Mrs. Hess was medalist after a 90 and successfully negotiated the match-play field to claim the title. She had to stage a strong comeback in the final, however, as she was two down through thirteen holes of the scheduled eighteen-hole final, before reeling off four holes in a row to win.

1931

Continuing a trend, the previous year's beaten finalist, Mrs. Frank Barnes of the Woodward Golf and Country Club, went one better the next year. She claimed the state title with a 2 and 1 victory over Miss Margaret Smith, also of Birmingham, at Gadsden Country Club, in the eighteen-hole final. Pettersen Marzoni noted in the *Birmingham News*: "... the match kept the interest of a gallery of 200 on edge all the way through."

He also noted, "... the best women golfers Alabama has to offer played golf at least six strokes better than the average of

"... the match kept the interest of a gallery of 200 on edge all the way through."

—Pettersen Marzoni, *Birmingham News*

the first event of the woman's association two years ago." He continued: "The final match was not of the par variety, but it was typical of championship flights in that both players showed evidences of the strain of five days of continuous golf, which is not usual in this part of the world."

1932

And yet again, for the third year in a row, the previous year's beaten finalist, this time Miss Margaret Smith, came to the fore in the final. She claimed the title over last year's winner, Mrs. Frank Barnes, with Smith winning by 5 and 4 at Beauvoir Country Club (now Montgomery Country Club). Pettersen Marzoni said:

Miss Smith . . . giving the finest demonstration of golf ever played in a woman's tournament in this state,

which includes the first year Alexa Stirling ever won the Southern golf crown . . .

Beginning her match one down, when a poor seven showed her initial nervousness, Miss Smith began immediately to show her championship calibre by shooting at par for the next 13 holes to bring victory. Her long shots, both with wood and iron, showed she has a game no other woman in Alabama has ever displayed.

‘I have seen them all,’ said Charlie Hall, pro at the Birmingham Country Club and Miss Smith’s teacher. ‘And there isn’t a one of them, Glenna Collett, Helen Hicks or anyone else who can hit a wooden shot or a long iron better than Miss Smith.’

High praise indeed for Smith, who would total four finals in a row.

1933

Miss Margaret Smith would become the first repeat champion. She successfully defended her state title with a 3 and 2 triumph over Mrs. Bee Cockrell of Gadsden at Mountain Brook Country Club.

Miss Smith looked like she would run away with another title as she took a five-up lead through eight holes, only for Mrs. Cockrell to go on a run of her own to stand two down through twelve holes. Alas, she could get no closer and Smith would close out the match on No. 16. “Miss Smith did not play the smooth golf in all departments of which she is capable but



Miss Margaret Smith

at one time or another displayed amazing ability at making virtually every shot required of a champion,” said Bob Phillips in the *Birmingham Age-Herald*.

1934

Mrs. Carl (Adeline) Liebold, who had lost in the semifinal round in the augural state championship also held at Birmingham Country Club in 1929, was the winner this time around over two-time defending champion Miss Margaret Smith over the East Course at Birmingham. Liebold (whose last name was also spelled Leibold in some news reports) beat the favored Miss Smith 3 and 2 in the final.

Liebold carded a 43 on the opening nine to be four up. With Smith producing better golf on the inward nine, Liebold matched her almost shot for shot and ran out a comfortable winner. According to an account in the *Birmingham News*: “Miss Smith, who is a long hitter, had her driver working in good fashion, but Mrs. Leibold’s ability to place her approaches close up with accurate irons, made up the difference.”



Mrs. Carl Liebold



Mrs. Roderick Trilck

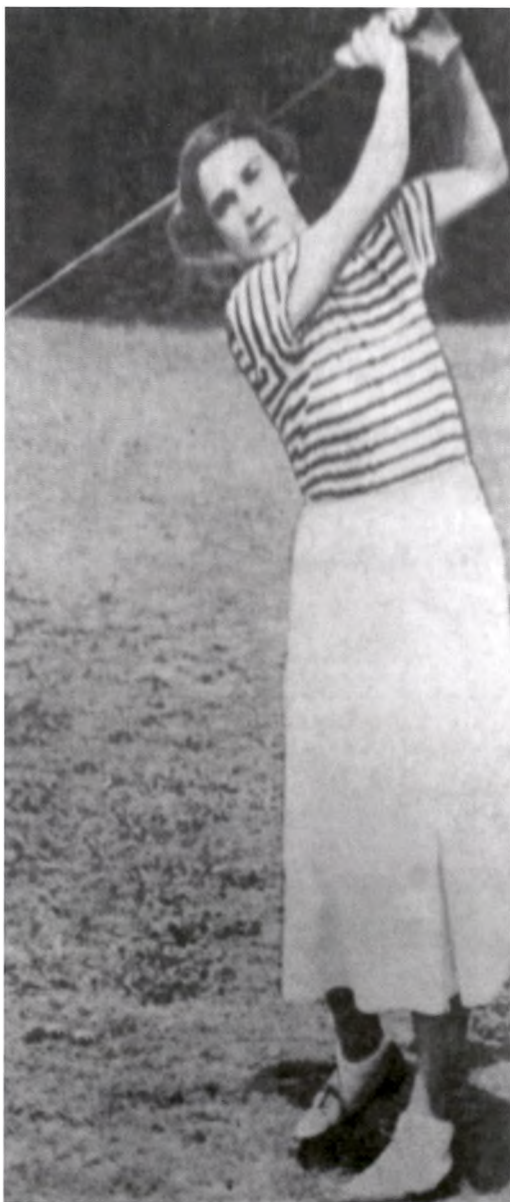
1935

Mrs. Roderick (Alice) Trilck of Birmingham beat Mrs. F. T. (Taylor) Peck of Mobile 2 and 1 at Mobile Country Club. “Victor over Mrs. Carl Liebold, defending champion, in an epic semi-final match, Mrs. Trilck blazed around the treacherous and tricky Country Club course [in the final], reeling off a series of sensational shots to finish the first nine with a four-up advantage,” a local newspaper account recounted.

Mrs. Peck, playing in front a large and partisan home gallery, rallied and looked like taking Mrs. Trilck all the way, but she three-putted the sixteenth hole at an inopportune time to half the hole after Trilck sank a twenty-footer for a matching bogey. They would half the next hole in

“Mrs. Trilck blazed around the treacherous and tricky Country Club, reeling off a series of sensational shots . . .”

—Local newspaper



Mrs. Bee Cockrell

pars with Mrs. Trilck now the champion, as she was down two up heading to the penultimate hole.

1936

Gadsden's Mrs. Bee Cockrell, who had appeared in the final two years before, would go one better this time around. She captured the title by 6 and 4 in the scheduled thirty-six-hole final at Anniston Country Club over Mrs. Roderick Trilck, the defending champion.

In a roller-coaster match, Cockrell was four down through fourteen holes of the morning eighteen and was, according to local writer Ralph W. Callahan, suffering greatly with the shanks. "But right there (after three shanked fairway shots in a row) is where the worm turned. The Gadsden woman [Cockrell] pulled her game out of the fire; in fact she pulled it to top form and with three pars and a birdie brought the match all square as the players quit for lunch."

Cockrell continued her top form and went to the turn in the afternoon four up. "It was the beginning of the end for the plucky Birmingham woman [Trilck]."

1937

Mrs. Bee Cockrell would become the second player to successfully defend their state title, as she did so over her home Gadsden Country Club course, besting former champion Mrs. Carl Hess by 4 and 3. Miss Margaret Smith was the first lady to win back-to-back championships, but she was now living in Tennessee and thus ineligible to play. She had also married and was now Mrs. Margaret Donaldson.

Mrs. Cockrell made a very fast start, courtesy of two pars and two birdies on the opening four holes and was immediately four holes to the good. Always in control, Mrs. Cockrell went into the lunch break four up. She was soon five up after the first hole in the afternoon, but then Mrs. Hess staged quite the comeback, winning four straight holes, and it was game on. However, Mrs. Cockrell got two holes back and was three up through twenty-seven holes. Six holes later she would close out the championship.

1938

Mrs. Ralph Carter of Birmingham put up a dominating performance to claim the state title at Mountain Brook Country Club



Mrs. Ralph Carter



Mrs. Peter Vrendenburgh

by 10 and 9 over Montgomery youngster Miss Joy McCann. Mrs. Carter went round in a spectacular 79 in the morning eighteen to stake a ten-up lead and closed out the match nine holes later.

Jerry Bryan wrote: "Reserving her top brand of golf for the proper spot, Mrs. Carter tossed a 79 at Miss McCann and against it the visiting girl could win but two holes. A 37 on the back nine produced seven more checks in the Carter credit column and the match was all but over."

Mrs. Bee Cockrell was not able to go for her third state title in a row as she now lived out of state.

1939

Mrs. Peter (Lucille) Vrendenburgh III of Vrendenburgh, Alabama, and a member at the host Beauvoir Country Club in Montgomery, defeated Mrs. Sam Friedman of Tuscaloosa 3 and 2 in the final state title of the 1930s. She took a three-up lead through eighteen holes and that proved to be the margin of victory sixteen holes later in the afternoon.

Mrs. Ralph Carter was unable to defend as she had since moved to Jacksonville, Florida. †

The 1940s

1940

Former champion Mrs. Roderick Trilck of Birmingham defeated Mobile's Mrs. Alan Knox at Mobile Country Club in commanding fashion, 9 and 8. Mrs. Trilck was five up after the morning eighteen holes.

An *Associated Press* report noted: "From there on [five up] the Birmingham woman had easy sailing. She dropped the first hole of the second round to Mrs. Knox, halved the second and came back to win the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh, and shot a birdie two on the eighth." The match would be over two holes later.

1941

Miss Joy McCann, beaten finalist three years before, would win this time over Mrs. Edward J. May of Tuscaloosa by 6 and 5 at Tuscaloosa Country Club. Miss McCann, a twenty-year-old University of Alabama junior from Montgomery, became the youngest winner of the then thirteen-year-old championship. "Miss McCann's victory

came as no surprise as she took the low medal honors with an 81 and defeated all previous opponents by decisive margins," an *Associated Press* report recounted.

Her fine play continued in the final as she sped to a seven-up lead through the opening eighteen holes. Mrs. May staged a slight comeback, but could get no closer than five down and the match result was never seriously in doubt.

1942-45

No championship was contested these four years due to World War II.

1946

Miss Joy McCann's record as the youngest state winner lasted five years, but just one championship, as Miss Ann Samford, at age nineteen, would win the first of her three titles as she defeated Mrs. Chester Zahn 2 and 1 at Birmingham Country Club. Miss Samford, a student at Sweet Briar College, a liberal arts women's

college near Lynchburg, Virginia, hailed from Birmingham and played at Mountain Brook Club, as did her opponent.

Mrs. Zahn went into lunch one up and the match was even through twenty-seven holes. Bob Phillips of the *Birmingham News* noted: "The expert putting stroke that had enabled her in the first 27 holes to overcome Miss Samford's superior distance began to fail Mrs. Zahn on the second nine of the afternoon round and the match ended on the 17th green when Miss Samford chipped



Miss Joy McCann



Miss Ann Samford with her father, Frank

dead to the pin for a certain four, with Mrs. Zahn one down and lying four on the green.”

1947

Mrs. Hugh Culverhouse, formerly Miss Joy McCann before marrying Mr. Culverhouse of Tuscaloosa, defeated Birmingham's Miss Bee McWane at Beauvoir Country Club 6 and 4 to win her second state title. Miss McWane would go on to a superb six wins and eight finals total, second only to Kathy Hartwiger's record ten wins and thirteen finals total.

Mrs. Culverhouse, described as free-swinging by the *Associated Press*, was four up through nine and seven up after eighteen holes. Miss McWane, fighting desperately, won the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth holes, but could get no closer.

The newspaper report also noted the Montgomery course played 6,350 yards, a very long ladies course, and to a par of 76.

1948

Miss Bee McWane was right back in the final the following year and went one better this time, defeating Mrs. Frank H. Roos at Mobile Country Club for the first of three wins in a row. She needed twenty-one holes to do so, as the scheduled eighteen-hole final went three extra holes.

Miss McWane had to stage a comeback, as she was two down through twelve holes after Mrs. Roos made a birdie 2 on the twelfth.

McWane then won Nos. 13 and 14 before Roos took the lead again on the fifteenth. McWane then squared the match on the sixteenth hole and they remained tied until Miss McWane won it in some style with a birdie 4 on the twenty-first.

1949

Miss Bee McWane was victorious again, this time at Anniston Country Club over Miss Barbara “Babs” Blakely of Anniston by 4 and 3. It was a battle of youngsters as “Miss McWane, a veteran tournament competitor at 21, played Barbara, who had just turned 15,” an *Associated Press* account noted.

Miss McWane had things pretty much her own way as she shot a two-under-par 35 on the front nine to stand five up. Miss Blakely showed some spirit as she won Nos. 10 and 11 to cut the deficit to three, but would get no closer. Miss McWane was triumphant again. †



Miss Bee McWane (right)

The 1950s

1950

Miss Bee McWane was victorious again, this time at Mountain Brook Country Club, again over Miss “Babs” Blakely by 7 and 6. As such, she became the first three-time champion and she did so in three straight championships. Miss McWane was on fire as she was just one over the ladies par for the twelve holes played and she never lost a hole.

Miss Blakely, still just fifteen, was a fine player in her own right who had made it to the semifinals of the inaugural U.S. Girls Junior the year before at Philadelphia Country Club (Bala Course), won by Marlene Bauer. Alf Van Hoose of the *Birmingham News* described Babs as “. . . visibly nervous and off her usual game. She was constantly in trouble from her first tee shot which went into the woods.”

1951

Mrs. Harry Webb of Huntsville defeated Birmingham’s Mrs. Sam E. (Ann)

Upchurch (nee Samford) at Gadsden Country Club 2 and 1. A newspaper account of the day noted: “Mrs. Upchurch led two up at the end of the first nine



Mrs. Harry Webb

holes, but later couldn’t match the longer drives and sharper putting of the victor.”

Indeed, at the conclusion of the morning eighteen, Mrs. Webb had gone from two down to two up. She would keep at least that margin during the afternoon round, eventually winning on the thirty-fifth hole. Mrs. Webb had to beat championship-favorite and three-time defending champion Miss Bee McWane in the semifinals, while Mrs. Upchurch took down two-time finalist Miss Babs Blakely.

1952

After a year away from the final, Miss Bee McWane once again took the state title, this time by 6 and 5 over Miss JoAnn Prentice at Birmingham Country Club’s East Course. This final match would be replicated for the following three years, with Miss McWane winning two more finals and Miss Prentice capturing one.

As Bob Phillips said in the *Birmingham News*: “Bee McWane’s the

'girl to beat' if you aspire to an Alabama women's golf championship, [this] was once more indicated . . ." He further noted that in the three years McWane had played in the championship and failed to win it, she had lost each of those times to the eventual winner. This year marked a return to a scheduled thirty-six-hole final after the WAGA had played a number of previous finals at eighteen holes.

Miss McWane played a flawless opening eighteen holes in just 71 strokes and built a commanding nine-up lead from which there would be no way back for Prentice. Phillips noted: "McWane's father, Bill, the southpaw golfer, suggested that the big improvement in Bee's game was in her work around the greens. She had learned to conserve strokes -- which is exactly what Joann's going to concentrate on from now on, take it from her brothers, Pro Dumer and Amateur Rather, who have been her teachers." Indeed it was Miss Prentice's short game that frequently let her down in the one-sided final.

1953

Miss Bee McWane took her fifth title as she staged a furious comeback to topple

Miss JoAnn Prentice at Tuscaloosa Country Club. According to a newspaper report, she "... uncorked a tremendous rally on the final 18 holes to defeat challenger Joann Prentice, 3 & 1, in the finals."

Birmingham's Prentice was five up during the morning eighteen, lost Nos. 16 and 17, but still led by three as the ladies took lunch. Nothing could prepare the gallery for the comeback they were about



Miss Bee McWane (left)

to witness as Miss McWane won the first seven holes in a row of the afternoon eighteen to go from three down to four up through twenty-seven holes. She played those nine holes in 34, four-under the women's par of 38.

Miss Prentice wasn't done though. She won Nos. 12 and 13 to trim the deficit in half, but she could get no closer with Miss McWane closing out the match on the seventeenth.

1954

Miss JoAnn Prentice would finally get the better of her rival, Miss Bee McWane, as she would win the state final on the thirty-ninth hole, the third extra hole, at Dothan Country Club. And she did it in some style as she sank a thirty-foot putt for a birdie 2 . . . a fitting way for her to claim her first state title.

As Doug Bradford said in the *Dothan Eagle*: "It was a well-deserved victory for 21-year-old Miss Prentice, as she finally shattered a long-time jinx with her fellow Magic City rival, Bee McWane."

In a well-played final, both players were round in 75 in the morning eighteen and entered lunch all square. The afternoon



Miss JoAnn Prentice accepts the trophy from Charles Dunseth with Marie Flowers (second from right) and Mrs. Harry Webb (far right) looking on.

eighteen never saw either player with more than a one-up lead, but Miss McWane narrowly missed putts on Nos. 17 and 18 by less than an inch that would have won the match.

The first two extra holes were halved, leading to the par-3 third hole, where Prentice would sink her winning putt.

"The new champ said later she 'knew it was going in' the moment club met ball. Visibly overjoyed at winning her first state crown and at finally defeating long-time rival McWane, Miss Prentice threw up her hands in happy relief as both girls embraced for congratulations," Bradford continued.

“Visibly overjoyed at winning her first state crown . . . , Miss Prentice threw up her hands in happy relief as both girls embraced for congratulations.”

—Doug Bradford, *Dothan Eagle*

1955

Miss Bee McWane would capture her sixth—and final—state title as she bested a familiar foe, Miss JoAnn Prentice, by 4 and 3 in the final at Mobile Country Club. Miss McWane dominated the match throughout as she topped the defending champion. She led five up through twenty-seven holes of the match, but dropped a couple of holes to lead by three with five to play. It looked as if Miss Prentice would further cut into the lead on the thirty-second hole, but she missed a tiny putt to three-putt and lost the hole to Miss McWane’s up-and-down for par. This left McWane dormie four up and she wrapped up the match on the next hole.

However, it would be far from her last involvement in statewide golf. In 2007 it was announced an annual endowment made possible by her would enable the WAGA to hire an executive director for the first time in its history.

1956

Mrs. Sam E. (Ann) Upchurch returned to the winner’s circle in the State Amateur as she defeated



Miss Bee McWane

Mrs. Richard Metz of Montgomery at Montgomery Country Club 9 and 8.

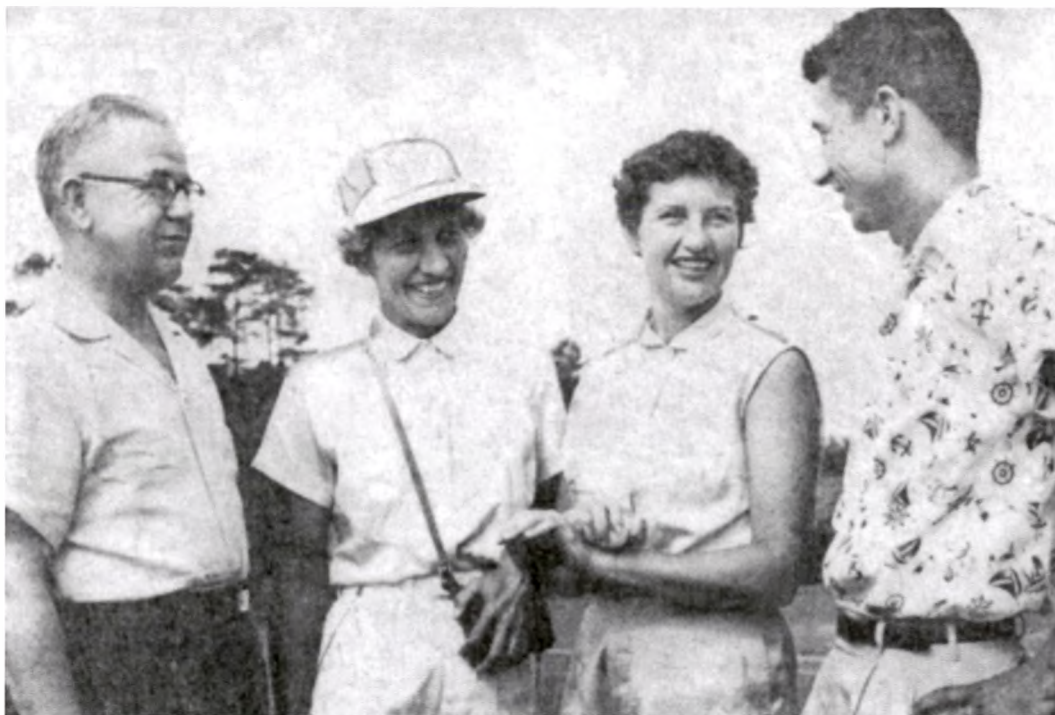
As Grantland Rice II of the *Birmingham News* noted: “Mrs. Upchurch, who won the title 10 years ago as Ann Samford, used a brilliant even par round on the first nine to take a commanding six up advantage. She was never in trouble from then on.” That edge was eight up after the morning eighteen concluded and the result was no longer in doubt as Mrs.



Mrs. Sam E. Upchurch

Upchurch's superior ball striking and putting proved to be the difference.

It was noted Mrs. Metz, whose husband Dick was a circuit pro for over twenty years, "saw her putting and chipping go sour. That had been her guiding hand in beating medalist Mary McCutcheon in the semi-finals." Rice continued: "Mrs. Upchurch, mother of three, including 5-year-old twin girls, kept the pressure on all the way."



(L-R) W. M. Mayson, Mrs. W. M. Mayson, June Mayson, and Wilmer Mayson. (Ed Jones, Birmingham News dated May 26, 1957)

1957

Mrs. Wilmer K. (June) (nee Buckhalts) Mayson of Mobile would win the first of her four titles as she beat Miss Mary McCutcheon of Jasper at Vestavia Country Club by 6 and 5. Mayson would show remarkable longevity, as she would appear in seven total finals, with the last one in 1984, fully twenty-seven years after her first appearance.

As Grantland Rice II wrote in the *Birmingham News*: "Easy-going, relaxed Mrs. W.K. Mayson out-drove, out-putted and out-chipped Mary McCutcheon."

Mrs. Mayson was four up after the morning eighteen, but saw her lead reduced to two after three holes of the afternoon session. No matter, she would quickly win back those two holes and it was only a matter of time before she closed out the match. Mrs. Mayson definitely came in as the form player as she had won the Mobile, Mountain Brook, and Pensacola Invitationals.

1958

Miss Minnie Lee Ashley of Gadsden defeated defending champion Mrs. Wilmer K. (June) Mayson of Mobile 5 and 4 at Anniston Country Club. Ashley came in as one of the form players having won Woodward Golf and Country Club's Invitational, defeating Mrs. Sam Byrd, who lost to Mrs. Mayson in the state semifinal, as well as the Gadsden Country Club Invite.

Miss Ashley, who had not played tournament golf in four years, played dominating golf to take down Mrs. Mayson. She had done the same in the semifinal,



(L-R) Mrs. Martin Anderson, Joe H. King, Miss Minnie Lee Ashley, and Mrs. W. K. Mayson

when she walloped another former champion, Mrs. Harry Webb, 7 and 6.

Miss Ashley led four up after the morning eighteen of the final and kept the pressure on, as she was soon seven up in the afternoon round. It was only a matter of time before she claimed the title.

1959

Mrs. Wilmer K. (June) Mayson was back in the final again for the third year in a row. Just like two years before, she was victorious over the same opponent, Miss Mary McCutcheon of Jasper, by 5 and 3. Mountain Brook Club was the venue this

time, with Mayson beating Mrs. Sam Byrd in one semifinal and McCutcheon beating Mrs. Dudley (Ceil) Watkins in the other.

Described by Grantland Rice II as “the 27-year-old cute mother of four, she was never behind after the third hole and she broke the match open in the afternoon round and coasted in for victory.”

However, the final was close through the morning eighteen as Mayson just led one up. McCutcheon won an early hole in the afternoon eighteen to square the match and it stayed that way through twenty-three holes. It was then that McCutcheon started struggling with her pitching and Mayson reeled off three wins in four holes to take a three-up lead heading into the final nine. She would subsequently close out the match six holes later. ↑



Mrs. W. K. Mayson (left)

The 1960s

1960

Miss Minnie Lee Ashley was the new decade's first winner as she collected her second title in three years. It was actually Ashley's second win in as many tries as she did not play last year. Playing at home in Gadsden at Gadsden Country Club she defeated Mrs. Dolphus Pruett by a score of 5 and 4 in the scheduled thirty-six-hole final.

Playing the first eighteen in driving rain, Ashley took a three-up advantage into lunch. She had added two more holes through twenty-seven holes and the result was not in doubt. She did, however, close in spectacular fashion.

Jimmy Bryan, sports editor of the *Gadsden Times*, said: "Miss Ashley, with a flair for the spectacular, mystified the fair-sized gallery by ending the match on a scintillating note . . . She chipped her ball from the rough approximately 50 feet into the cup for a birdie to end it all. It was a true championship finish."

At the presentation of the awards, former state champion and current state president Mrs. Sam Upchurch said, "I can sympathize with Mrs. Pruett. I've had to play Minnie Lee before myself."



Miss Minnie Lee Ashley

1961

Mrs. Sam Byrd of Birmingham won the title over Miss Carolyn Smith of Mobile by a score of 3 and 2 at Tuscaloosa Country Club. Taught the game by her



Miss Carolyn Smith (left) with Mrs. Sam Byrd

legendary husband, Byrd had long come close to the elusive state title. That would finally come to an end on October 6. A winner of countless invitationals over the years, including the Montgomery and Huntsville Country Club events earlier in the year, she came good at the right time and began the week playing well as evidenced by finishing with medalist honors. And she rode her hot streak all the way to the title.

1962

Mrs. Sam Byrd would put up a spirited defense of her title, but she fell at the final hurdle in the final at Mobile Country Club to Mrs. Wilmer K. (June) Mayson, twice former champion, of Mobile. Both ladies played well in stroke play qualifying and made their way to the final via three rounds of match play with Mayson winning by 4 and 3.

Mayson played stunning golf on the opening nine of the scheduled thirty-six-hole final as she was out in one under par and four up. Although she could not maintain that torrid pace, she was never headed and went into the break two up. The margin would drop to a single-hole lead on



Mrs. W. K. Mayson (left) with Mrs. Sam Byrd. (*John Spottswood, Mobile Press Register*)

three separate occasions, but she was never caught and captured two more holes on the final nine to close out the match.

A newspaper account noted that putting was the difference. “Mrs. Byrd

muffed several putts of two feet or less at critical points in the firing while Mrs. Mayson, at the finish, was putting exceptionally well as she established her victory margin.”



Mrs. S. E. Upchurch (left) with Elbert Jemison Jr. and Carolyn Smith. (*Birmingham News*)

1963

Mrs. Sam E. (Ann) Upchurch of Birmingham would win her third and final State Amateur in a thrilling match with Miss Carolyn Smith one up over the West Course at the Country Club of Birmingham. As Bob Phillips of the *Birmingham Age-Herald* would write:

“A never-say-die attitude backed up by a superb chipping game brought victory to Mrs. Upchurch.”

—Bob Phillips *Birmingham Age-Herald*

“A never-say-die attitude backed up by a superb chipping game brought victory to Mrs. Upchurch” who had collected the title before as nineteen-year-old Ann Samford in 1946 and again in 1956 after she married and became Mrs. Sam Upchurch.

It took a spirited comeback from Upchurch who found herself four down after the opening eighteen and staring defeat in the face. However, she fought back and as they reached the thirty-sixth and final hole they were all square.

Both players came up short of the challenging par 4 in two, but then Upchurch’s short game took over as she chipped up and over a rise to within inches of the cup. Smith was unable to replicate this wonder shot and made a bogey, thus allowing Upchurch to prevail.

1964

Mrs. L. A. (Sara) Cone of Woodley Country Club in Montgomery defeated Miss Mary McCutcheon of Jasper on the first extra hole of the final at Montgomery Country Club. Described in the *Montgomery Advertiser* as “two veteran players,” Cone had beaten reigning State Girls champion Carol Sanderson in the semifinal, while



Mrs. L. A. Cone (right) with Mary McCutcheon.
(Montgomery Advertiser dated October 10, 1964)

McCutcheon had claimed the scalp of the previous year's inaugural State Girls champion Judy Jehle. Thus, all but McCutcheon of the semifinalists hailed from Montgomery.

The extra hole in a long final was somewhat anticlimactic as McCutcheon found trouble with her second shot, had to take a penalty stroke, and eventually conceded the hole to Cone who had played it steadily in five shots.

1965

She had twice been a beaten finalist, but Mobile's Carolyn Smith was finally able to join her father and brother as a state

champion when she bested Miss Candy Phillips, also of the Port City, in a lopsided final by a score of 7 and 6. Smith's vast experience won the day over the youthful Phillips at Selma Country Club.

"Miss Phillips had swept into the finals in brilliant fashion, but appeared nervous in her showdown with the veteran Smith," a newspaper account related. "She [Phillips] could do little right in the final as compared to the cool, well calculated game played by her opponent."



Miss Carolyn Smith

Smith's father, Gordon Smith Jr., had won the Men's State Amateur in 1931 and her brother, Gordon "Buddy" Smith III, won it back to back in 1947-48. Thus they became the only family in Alabama golf history to have three family members each win a state title.

1966

Miss Kathy Farrer of Decatur would come out on top against Miss Beth Barry of Mobile at Willowbrook Country Club



Miss Kathy Farrer (Huntsville News)

STATE CHAMPION GOLFING FAMILIES



Alex and Virginia Green

When Alex Green captured the Boys State Junior title in the summer of 2014 with a closing round of 64 at Gadsden Country Club, it marked the first time a brother and sister had won the State Juniors in the same year. His younger sister, Virginia, won the Girls State Junior about a month before him at TP Country Club in Cullman. The Boys State Junior started in 1946 and the Girls State Junior in 1963.

The Green siblings hail from Point Clear and the significance of their dual wins was not lost on Alex Green. "Of course, I was aware of that [the brother-sister potential

winning combo]. We'd talked about it and I'm glad I was able to win so we could complete it. We push each other a lot and play a lot of golf together."

It was quite the summer for Virginia as well, as the week prior to winning the Girls State Junior she had lost in the final of the Women's State Amateur to Elaine Wood.

Let's take a look at other families having at least two state champions in their midst.

Leading the way is the storied Smith family of Mobile. Carolyn Smith won the Women's Amateur and Women's Senior (twice). Her brother Gordon "Buddy" Smith III won the State Amateur twice. And their father, Gordon Smith Jr., won the State Amateur.

Also from Mobile, Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson won the Women's State Amateur four times and the Women's State Senior three times. Her daughter Karen Mayson (now Bahnsen) won the Girls State Junior and is the women's golf coach at LSU.

Selma brothers Glenn Crisman (three times) and Lewis "Lewie" Crisman won the State Amateur.

Montgomery brothers Scudday Horner (three times) and Jack Horner won the State Amateur.

Greenville's Jimmy Ryan won the State Amateur and his son, Jimmy Ryan Jr., won the State Junior.

Tuscaloosa brothers Robert Maness and Jackie Maness each won the State Junior twice.

Jasper brothers Steve Hudson (twice) and Tab Hudson have both won the State Mid-Amateur. Steve has also won the State Senior twice.

Mobile brother and sister, Robert and Debbie Nelson, have both won their respective State Junior title. Robert has also won the State Mid-Amateur and the State Senior Four Ball (with Walker Grant).

Birmingham sisters Kathy and Betsy Birchall have both won the Girls State Junior. Betsy has also won the Women's State Stroke Play.

Birmingham brothers Payton Osborn (twice) and Garrett Osborn won the State Amateur. Garrett also won the State Match Play.

And Montgomery brothers Adam West and Blake West won the State Four Ball twice together as a team.

in Huntsville by a score of one up in a very well-played and contested final. In a battle of younger players, twenty-two-year-old Farrer, a senior nursing student at the University of Florida, would emerge victorious over Barry, who had just turned eighteen the week of the championship. Little did anyone know, but it would also mark the beginning of the Barry dynasty as she would appear in six more straight finals, losing the next two, before reeling off four straight wins.

After eighteen holes of the final, Farrer was one down after leading three up through nine holes as Barry came firing home in 35 shots to wrestle the lead. The standard of play in the final was the best seen in a state final to this point as Farrer would shoot 72 in the afternoon round, three under the ladies par of 75, to come through by one hole after Barry almost matched her shot for shot for a 74 total.

"I'm real happy to win this one," Farrer told Jim Williams at the *Huntsville Times*. "I've been waiting a long time for it. It was tough, but those last 18 holes were super. She [Beth] had more composure than I thought she would. She wasn't going to give up, but neither was I." The beaten finalist wiped away a tear as she said: "I'll be there next year in Mobile and I'll win it then."

1967

Joyce Ann Jackson defeated Beth Barry 2 and 1 in the final at Skyline Country Club in Mobile. Birmingham



Joyce Ann Jackson (left) with Beth Barry. (Decatur Daily dated June 19, 1968)

“She [Joyce Ann Jackson] played the course like the book says, waiting for Miss Barry to run out of holes and that’s what happened.”

—*Mobile Press*

resident Jackson, age twenty and a junior at Alabama College, twice had four-up leads in the final, but each time the tenacious Barry pegged her back to just a one-hole advantage. Barry, a sophomore on the men’s golf team at the University of South Alabama (they did not have a women’s team at that time), gamely kept going, but could never catch back up to Jackson.

The *Mobile Press* reported: “The game little South Alabama battler cut the lead to two strokes on the 33rd (hole) with another birdie. But that was the end of the road as Joyce Ann simply did not yield an inch under the pressure of Beth’s charge. She played the course like the book says, waiting for Miss Barry to run out of holes and that’s what happened.”

1968

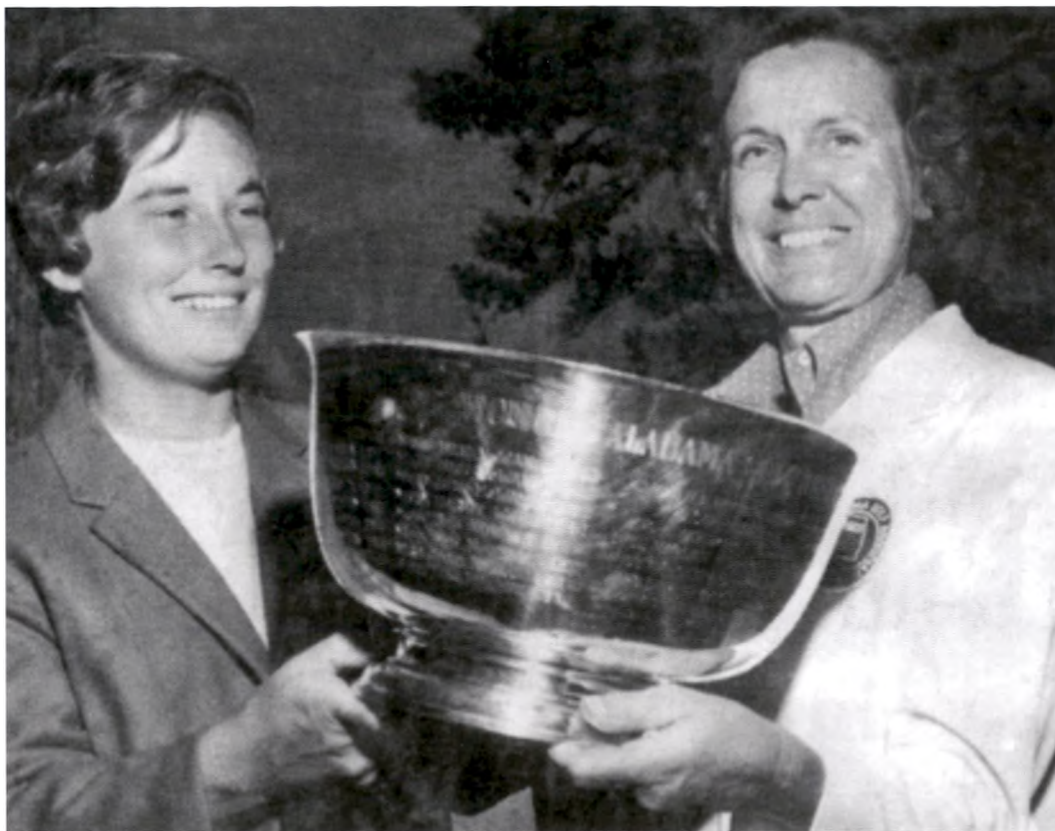
Two years on it was the same finalists, and the same result, as Kathy Farrer beat Beth Barry at the course she learned the game on—Decatur Country Club—with a masterful display of golf by a score of 10 and 8. Farrer, age twenty-four and by this time living in Birmingham, had grown up on the Decatur links under the watchful eye of head professional Bill Curtis, who was there to watch her win.

The contest was over in short order as Farrer charged to a five-up lead through nine holes, which became seven up through eighteen. She simply never let up over a course she knew so well and Barry was unable to stem the flow. Barry did make some brief inroads in the second eighteen, but Farrer would reel off four holes in a row, Nos. 7–10, to close out the match.

It was prophetically noted by Dick Bell in his *Decatur Daily* final round



Miss Kathy Farrer (*Decatur Daily* dated June 29, 1968)



Miss Beth Barry (left) with Mrs. B. G. Gilmer, president of Vestavia Country Club.

story: "... Curtis also taught 15-year-old Martha Jones how to play golf. Martha is the current Alabama Junior Girls State Champ and is destined to be one of the best female golfers to come out of the Alabama in some time. She can't play in the WAGA tournament until she is 18, but the field of the 1971 tournament

had better watch out." Jones, who would become Martha Lang, won four State Girls in a row (1967–70). She would not win the Women's Amateur in 1971 and would lose in the final in 1972, but rallied back and won it in 1973. This was just the start of her glittering and decorated amateur career.

1969

Beth Barry would finally claim the title in her fourth consecutive final appearance and liked the view so much she would not relinquish the title until 1973. Her run of seven straight finals was matched in 2008 by Kathy Hartwiger, who won six titles in a row from 2002 to 2007, before losing in the 2008 final.

Barry won in some style at Vestavia Country Club dusting Montgomery's Judy Jehle by 8 and 7 in the final. Jehle, age nineteen and a student at Auburn, took an early two-up lead, but Barry pulled even through nine and then went on a tear winning five of the inward nine holes to go into lunch five up. She gained two more holes on the afternoon's opening nine and two holes later was state champion for the first time. "... I thought I hit the ball as well as I ever have," Barry told *Birmingham News* writer Frank McGowan. ↑

"I thought I hit the ball as well as I ever have."

—Beth Barry as reported by Frank McGowan in the *Birmingham News*

The 1970s

1970

Another decade, another win for Mobile's Beth Barry as she successfully defended her state crown at Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club beating Mrs. Pete Mixon of Dothan by 10 and 9. Never troubled in the final, Barry led by six holes



Miss Beth Barry

after the initial morning eighteen and pressed on to a comfortable victory.

Doug Treadwell in his Doug's Tee Talk in the *Florence Times Tri-Cities Daily* described events thusly: "... Miss Barry held a six hole lead. From that point on, it was like a cat playing with a wounded mouse. It was just a matter of time before the kill. As it turned out, Beth administered the coup de grace on the 27th hole when she sank a long putt for a birdie."

Barry played exemplary golf, as she was the equivalent of even par for the twenty-seven holes contested.

1971

There was no hotter player than Beth Barry as she headed to Dothan Country Club for the State Amateur. She had been selected for the 1972 Curtis Cup matches, had gone all the way to the final match in the U.S. Women's Amateur that summer before losing

to Laura Baugh, and had won both the prestigious Western and Southern Amateurs that year too.

In a carbon copy of the previous final, she faced Mrs. Pete Mixon and won by an almost identical score of 9 and 8. Truly a dominating performance from a player at the very pinnacle of her game.

Barry was also the Southern Women's Amateur champion in 1971, '72, '73, '75, and '82, as well as the North-South Women's Amateur champion in 1973. She won two Mexican National Amateur Tournaments and played in several U.S. Opens, as well as playing on two Curtis Cup teams in 1972 and 1974. As previously noted, remarkably she played golf at the University of South Alabama as a member of their men's team. She has also had a massive number of holes in one over her rich career; a number of aces now totaling close to forty! A remarkable number from a remarkable player.

JEANNETTE SELL (1971-72)



WAGA Presidents Jeannette Sell, 1971-72 (bottom second from left); Sherry Scott, 1979-80 (bottom far right); Faye Edmondson, 1973-74 (back second from left); Jean Gilmer, 1969-70 (back third from left); and Alice Till, 1965 (back fifth from left).

Jeannette Sell's golfing career began in 1948 playing on a Kansas course with only a borrowed 5 iron and putter. Traveling around the world with her husband and the U.S. Army, she taught herself the game, eventually played to a 3 handicap, and picked up a lot of "silver" along the way. Now ninety-eight, Sell is the oldest living WAGA past president. She also served as president of the Ladies Birmingham Golf Association and the Women's Southern

Golf Association. In 1973, she was responsible for organizing the WAGA Senior Championship. Sell is pleased and truly appreciates that the winner's trophy bears her name. In 1977, in recognition of her many achievements and contributions to the game, she was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame. In 1983, she received the prestigious Sadie Roberts Award.

Reflecting back on more than sixty years of golf experiences, Sell's fondest memories are not of great shots, trophies won, or administrative accomplishments but rather of the people she shared it all with. She loved being a starter at championships

because it gave her the opportunity to meet and greet her many golfing buddies. The socializing would continue long after the round was done. She is quoted as saying, "I am going to go out there today and play the very best I can. But when the day is done, I'm going to come in and have a ball talking to my friends."

Jeannette Sell, WAGA president in 1971-72, clearly understands what golf is all about.



Miss Beth Barry (left) with Martha Jones. (Huntsville News dated October 6, 1972)

1972

Beth Barry would continue her winning ways, this time at Huntsville Country Club against Miss Martha Jones, who was now on the golf team at the University of Alabama, by a score of two up. Jones, who had won the Girls State Junior four years in a row, was playing in her first State Amateur. She pushed three-time defending champion Barry the whole way.

“She’s a fine player,” Barry told John Pruett of the *Huntsville Times*. “I’ve got

a feeling I’ll be seeing her again.” Jones replied: “I hope I’ll get in this position again some day. I’m gonna keep trying.”

Barry, a twenty-four-year-old graduate student at the University of South Alabama,

“It was one of the best matches I’ve ever been in.”

—Beth Barry as reported by John Pruett in the *Huntsville Times*



Miss Martha Jones in 1973. (Barry Fikes)



(L-R) Martha Jones, Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson, Betty Nixon, and Ouida Cunningham. (Roy C. McAuley, Mobile Press dated October 3, 1974)

was in control of the match after eighteen holes as she led four up, but Jones was far from done. She methodically chipped away at Barry's lead and drew level after the thirty-third hole of the match. Jones bogeyed the next hole to fall one down and Barry closed the match in style with a close second shot and a conceded birdie after Jones's birdie roll slid by. "It was one of the best matches I've ever been in," Barry said.

1973

Martha Jones won the title in 1973, a year after appearing in the final. Mrs. Pete Nixon would appear in the third of her five finals. Unfortunately she would lose the first four of them before winning her

elusive title in 1981. Jones's 4 and 3 win came at the Country Club of Tuscaloosa, in her adopted hometown while she played golf for the University of Alabama.

Jones took a three-up lead into lunch, but it was gone after five holes of the afternoon as Nixon staged a comeback. However, Nixon couldn't hold Jones and she went back ahead again . . . this time for good. She was mobbed by sorority sisters and friends at the conclusion of the match.

"I kinda thought I had things in hand after 18 holes, but things quickly changed and it was a real fight all over again," Jones told Ed Darling of the *Tuscaloosa News*. "I really wanted to win this one after finishing second last year and it's probably the biggest win I've ever had."

1974

Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson won the title twelve years after her previous win and seventeen years after her first win. In total, she captured four state titles ranging from 1957 to 1974. She beat Mrs. W. L. (Ouida) Cunningham of Birmingham by 3 and 1 and she would win it, for the second time, in her hometown of Mobile at the Country Club of Mobile.

1975

Jane Reynolds, a junior on the golf team at the University of Alabama who grew up in Huntsville, captured the first of her four straight titles at Burningtrees Country Club in Decatur defeating her Alabama teammate Denise Snellman by 3 and 2. "I hope this victory gives me the confidence I need," she told the *Decatur Daily's* Billy Mitchell. "I have been needing a big win and maybe this one will get me on my way."

Twice Reynolds built big leads, once as many as six up, but she couldn't shake Snellman. "I never thought about quitting after getting 6-down, but my holes were running out," Snellman said.

1976

Jane Reynolds kept the wins coming as she conquered Mrs. Pete Nixon at the Country Club of Birmingham. And

"I have been needing a big win and maybe this one will get me on my way."

—Jane Reynolds as reported by Billy Mitchell in the *Decatur Daily*



Miss Jane Reynolds

Reynolds staged a ferocious comeback as she was five down with twelve holes to go, only to win one up on the final green. She made a habit of such turnarounds as she found herself five down to Mrs. Dudley (Ceil) Watkins in the previous

day's semifinal only to turn that match in her favor too.

"I probably put a hole in the last green," Reynolds, captain of the golf team at Alabama, told Kathy Lumpkin of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*, "because I was so excited." Reynolds said she gave herself a stern talking to as she struggled earlier in the road and was able to come all the way back.

Mixon, who had come so close to the state title over the years, had a putt for a chance to win it on the final green, but it stopped two inches agonizingly short. Reynolds stepped up and made her putt. "When I walked up to take my last shot, I closed my eyes and could see it going in. I was talking to myself the whole time saying please go in."

1977

Jane Reynolds headed home to Huntsville and Valley Hill Country Club to notch her third state title in a row. On a rainy day, she bested Birmingham's Ouida Cunningham by 3 and 1 in the final, which was reduced to eighteen holes due to the weather. Rain had soaked the course all week making it play extra long,

but twenty-three-year-old University of Alabama Business School graduate student Reynolds coped best.

"This is the soggiest tournament I've ever played in," she told Phil Blackman of the *Birmingham News*. "I have the highest respect for Mrs. Cunningham as a competitor. If a few putts had fallen differently for her, the results could have been quite different."



Miss Jane Reynolds (left)

1978

Dothan Country Club saw Jane Reynolds match Beth Barry's record of four state titles in a row, which would be subsequently eclipsed by Kathy Hartwiger's six in a row (2002–07), when she beat Chris Spivey of Birmingham by 9 and 7.

"I'd love to win five in a row," Reynolds told Al Burluson of the *Huntsville Times*. "Some others have won it five times [Bee McWane had won it six times], but I don't think anyone has ever won it five consecutive times. I felt like I was in pretty good company, though, to win it four times with players like Beth Barry. Beth won it four years in a row and if she had played, could have probably won it four more." Barry did not play after her wins as she concentrated on teaching the game in her native Mobile.

Reynolds won the Alabama High School Golf Championship playing for Huntsville High School in 1971 and 1972 and first attended Vanderbilt University for two years before deciding to accept a golf scholarship at Alabama. She turned professional in 1980, playing on the LPGA Tour on and off for the next ten years. In 1990 she went to work with the LPGA as a

Rules official and did so for almost twenty years. "Working for the LPGA Tour for many years was a dream job that allowed a kid from Huntsville to still pursue her passion for the game of golf I first learned as a six-year-old," she said.

1979

A new name adorned the Women's State Amateur trophy as it was contested at Montgomery Country Club. Mrs. Lester (Mary) Isbell of Birmingham won the first of her three state titles beating Miss Jane Phillips of Mobile by 7 and 6. It marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Women's Alabama Golf Association, but the forty-seventh playing of the championship as it was not played in 1942–45 due to World War II.

"It was the first state crown for the sweet-swinging Mrs. Isbell, who played close to par golf while bowling over her young [nineteen-year-old] opponent in the scheduled 36-hole final," Max Moseley wrote in the *Montgomery Advertiser*.

Jane Reynolds was not able to go for her record fifth title in a row as she had moved out of state and was thus not eligible to compete. †



Mrs. Lester Isbell

The 1980s

1980

Miss Chris Spivey would capture the first of her five titles at Indian Hills Country Club in Tuscaloosa as she defeated Miss Shannon McAleer by 3 and 1. Over the years she showed remarkable longevity as her final title came in 2000, some



Miss Chris Spivey

twenty years after her first win, eclipsing the seventeen years between Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson's first (1957) and fourth (1974) wins and Mrs. Sam E. Upchurch's first (1946) and third (1963) wins.

In an exciting thirty-six-hole final match, with lots of ups and downs and



Mrs. Betty Mixon (*Ken Elkins, Anniston Star* dated September 25, 1981)

lead changes, it was Spivey who proved decisive, slotting home a twenty-five-foot putt on the thirty-fifth hole to close out Mobile's McAleer, a two-time State Girls champion. "I'm just ecstatic," Spivey told Frank Brown of the *Tuscaloosa News*.

It was truly a family affair for Spivey, as her mother, also named Chris, won the third championship flight. "Like mother, like daughter," said the older Spivey, who learned the game from a daughter just a couple of years before. "Or maybe that should be 'Like daughter, like mother.'"

1981

"After 24 years of golf and 14 years of competition in the WAGA's State Amateur, Mrs. Betty Mixon finally has her wish," wrote Joey Kennedy in the *Anniston Star*. Indeed she did as she beat Mrs. Lester (Mary) Isbell by 5 and 3 at Anniston Country Club. "Oh, you'll never know how long I've wanted this. This is my dream in golf," Mobile's Mixon said after her fifth

visit to the final match ended in her first state success.

Mixon took a five-up lead through the morning eighteen holes, but knew

better than to think things were done and dusted. "I've been 5 up before [in 1976] and lost on the 36th hole. I almost waited until I was a senior," the

HELEN SMALLEY (1981-82)



Shown are Ann Upchurch (1960), Jean Gilmer (1969-70), Sue Whiting (1967-68), Helen Smalley (1981-82), and others.

We would have fun at the State Amateur. After our meetings, we'd have cocktails and dinner and then dance. We'd stay at a Holiday Inn and Ruth Bridges would play her trumpet. There was a lot of fun and carrying on. I remember someone got so upset we were making too much noise that they threw ice at us.

In the early '80s we had a State Amateur at Riverchase.

We had quite the entourage of

carts with the thirty-six-hole final. All carts had red flags on them, with people's names across them. We all wore our white jackets, which is what we did until we switched to red jackets years later.

It was quite the parade of carts with fore caddies, scorers, observers, the players, and spectators. We were all in a line and came to a screeching halt as a porta potty had fallen across the cart path on No. 8. We moved it and carried on. What memories.

And I believe the most important thing we did when I was president was to incorporate.



Miss Claire Kyzar (left) with June Mayson. (Wayne Flesher, Mobile Press Register dated October 9, 1982)

forty-nine-year-old said. "I really felt I had a chance in this tournament. I've been playing real well all summer."

And so it proved to be.

1982

The milestone fiftieth playing of the championship was played at Skyline Country Club in Mobile with Miss Claire Kyzar of Rolling Hills Country Club in Montgomery defeating Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson of the host club by 4 and 2 in the final. Kyzar defeated Chris Spivey in the semifinals, while Mayson took down Karen Clark of Woodley Country Club.

1983

The next year would see Claire Kyzar back in the final. She would face Mary Isbell, with Isbell prevailing over her home course of Grayson Valley Country Club in Trussville by 4 and 3. It was Isbell's second state title.

"The second time is a little more fun," she told the *Birmingham News* writer Jimmy Bryan. "The first time you wonder if it was an accident. Win it twice and you know you can play well enough."



Mrs. Lester Isbell

Isbell played unstoppable golf in the morning eighteen holes as she carded nine birdies against four bogeys to be round in her best ever 68. Much to Kyzar's credit, she was only two down heading into the afternoon round as she played a fine even par round herself, including a double bogey.

The afternoon round was of a fine standard from both players, with Isbell, despite losing the first three holes in both morning and afternoon, triumphant.



Miss Diane Dean

"The first time you wonder if it was an accident. Win it twice and you know you can play well enough."

—Mary Isbell as reported by Jimmy Bryan in the *Birmingham News*

Isbell shot an equivalent of five under par for the thirty-three holes played.

Isbell didn't start playing golf until 1975. She played her first state two years later, losing in the semifinals, and she copied this feat the next year. She won her first state in 1979, won the championship consolation in 1980, lost in the finals in 1981, and lost to Kyzar in 1982 in the second round. Talk about a fast learner.

1984

Diane Dean, age twenty, of Birmingham beat Mrs. W. K. (June) Mayson of Mobile by 5 and 4 at Gulf Shores Golf Club. Mayson defeated defending champion Mary Isbell in the semifinals, while Dean beat Jane Phillips of Mobile.



Mrs. Lester Isbell (Steve Barnette, Birmingham News dated September 27, 1985)

1985

Mary Isbell took down Chris Spivey by 7 and 6 at Riverchase Country Club in a battle of former champions. It would prove to be Isbell's third and final State Amateur title and Spivey's third final (of nine). She would go on to record five wins. Both ladies had long and storied golfing careers and are both inductees in the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame. "Mary is one of the toughest I've seen, especially in match play. What separates her from the rest is her putting," Spivey told Mack Shoemaker of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*.

Isbell was round in 73 in the morning eighteen and five up. She kept playing

solidly to run out an easy winner. The win was noted as Isbell's thirty-second tournament championship. "I have to rate this win No. 1, because I haven't played that much golf this summer." Indeed, both players professed to be pleasantly surprised to be in the final as work commitments had meant slimmed down golfing schedules for both.

Not only did Isbell win three Women's State Amateurs, but she would win a host of other championships including the Women's State Senior a record eight times and the Lady Legacy a number of times. She was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2012.

1986

Chris Spivey was back in the final the next year and this time recorded her second state win in convincing 10 and 8 fashion over Lynn Bradley of host club Valley Hill Country Club in Huntsville. "I wouldn't have wanted to play me today," Spivey told Al Burleson of the *Huntsville Times*. "You have days when you think I'll play great and other days when things are not so great. But it was like that—great—for me all week long."



Miss Chris Spivey

Spivey, a surgeon's assistant, faced seventeen-year-old Bradley, a senior at Grissom High School, and was six up after eighteen holes on the back of a three-under-par back nine 33 where her game caught fire. She kept her young, but game, opponent under pressure the rest of the way as she ran out the big winner.

1987

Oak Hills Country Club in Montgomery was the site of Miss Claire Kyzar's second state win, when she pipped Michele Drinkard, who played at North River Country Club in Cullman, by a score of two up.

Both players led qualifying with rounds of 76 over Kyzar's home course and were named co-medalists, before each

made their way through three matches to meet in the final. Drinkard, who would go on to teach the game professionally and remains involved in the game as the head coach of the women's golf team at the University of Mississippi, was one up through the morning eighteen, but couldn't hold her lead in a well-contested and tight final.

1988

Laurie Burns Franks beat Kim Wilcox by 4 and 3 at Olympia Spa Resort and Country Club in Dothan. Florence's Burns Franks enjoyed a banner week as not only did she vanquish Vestavia's Wilcox to win the state title, but she got married to Kenneth Franks on October 1 and then journeyed south spending her honeymoon competing in the State Amateur, winning the title on October 7. "I had already decided to play (in the tourney) before we set the wedding date," she told Elaine Brackin of the *Dothan Progress*. "When we set the date, I knew I'd be here for the tournament."

Golf played a key role in Burns and Franks's relationship as Franks worked for Burns's father, Chris, the head golf



Miss Claire Kyzar (left) and Miss Michele Drinkard (right)

VIRGINIA BEAVERS (1987-88)



Virginia Beavers

a good golfer, I was respectable. I loved sports and good, friendly competition.

When I was host director at Valley Hill, I was nominated for and elected president elect. Such an honor. I was now in the position to appoint various directors to serve on my board.

My first year as president, we bought our first computer, but our problem was our secretary didn't know how to work

My introduction to the Women's Alabama Golf Association was to serve on the Host Tournament Committee for the State Amateur at Valley Hill Country Club. From there my next assignment was Area 1 director serving as the liaison for the clubs in north Alabama. In the meantime I played several tournaments. Even though I am not what you would call

it, so we sent her to school! One of the director's husbands was a programmer and he developed a program for our amateur tournament's pairings and scores. Unfortunately our vice president in charge was old school and she insisted on the old way, so we did them both. The computer took two hours off the time required and did everything we needed it to do. From then on, we just used the computer.

That first tournament was off to a bad start as the host club went bankrupt. It was arranged for us to use the golf course, but all the furniture was taken away. The ladies golf association came through and rented everything we needed and the tournament went off beautifully.

Rules are very important for players and the committee so my rules director was our first candidate for the Rules School.

After serving as president, I stayed on the board as past president for two more years to help with the transition. I also continued to be involved with the WAGA by serving on the USGA Rating Committee for North Alabama, then as captain of the rating team until the AGA took it over.

I treasure all the time I was associated and involved with the WAGA. It gave me many opportunities to visit and meet many wonderful ladies, many of whom I have remained close friends with.



Mrs. Laurie Burns Franks (Greg Johnson, Dothan Eagle)

professional at Florence Country Club. Burns Franks was playing in her first State Amateur and she made it count over Wilcox, who would make her career in the game in golf administration and as the long-time head women's golf coach at UAB.



Miss Virginia Derby (Steve Barnette, Birmingham News dated October 13, 1989)

Burns Franks had to stage a furious comeback as she began the second eighteen of the final five down to Wilcox, but she won the first three holes of the afternoon eighteen and never looked back. "I knew, being down by five after the first 18, that I'd better get moving or go home

real quick. When we started the third nine, I was loose as a goose." It showed in her play and she kept it going on the final nine as she ran out the winner.

1989

Miss Virginia Derby won her first of five state titles as she beat former two-time champion Claire Kyzar at the Country Club of Birmingham by 7 and 6. Derby, who played for Auburn and had won the prestigious Southern Amateur two years before, was coming off a year lost to various injuries, but the twenty-five-year-old was back with a vengeance.

Kyzar couldn't get anything going on the greens. "It wasn't my day. I couldn't make any putts and I couldn't stay on the fairway. I was just too inconsistent."

Derby told Cary Estes of the *Birmingham Post-Herald* that she was so focused on her own game she didn't realize the match was over on thirtieth hole. "I was so into my game. I've played better, but I knew I had the lead and I was so focused on not making any mistakes that I didn't even realize how close I was getting to winning it. I was surprised that was it." †

PATTY FAULKNER (1989–90)



Patty Faulkner (left) with Chris Spivey

I played in my first WAGA tournament in 1965 at the Selma CC. I had only played about five eighteen-hole rounds but thought since I had a cousin and a golfing buddy in Selma it would be a fun thing to do. I qualified with a score of 114, with seventeen of those strokes on hole 17. None of this discouraged me from participating in this state golf tournament for the next thirty-five years.

I will always treasure the friendships of the ladies I met participating in many golf events. In fact when I was president of the WAGA, I spent so many days traveling to all the tournaments held by member clubs in Alabama, my family said I should run for governor. Golf is a wonderful game and meant so much to me.

During my tenure as president of WAGA, I was instrumental in founding, along with others, the Southeastern Women's Amateur Team Tournament. The first one was held at Shoal Creek and from then on was a successful event. I think the USGA State Team event for women was started after the enthusiasm and competition in this tournament proved to be so popular. I went as our state captain along with our four players to Orlando for the first USGA team event.

It was also during this time the USGA formed the Women's Regional Affairs Committee with a representative from each state golf association. I was fortunate enough to be selected to serve on this group for ten years and met many golfers from around the USA. I also attended the USGA Rules Schools, annual meetings, and tournaments as a volunteer worker.

I am proud to have been a part of the Women's Alabama Golf Association for many years and hope all of the ladies playing today will get as much enjoyment from participating in golfing events around our state as I did. I treasure all the many friendships made through my golfing days and the WAGA.

The 1990s

1990

Chris Spivey came out on top in a very close match at Skyline Country Club in Mobile two up over Monica Hilger of Lake Forest Yacht and Country Club in Daphne.



Miss Chris Spivey

In taking her third state title, Spivey told Robert Ashbrook of the *Mobile Press-Register*: “It feels absolutely great. It was a great win. I haven’t been playing good this week, so it feels good to come back and win it after five years. This was kinda a challenge of the minds so to speak, rather than physical skills because you had to go out there and mentally make yourself do it.”

The match was always close. “It was an exciting championship match for the gallery,” Spivey continued. “It was back and forth all day . . . There were some really great shots. Some that were simply amazing in fact.”

1991

Miss Missy Tuck, playing her home course of Grayson Valley Country Club, steamrolled Chris Spivey in the final by 9 and 8. The former Auburn University golfer racked up many birdies on her way to a dominant win and she was nine up after the morning eighteen holes.

Tuck, age twenty-two, told Cary Estes of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*: “This is something I’ve worked toward for a long time. This is the highest honor I can achieve in Alabama and it really means a lot.”

She comes from a true golfing family as her brother Wes, who also played for Auburn, won the Alabama Open four times. “What can I say? She whipped me bad,” Spivey said. “She played extremely well. She just piled a bunch on me early and that was that. She’s one of the strongest players I’ve ever seen [in the state], without a doubt.”

“This is the highest honor I can achieve in Alabama and it really means a lot.”

—Missy Tuck as reported by Cary Estes
in the *Birmingham Post-Herald*

JEAN MILLER (1991–92)



Jean Miller, Ann Watlington, and Chris Marr

GOLF: How to define? Honesty, Integrity, and Courtesy are all themes. It doesn't take strength of muscle, it does take strength of mind. It takes patience, practice, courage. Lifelong friendships are formed. The spirit of competition among many age groups is amazing. It is the only game I know in which the low score wins!

You really don't have to be athletic. I have watched many golfers who learned how to chip and putt well, enabling them to win over the strong long hitters.

Why did it take women so long to get to the golf course? Men played in the early 1800s in the U.S. but very few women. "Golf Clubs" were "Male Only." The USGA held its first

Women's Open in 1893 with thirteen entries. Growing up in the 30s I never knew a female who played golf. Well, it all changed.

Golf for me started late, not until the 50s. The ladies of the clubs were polite and helpful and I was captured. I was fortunate enough to meet and play golf with Nell Reese, Ann Upchurch, Sally Shertzer—all active members of the Women's Alabama Golf Association. I was asked to serve on the WAGA board in 1975–76 as tournament chairman for the Amateur Championship at the Country Club of Birmingham. The work done by the WAGA Board was remarkable with little financial assistance statewide, but always a full field!

I played in local championships, won a few, and raised children. I was asked by Ann Upchurch to help with organizing the Ladies Birmingham Golf Association. I served several offices and enjoyed the presidency in 1988–89.

I was asked to serve on the USGA Junior Committee in 1967, which began my lifelong interest in promoting golf for women specifically Junior Girls.

The WAGA Junior Championship Committee was everyone's favorite. Such adorable young girls, some very talented. There were many exciting moments over the years as well as many tears during trying times and missed shots. Using USGA as a model, we created fun putting contests as well as social events to encourage our girls. The only problem that will last forever is the DADS! Some will never be able to let their daughter make her own decisions. They would hide

behind trees or hold up fingers for club numbers. I actually caught one in the sand bunker offering advice on the shot.

1979: *I was asked to be vice president for WAGA. I had very little experience but I felt I could learn. The first day of the tournament practice round at Montgomery Country Club, Sherry Scott, president, was preparing her welcome speech and was called home to Mobile, her husband was seriously ill. It was a quick learning experience. I was petrified—too many women to navigate the course. How we got that many women around a golf course is still amazing to me. It would be impossible today!*

In those days the State Amateur Championship limited the field to 144 players. There was always a waiting list of fifteen to twenty ladies. The fiftieth anniversary was in 1979, an important event for WAGA. I remember being very insecure and decided to write a poem concerning our abundance of players. With apologies to Alfred Lord Tennyson, I penned, "The Charge of the One hundred & Forty Four." I felt as if I entertained them, no one would ask questions.

1989: *Patty Faulkner, WAGA president, asked me to serve on the board as Rules chairman, primarily because she could find no one else. We learned a lot together, friendships and fun were the themes.*

As chairman, many unusual questions arose such as, "My opponent keeps using a small rock as a ball marker, and I know that is not fair?" Well, yes it is fair, the rule only states, "a small coin or similar object." A daisy could be used.

At the State Amateur in Huntsville, I was called to a group of four. Approaching the ladies, I could tell it was a heated

argument over who hit whose ball. One had already called her husband, a lawyer, so a second competitor called her husband, a policeman. The policeman arrived first and took his wife from the course. The other three played happily on. I never know who hit whose ball! The lawyer never came—smart guy!

1990: *Patty Faulkner and I saw the need of a Stroke Play Championship and began the WAGA Stroke Play Classic at Gulf Shores Country Club.*

1991–92: *As president of WAGA, among regular duties I felt a better method of communication within the state was necessary. I asked Gloria Kurtts, a computer expert, to help me produce the first WAGA newsletter.*

1992: *A group of businessmen in Huntsville offered a large monetary gift to the Women's Alabama Golf Association. The gift was withdrawn when it was discovered that WAGA did not have a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. This became the impetus for me to contact Cleveland & Coley, Prattville Law firm to begin the process with the IRS for our 501(c)3.*

1993: *The WAGA Scholarship Foundation Trust was established, "Dedicated to Assisting Young Female Golfers in Higher Education." We realized it would take something extra to attract girls to the game. We had college coaches speak at several events. When the parents realized golf scholarships were available, they became more interested. We also wanted to encourage the average golfer who was an outstanding student but needed financial assistance to attend college.*

Our scholarships awards were small at first. An annual award of \$500 was given to exceptional young women

in Alabama allowing them to obtain four years of higher education at an accredited college in Alabama.

The first Scholarship Committee consisted of Ann Upchurch, Jeannette Sell, and myself. We selected Hannah Krehling of Elberta, Alabama, as our first recipient. Fundraising committees were chosen at member clubs. The first trustees were Ann Watlington, Chris Marr, and myself.

LPGA-USGA Girls Golf came to Alabama, what a great format to support the future of women's golf.

1994: *The primary purpose of the WAGA was "Promoting and conserving golf among women and junior women." WAGA was growing and needed professional assistance.*

AGA and Buford McCarty had always been of assistance. Thanks to their expertise and generosity, arrangements were made to house documents in the AGA office. AGA provided office storage space, radios, and tournament equipment. They also provided financial support for the SWATCA Alabama Team. It was time to change from an "under the bed office storage" to a more professional location.

We established the Scholarship Foreball Championship as a fundraiser at Gulf Shores Country Club.

1995: *Team Alabama participated in the USGA Women's State Team championship in Lake Buena, Alabama.*

WAGA newsletter named WAGA TALES by Ann Upchurch.

1996: *I, as a USGA Committee member, and the WAGA Rules Committee were Rules officials for the National Collegiate Athletic Association East Regional tournament hosted by Auburn University.*

WAGASFT named our first scholarship award for Stone Hodo of Marion.

1997: *The second scholarship was named for Ann Samford Upchurch. Since that time the scholarship amount has risen to \$16,000 for four years of college. The WAGA Scholarship Foundation Trust has selected seventeen young women as recipients.*

Patty Faulkner and I had worked with the USGA Regional Affairs Committee. We both felt the need for an interstate championship. We spoke with young golfers and discovered there was no competitive team match play competition after college in our area.

We met with the USGA State Regional Affairs Women's Representatives and invited the states of Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee to Shoal Creek for a new interstate match play championship. WAGA was the host association and conducted the competition won by Florida. The new event was so successful it was named the Southeastern Women's Amateur Team Championship Association (SWATCA). WAGA was involved until 2011. It became extremely popular among the low handicap golfers. Players were inspired to work on their games to make the team. The six state women's associations were extremely supportive in promoting amateur golf as well as sharing ideas and programs among the states. Team Alabama won in 2006 and 2008.

Virginia D. Grimes, Alabama champion, was USGA Amateur Championship medalist at Brea Burn Country Club, West Newton, Massachusetts.

As past president, I hired "GROW SEMINARS," a professional organization, to hold a two-day workshop to establish future goals. WAGA developed a new mission statement: "The Women's Alabama Golf Association serves all female Golfers in the state of Alabama by providing education, services and competition with integrity in the true spirit of the game of Golf."

WAGA voted to use indexes for state amateur rather than a qualifying round.

WAGA Team Alabama won the USGA Team Championship: Virginia Grimes, Kathy Hartwiger, Beth Williams.

1998: *Once again, as a USGA official, I led the WAGA Rules Committee as Rules officials for the SEC Championship at Riverchase CC.*

Janie Solomon, WAGA president, attended the USGA Seminar in San Antonio, Texas. She announced the involvement of WAGA in one of the first USGA-LPGA Girls Golf programs at Altadena Valley, Birmingham. "The WAGA is one of the first state associations in the country to join with Girls Golf by furnishing volunteers and financial aid."

1999: *WAGA sponsors an area meeting with Judy Bell, past president of the USGA, visiting Birmingham.*

2000: *USGA Women's Committee partners with LPGA Girls golf. I was named chairman. Information was presented to WAGA to advance girls' golf in Alabama.*

The scholarship fundraiser was named the Virginia Derby Grimes Classic to be held at Wynlakes Golf and Country Club in Montgomery. Wynlakes and Brent Krause were generous supporters of the scholarship trust. The

classic proved to be a popular event for top amateurs as well as club professionals. The 2004 championship held there was a memorable experience and an all-time "Four Person Scramble" record. I had invited Ian Thompson several times; he was reluctant to go to Montgomery to play with a couple of women, myself and Essie McKee. I did ask my "scratch" player son. Ian relented. We happened to "birdie" the first hole, then the second hole. Ian and Mark reached all par-5 holes in two strokes, all but one par 5 was eagled. A magical day, eighteen holes—21 under par Gross, 39 Net. It, of course, has never been repeated. We reluctantly agreed to accept only one award, having won both.

2005: *WAGA established a new girls golf program in Huntsville. WAGA Senior Director Marie Maximouski took on this project and worked hard for its success. The program in Birmingham is doing well and supported by volunteers from WAGA. Decatur is beginning a new program. The success of the programs is with women's golf associations across the country who are dedicated to enjoyment of the game.*

2006: *Philip McWane contacted me with the idea of his Aunt Bee McWane Reid making a generous donation to promote women's golf. After meeting with Bee and Philip it was decided the most efficient way to promote the future of WAGA was the hiring of an executive director. Times were changing; women were working or raising families. The participation in tournaments was dwindling. This became a second step toward the association of the WAGA and the AGA.*

2007: *Between 1947 and 1955, Bee McWane Reid won our Amateur Championship six times and was runner-up*



twice. She was also twice a finalist in the Women's Southern Amateur. Although she now resides in Florida, Bee's interest and commitment to the success of WAGA remains strong. She contacted me with the idea of establishing an endowment fund dedicated to ensuring the long-term growth and development of our association. After much discussion with Bee, and consultation with representatives of USGA, the board of directors decided Bee's wishes could best be realized by hiring a full-time executive director responsible for providing WAGA members with excellent service.

The Women's Alabama Golf Association announced the Bee McWane Reid Endowment at the seventy-fifth State Amateur championship. Bee McWane Reid received thunderous applause when she was introduced to a dinner crowd of women golfers at the Country Club of Birmingham on October 16, 2007. The dinner was the highlight of the seventy-fifth WAGA Championship Tournament held on the East Course at the Country Club of Birmingham on October 15-19. Women's Alabama Golf Association President Carol Lell announced an annual endowment made possible by Mrs. Reid will allow the organization to hire an executive director for the first time since its founding in 1928. Erica Wein from Atlanta, Georgia, assumed that role in January.

In keeping with the historic nature of the event Elizabeth VanderKamp presented a one woman play based on the life of legendary golfer Babe Zaharius. In 1948 "The Babe" played an exhibition match on the championship West Course of the Country Club of Birmingham.

During the dinner, nine past presidents were also recognized for their service to the organization. Those included Janet Haines, Helen Walker, Helen Smalley, Baker Smith, Patty Faulkner, Mary Dean Gray, Jean Miller, Janie Solomon, and Judy Taylor.

2008: WAGA Tales goes online.

WAGA announces first Four Ball Championship!

2010: USGA presents an award to the Women's Alabama Golf Association in recognition of their vision and willingness to help young girls learn this great game of golf. Alabama has been one of the key states. WAGA has been recognized nationally as an official national supporter of girls' golf. They have agreed to support the programs already in place as well as start new programs when the occasion presents. This has happened in Texas, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Many women's golf associations are joining the program to "Grow the Game."

WAGA Scholarship Foundation Trust agrees to merge with WAGA under the new executive director.

In closing, to be honored for the many years of learning, excitement, pleasure, and forming wonderful friendships is a miracle that I'll never understand! Playing the game on courses such as Ballyunion, Pine Valley, Merion, St. Andrews, Augusta!!! Another miracle! All because I played golf and met such wonderful people as Joe King, Ann Upchurch, Elbert Jemison, and so many others. Growing up as a Monopoly player, the game of golf was a fantastic new experience. They taught me that golf is so much more than a game! Watching a young girl finally make contact with a golf ball, turn, and grin is the only reward needed.

1992

Missy Tuck was back in the winner's circle the next year, defeating her former Auburn teammate Kelli Sanders 5 and 4 at Montgomery Country Club. Tuck professed to sleep poorly in advance of the final match. "I would have rather played anyone but Kelli," she told Jim Johnston of the *Montgomery Advertiser*. "I've seen her play too much. I know she's a great player."



Miss Missy Tuck (*Jay Sailors*, newspaper dated October 10, 1992)

Sanders, who plays at nearby Arrowhead Country Club, couldn't ever get herself in front. "It's hard to play catch-up and I did that all day. It was definitely tiring." She was valiant in defeat as, having trailed five down, she fought back to just one behind. Alas she could get no closer and ran out of steam down the stretch. "It was much more difficult [to win] this time," Tuck said. "I never felt comfortable with the lead I had. You can't with Kelli right behind you."

1993

Virginia Derby, now the Auburn women's golf coach, defeated a fellow former Auburn golfer, Julie Levan, by 6 and 5 in the final at Anniston Country Club. Derby, of Sumter Country Club in York, took a four-up lead after the morning eighteen over Levan, age twenty-four, who played at Altadena Valley Country Club in Birmingham. "I've played a lot of match play and you have to work on it," Derby told Mike Griffith of the *Anniston Star*. "You try not to play the person, so much as work on the course."

In a battle of the Tigers, Auburn had to come out on top. Levan started at Auburn



Miss Virginia Derby (right) with Julie Levan

the year after Derby left and graduated one year before Derby returned to coach. "It just meant somebody from Auburn had to win," Derby proudly pointed out.

1994

A new year, but the same finalists and the same result as Mrs. Virginia Derby Grimes defeated Mrs. Julie Levan 8 and 7 at Dothan Country Club. Derby was now Grimes as she had married Dr. Ben Grimes since the previous year's championship and had even used the WAGA championship trophy as a punch bowl in her June

“I really came to have fun, make a few putts and see what happened.”

—Virginia Derby Grimes as reported by Elaine Brackin in the *Dothan Progress*

wedding. She had also now moved to Montgomery, playing out of Wynlakes Golf and Country Club and was no longer the women’s golf coach at Auburn.

Derby Grimes entered lunch four up and was never troubled as she romped to a comfortable win. “I really didn’t expect to dominate [the field],” she told Elaine Brackin of the *Dothan Progress*. “I haven’t played that much until the last month or so. I really came to have fun, make a few putts and see what happened.”

No doubt, she had a lot of fun.

1995

Virginia Derby Grimes would make it three state titles in a row as she won it at Greystone Golf Club after just one day’s play was possible. Her round of 69 in what was to have been stroke play qualifying for the championship flight was good enough

to be declared the state winner after all other day’s play was cancelled due to the impending Hurricane Opal.

The weather played havoc with the schedule, with two days washed out and Derby declared champion. “This was probably the easiest tournament that I’ve ever won and the easiest one I ever will win,” Grimes told Susan Storey of the *Birmingham News*. “I wish we could have played all five days, but weather’s just a part of golf.”

Chris Spivey was declared as the second-place championship finalist.

1996

Chris Spivey must like Valley Hill Country Club in Huntsville as she captured the state title there in 1986 and did the same again in 1996 defeating Mary Isbell 2 and 1.

“I’m drained,” Spivey told Al Burleson of the *Huntsville Times* after winning the match. “You have to concentrate so hard all the way in a match that could go 36 holes or more. And that’s what I had to do. When I play (my good friend) Mary, when we’re both on, I know it’s going to be a long day. She’s a super player and she kept making some long putts.”

JUDY TAYLOR (1993–94)



Mary Dean Gray (1995–96) and Judy Taylor (1993–94).

What I remember most about the WAGA is all the great ladies and the close friendships formed. One of my fondest memories is of playing with both my mother (Mary Booth) and daughter (Jennie Taylor Gibson) in the 1990 State Amateur—three generations of us the year before my mother passed away. It was a dream of hers for the three of us to compete together.

MARY DEAN GRAY (1995–96)



Mary Dean Gray

I served on the board of the Women's Alabama Golf Association from 1988 to 1997. I am currently the captain of the Country Club of Birmingham's women's golf team.

I had been enjoying state events for several years before Jean Gilmer approached me in 1985 while playing in the State Amateur at Riverchase Country Club in Birmingham. Jean asked

me if I thought I could arrange for my club, the Country Club of Birmingham, to host the 1989 State Amateur. At that tournament, sites were often set four or five years out. Sadie Roberts, a member of the BCC, founded the Women's Alabama Golf Association at the club in 1929 and all felt it would be a special occasion if the sixtieth anniversary event could be at the founding site. The club had hosted the State Amateur five or six times over the years but the club board was very receptive to hosting for this special anniversary. I was asked to serve as host director, which put me on the WAGA Board in 1988. Little did I know how it would affect my life for years to come.

We had an outstanding State Amateur. The field at that time was 144, which we filled with a large waiting list. For those who did not make the final two rounds of match play, we held a one-day event at Shoal Creek, which was a special treat. Each night we had a social event. One night featured a performance by the late beloved local comedic actor Jim Rye, who came dressed as a lady golfer from Sand Mountain. He had the large audience in the East Room laughing uncontrollably.

Remember in those days not many people had computers but more importantly there was no computer program for pairings in tournaments. It was several years later in 1994 that our secretary Monika Kelly developed our first computer program. Later we received a more extensive program from the USGA. So as you can imagine before we had a computer program, all the work had to be done by hand. Many days we were up late preparing pairings, score cards, etc.—a real challenge for the committee.

Following my term as host director I was elected senior director, a position that was a two-year term. Nineteen ninety saw our senior event at Mountain Brook Club and we all have great memories of the event and especially the weather. One day we had to endure snow and extreme cold but all survived. The senior fielded a group of 112 and once again we had a full field with a waiting list. These were truly the "good ole days" when so many ladies wanted to play and had the leisure time to do so.

My second year as senior director we played at Troy Country Club. On arrival we discovered the local pro had resigned the

day before, taking all our paperwork, paint, hazard stakes, and so forth. We faced a true challenge trying to get ready for the tournament, driving many miles around the area buying paint just to mark the course. We endured and had another successful event.

In 1992, I was elected vice president and that responsibility included tournament chair of the State Amateur. Our first event was at Montgomery Country Club, a great site with a full field and excellent golf. In 1993, the event was at Anniston Country Club, which saw the first appearance of a young outstanding golfer who had played in our junior program, Virginia Derby, later Virginia Derby Grimes. Virginia won the first of many amateur championships as well as other state and national events.

My next position was president elect, which was a one-year term. My presence was required at all WAGA tournaments and board meetings, a great learning experience. Then I served two years as WAGA president. I have many great memories of all our events and especially the board meetings at the beach home of Patty Faulkner and for sure the evenings at the famous Gulf Shores institution, Shirley and Wayne's.

The first State Amateur of my presidency we were playing at the Greystone Club in Birmingham. Unfortunately, play had to be cancelled on the first day because of Hurricane Opal, which did a lot of damage in our state and elsewhere. It was a huge disappointment for us all. The following year we were at Valley Hill Country Club in Huntsville. All went well with another full field and great golf. During my term as president, we limited the number of the field to the discretion of the host club since some of the smaller clubs couldn't accommodate the larger fields. This

opened our tournaments up to many more sites. Also during my time as president, Jean Miller and I met with Barney Lanier, president of the Alabama Golf Association, and Buford McCarty, the director of AGA. That meeting resulted in the beginning of a very good relationship with AGA. They furnished us with radios, which we had had to rent in the past. AGA also provided us a storage unit for files in their office and use of this office as needed. Several years later a merger was completed with WAGA and AGA. This merger is the best thing that could have happened for women's golf in Alabama.

I would be remiss in my recount of WAGA history if I did not include our wonderful women's scholarship program, which was established in 1991. Barbara Raynor was a trustee and treasurer in the beginning but resigned after several years and I went on as a trustee and treasurer. Just a handful of ladies worked very hard running golf tournaments, raffles, and all types of fundraisers and in so doing established a very strong foundation which continues today to support young women in the pursuit of a college education.

Following my years on the board of WAGA, I served on the USGA Senior Women's Committee for twelve years, another and most rewarding experience.

In closing, I must say my time on the WAGA Board and times involved in golf have been truly rewarding experiences, so many funny, crazy experiences. I could write a book about some of those times, but on reflection, I think most should remain in our memories. The people I have met and the friendships that were established throughout the state and nation I truly cherish.

Spivey took a two-up lead into the afternoon eighteen, but pulled even after the third nine. Unfortunately Isbell's normally reliable putter let her down coming down the stretch and she missed some short putts that put Spivey back up for good.

1997

Alabama women's golf was at an all-time high as the State Amateur rolled

around at Old Overton Club. The reason? Virginia Derby Grimes, Kathy Hartwiger, and Beth Williams had represented the state and captured the USGA Team Championship the previous month in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Birmingham's Williams would ride the momentum to the state title. She had to go extra holes in the final and earlier in the week, just to make the

championship flight. In a week that began with Derby Grimes shooting 67 to be medalist, with Hartwiger on 69 two back of her, Williams struggled to an 83 and had to win a playoff in extra holes to reach the championship flight.

Hartwiger had knocked out Derby Grimes in the semifinal, but she lost a thrilling final on the thirty-eighth hole, after it was deadlocked through thirty-six



Miss Chris Spivey (center) with Mary Dean Gray and Chris Marr



Mrs. Virginia Derby Grimes (*William Luther, Post-Herald*)



Mrs. Beth Williams (center) with Chris Marr (left) and Janie Solomon (right)

holes of regulation. “It felt great to win, especially since I almost didn’t get to the match play [stage],” she told the *Birmingham News* writer Susan Storey.

In the final, Williams led three up after eighteen holes, only for Hartwiger to claw back her lead and go ahead one up with two holes left. Hartwiger missed a putt on the final green that would have

sealed it, so it was off to extra holes. After Williams lipped out for the win on No. 1, she played a flawless second playoff hole reaching the par 5 in two shots and two-putting for a birdie and the win.

1998

To say Virginia Derby Grimes enjoyed a good year on the golf course would be

something of an understatement. She added to her win total as she took the state title at Saughatchee Country Club in Opelika. She defeated Kathy Hartwiger of Birmingham by a score of 4 and 3. In a top-quality match, Grimes was eight under par for the thirty-three holes played; Hartwiger four under par.

Both Grimes and Hartwiger shot 73 to be co-medalists and tore through the rest of the field in match play. “We’ve both been playing well all summer and this was a challenge I was looking forward to,” Grimes said. “It sounds simple to say it, but it was a good match with lots of good golf.”

Grimes described the sixth hole in the morning round as a turning point. “Kathy was one up through five holes and had hit her shot within gimme birdie range on No. 6. I pushed my second shot right of the green, but chipped the ball in for a birdie. This stopped me from going two down.”

“It sounds simple to say it, but it was a good match with lots of good golf.”

—Virginia Derby Grimes

Grimes followed this by hitting the pin on the next hole, the par-3 seventh, with her tee shot, which finished next to the hole. This near hole in one enabled her to square the match and she never looked back. By the end of the first eighteen holes Grimes had moved three up and was

round in a 69. Hartwiger matched par with a 72.

Birdies began to flow freely at the start of the second eighteen. Grimes took the first hole with a birdie to go four up. Hartwiger won the next hole with a birdie to reduce the deficit by

JANIE SOLOMON (1997-98)



Janie Solomon

Oh, how wonderful all the great golf courses and wonderful ladies I played with and worked with to make it all happen.

I was born in Pensacola, Florida, and was raised in Hazlehurst, Georgia. I have been in Dothan, Alabama, since 1958. What a great and beautiful state.

I was area director, junior director, president elect, president, and past president. I also volunteered for the USGA, as well as being president at both Dothan Country Club and Dothan National Golf Club.

My daughter, Jane Solomon, played junior golf and my mother-in-law, Marie Flowers, played in the Amateur a few times.

I think fondly of Missy Tuck, Beck Cross, Virginia Derby Grimes, and all the great golfers, as well as dear ladies Jean Miller, Patty Faulkner, Helen Smalley, Jeannette Sell, and many more.



Mrs. Virginia Derby Grimes (right) with Audrey Songy (left) and Janie Solomon (center)

one. Both players birdied the next hole and Grimes won No. 4 with a par to go back to four up. Then the fifth hole was halved with birdies, as was the eighth. Both players parred the remainder of the holes, until they both birdied No.15. This marked the end of the contest, with Grimes in the winner's circle.

October was a busy month for Grimes. She helped Alabama into a tie for second with Tennessee in the Southeastern Team Matches in Philadelphia, Mississippi, which Florida won by one point. The State Amateur followed. The coup de grace was

her win in the U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Championship as she was crowned a national champion, something her opponent in the state final would achieve herself four years later.

Additionally, Grimes represented her country in the Curtis Cup in early August, something she would also do in 2000 and 2006. She is also a multiple Southern Amateur champion and is only the second



Mrs. Kathy Hartwiger (left) with Audrey Songy

“It feels so good to win one. Finally. I felt the pressure during the middle of the round. It slowed me down. I played well, but was a little tentative because I was feeling the pressure.”

—Kathy Hartwiger as reported by Tim Stephens
in the *Birmingham Post-Herald*

female golfer in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, following JoAnn Prentice.

1999

Birmingham resident Kathy Hartwiger would capture the first of her ten State Amateur titles at Inverness Country Club in Birmingham, defeating Jamie Weaver of Andalusia 3 and 2. After losing in the two previous finals, she got her name on the trophy and never looked back.

“It feels so good to win one,” Hartwiger told Tim Stephens of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*. She had also been the runner-up in State Amateurs in Wyoming and North Carolina. “Finally. I felt the pressure during the middle of the round. It slowed me down. I played well, but was a little tentative because I was feeling the pressure.”

Hartwiger took a three-up lead into the afternoon round but couldn't shake Weaver, who cut the lead to one through eight holes in the afternoon. However, Hartwiger won Nos. 9 and 10 to take charge and never looked back. ↑

The 2000s

2000

Chris Spivey headed north to Huntsville to a city she obviously felt right at home in as three of her five state titles

would be won in the Rocket City. She captured two at Valley Hill, with this one, her last State Amateur title, coming at Huntsville Country Club.



Chris Spivey (left) with Janet Mardick

Spivey's opponent was the previous year's beaten finalist, Jamie Weaver of Andalusia. Spivey, at age fifty-one and a veteran in the game, defeated Weaver, age twenty-three, by 2 and 1. "Experience helped me," Spivey told Al Burlison of the *Huntsville Times*. "That's all it was. I've played in a few tournaments and have been able to win a few."

She was both the reigning Alabama Women's Senior champion and Southern Seniors champ. "There's something about Huntsville. To start with, the setting is beautiful, the people are nice and the courses are gorgeous."

Spivey took a four-up lead into the afternoon round, but Weaver, an Auburn graduate who played on the golf team for one year, cut into her lead and made her work hard for the win. "I've won the State Amateur in three decades. I guess that says something for my longevity."



Beth Chandler (left) with Audrey Songy

2001

Miss Beth Chandler beat Mrs. Tami Green at Dothan National Golf Club in a match that went thirty-eight holes. Chandler, of Quail Creek Country Club in Fairhope, was running away with the final as she led seven up with just ten holes to play, but a combination of strong play from Jasper's Green and struggles from Chandler meant it had to be decided in extra holes.

After Green had won the thirty-sixth hole to keep the match alive, the first extra hole was halved before Chandler's par on the next hole was good enough for the win and the championship match.

2002

There was no let down for Kathy Hartwiger. The previous week she won the U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship; she then captured the Women's State Amateur. Two wins in two weeks for Hartwiger who defeated Annie Kirkland

of Seale by a score of 4 and 3 in the thirty-six-hole final. "I was pretty worn out when the week began [with Sunday's qualifying round], but I got better and better with each match. I played well in Wednesday's semi-final against Tami Green and played very well in the final."

JANET MARDICK (1999–2000)



Janet Mardick

I moved to Birmingham in April 1986 and my husband and I bought our first set of golf clubs and began our love of the game. In 1991, I played in my first Amateur Championship tournament at Grayson Valley Country Club. Match play was the form of play and I wasn't familiar with it. But that was the start of my involvement with the Women's Alabama Golf Association. In 1994, I accepted my first directorship on the board and it lasted for nine years. I served as president for two years (1999–2000) working closely with the AGA office that allowed us to share our first USGA intern with them.

But my initial experience at the Amateur was such a memorable one it kept me involved with the organization. It was meeting new golfers, developing friendships and the camaraderie that truly captured my love and interest for the game. Working with so many talented women was indeed a wonderful experience.

AUDREY SONGY (2001–02)



Audrey Songy

I am Audrey Songy from Huntsville, a member of Valley Hill Country Club. Valley Hill was asked to host the 1996 Amateur. Virginia Beavers, VH member and past WAGA president, asked if I would be the host chairman and I became a board member as host director in 1995. I attended my first board meeting and State Amateur Championship at Greystone Country Club. Mary Dean Gray was president.

With the support and guidance from

Virginia and Mary Dean, the 1996 Amateur at Valley Hill was a success. In 1997 I was elected vice president, in 1999 was elected president, and stayed on the board through 2001 as past president. During my years on the WAGA Board I traveled the state, met many lady golfers, and formed many lasting friendships.

Immediately after my service to WAGA I was asked to represent Alabama on the Southeastern Women's Amateur Team Championship Association with ladies from Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and North Carolina. In 2007 I was asked to be the Alabama State Representative on the Women's Southern Golf Association composed of fifteen southern states and the District of Columbia. In 2009 I was elected Rules, course setup director and currently the president elect. My two-year term as WSGA president will begin in 2016.

I am still traveling and making friendships but over many states. The years of working on the WAGA Board with ladies who were willing to share their knowledge of golf with me are the reason I am able to continue my endeavors. The most rewarding thing about this is that I have stayed in contact with many Alabama golfers and at the same time have met many lady golfers from hundreds of clubs and many southern states.

Hartwiger was even par for the thirty-two holes it took her to beat Kirkland at Riverchase Country Club. "I tried to use the same philosophy that worked so well for me last week in Oregon [at the U.S. Mid-Amateur]. It doesn't matter who you are playing against. Now it's time for a break. No more tournaments until next spring. I want to change my swing a bit more . . . tweak it a little. I know I can get better, just like Tiger Woods always strives to get better."

Hartwiger also won the State Amateur in 1999, the last time she played in it. She also tasted victory in this year's State Stroke Play Championship in Gulf Shores.

Kirkland, age twenty-two, graduated from Vanderbilt in May. She has plans to turn professional, she's just not sure when yet. "This was my first [State Amateur], and hopefully my last as I plan to turn pro," Kirkland said. "I've played with Kathy before and I was disappointed not to beat her, but she played very well. She's a great player."

2003

Kathy Hartwiger continued her dominance of Alabama women's golf by winning her third WAGA State Amateur Championship in her last three tries. She

also won the State Amateur in 1999 and 2002; she did not play in 2000 or 2001.

Hartwiger defeated Annie Kirkland of Seale by a score of 8 and 6 in the thirty-six-hole final over the Founders Course at Greystone Golf and Country Club.

This pairing was a repeat of last year's final. Hartwiger was six under par for the thirty holes it took her to beat Kirkland,

age twenty-three, who graduated from Vanderbilt last year.

For the first eighteen holes Hartwiger shot a 69 to Kirkland's 71. There was no let up in the afternoon as she added three more birdies. "I was so pleased mentally. I wanted to focus on each hole, one at a time."

Hartwiger is a match play expert, but she didn't always enjoy this format. "I

have really started to enjoy it. You have to play the course, not the other person. I feel very confident in this strategy and I'm looking forward to [defending] the [U.S.] Mid-Am. If I can get past the first couple of matches, I'll like my chances because it's like I've been there, done that and feel like I can handle the pressure."

2004

Kathy Hartwiger continued her dominance by winning her fourth state title in her last four tries. She defeated Cynthia Parrish of Boaz in the thirty-six-hole final by a score of 10 and 8 at Heron Lakes Country Club in Mobile.

Hartwiger began the week as medalist in the eighteen-hole qualifier shooting 69. She then beat Amanda Miller of Scottsboro, June Mayson of Mobile, and Paula Weaver of Mobile to reach the final. "I was on my game, particularly the second and third nines," Hartwiger said. "Through 10 holes I was just 1 up, but then I made six birdies in the next 18 holes and was able to pull away. I knew I needed to be focused in the final as Cindy hits the ball a good distance and is a good player."



Kathy Hartwiger (right)



Kathy Hartwiger

2005

Kathy Hartwiger continued her rule by winning her fifth state title in her last five tries. She defeated Judy Taylor of Huntsville in the thirty-six-hole final by a score of 14 and 12 at Cypress Lakes Golf and Country Club in Muscle Shoals.

Hartwiger began the week as medalist in the eighteen-hole qualifier shooting 72. She then beat Nancy McDonald of

Birmingham, Suzanne Bedinger of Dothan, and Mary Isbell of Oneonta to reach the final. "I played very steady. I didn't miss a fairway in the first 18 holes and only missed one green [in regulation]."

She built a ten-up lead after the first eighteen holes, so the match was

effectively over at that point. "I'm excited to have won four state titles in a row. Only two other people have ever done that. But what excited me the most was that no matter the situation or match my focus was where I wanted it. I was very pleased with that."

JANET HAINES (2003-04)



Janet Haines

My first involvement with the WAGA was when I played in the State Amateur at Olympia Spa in Dothan. I enjoyed it and played in several more. In the early 90s I was asked by Jean Miller to be secretary. Jean was WAGA president. I enjoyed the experience and working with the WAGA. I kept involved with the organization, holding other positions, but my favorite was when I was Rules director. I really enjoyed it. The Senior Tournament was my first tournament, and it was a challenge. I always told the ladies, they would not see me, just hit the fairways and greens.

The experience with the organization was great, meeting lots of golfers, making friends, and learning a lot about the game. My memories of the organization will always be with me; I would not change any of it.

HELEN WALKER (2005–06)



Helen Walker

I was introduced to the game of golf through my husband in 1969. Quite frankly I could not grasp why anyone found the sport interesting enough to spend hours playing the game and then even more time afterwards discussing hole-by-hole play of the game!

Begrudgingly, in 1972, I attended The Masters with him and a whole new perspective of the game began to fill my heart and mind. So began my journey with the game of golf. Fast forward many years and I was privileged to serve as president of the Ladies Birmingham Golf Association in 1994–95 and had begun to participate in championships sponsored by the Women's Alabama Golf Association. I was ultimately invited to serve on the WAGA Board of Directors, serving as president in 2005–06.

Through my years of involvement with WAGA I had the pleasure of working with others to promote and build the game of golf for women of Alabama, while acquiring treasured lifelong friendships with women throughout the state. We traveled many miles across the state attending board meetings and Rules Schools, selecting and preparing venues for championships, up long before the sunrise setting and marking the courses, staying late into the evenings reviewing rulings, determining flights and pairings for the following day—these were times long before computer pairings! But we made it and still managed dinner and some really fun times!

I have extremely fond memories of little girls playing in their first state championship—bags on their backs, walking the fairways, enjoying being with each other in God's beautiful world, competing under USGA rules, and growing into fine young women—many of whom went on to play competitive golf on scholarships for Auburn, Alabama, Samford, Birmingham-Southern, UAB, and Mississippi State, to mention a few.

The rewards of being a part of the Women's Alabama Golf Association were many; I am honored to have served in this capacity.

2006

Kathy Hartwiger's run continued. She defeated Connie Bousquet of Birmingham in the thirty-six-hole final by a score of 7 and 6 at Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club in Killen.

She began the week in the eighteen-hole qualifier shooting 78 and winning a playoff for medalist. She then beat Amanda Miller, Chris Spivey, and Tami Green, all by big margins, to reach the final.

Hartwiger gave up the chance to play in this year's U.S. Mid-Amateur for a chance to win the state title five times in a row, a feat that had never been achieved before. "I tried not to think about that



Kathy Hartwiger

"I tried not to think about that [five wins in a row] too much so as not to put too much pressure on myself. It's an achievement I'm very proud of and have worked hard to get to this point."

—Kathy Hartwiger

[five wins in a row] too much so as not to put too much pressure on myself. It's an achievement I'm very proud of and have worked hard to get to this point."

She built a seven-up lead after the first eighteen holes, so the match was well in hand at that point. In the second eighteen the match remained even until she won on the twenty-ninth green.

2007

Kathy Hartwiger won her sixth state title in a row, and her seventh State Amateur total, by defeating Melissa Gooden, known to many local golfers by her maiden name of Missy Tuck, one up in the thirty-six-hole final over the East Course at the Country Club of Birmingham.

Hartwiger began the week in the eighteen-hole qualifier shooting 68, tying Gooden for medalist. She then beat Nancy

McDonald, Chris Spivey, and Jill Martin, all by big margins, to reach the final. She was pushed all the way by Gooden, however, who came back from four down through twenty-seven holes to tie the match through thirty-four holes.

The par-5 seventeenth hole proved to be key in both rounds as Hartwiger made an eagle in the first round and then got up-and-down for birdie after going through the green in two to win the hole against Gooden's three-putt par from long range. "I had a good feeling over that putt [fifteen feet for birdie on No. 17], saw the line and made it," Hartwiger said. "This is my closest final by far in all the [State Amateur] matches I've played. My run [of wins] will come to an end at some point . . . I'm just glad it wasn't today. I was very proud of myself for the way I played 17 and 18 [a solid par] to win the match."



Sara Grantham

Gooden, who lives in Trussville and played college golf for Auburn, then turned pro playing on the Futures Tour. After a few years of pro golf, she stopped playing altogether, got married, had children, and just in recent years started playing again. She got her amateur status back only a few years ago and was playing in just her second tournament of the year. "I'm proud of how I got back into the match," Gooden said. "At one point it looked like it might



Jordan Hardy

get ugly. Kathy played so well . . . she just doesn't make mistakes."

2008

For the first time since 2001, there was a name other than Kathy Hartwiger on the trophy. Sara Grantham defeated none other than Hartwiger in the final at Timberline Golf Club in Calera.

Grantham laid down a marker starting the week with her round of 67 to finish

medalist by three shots from Hartwiger. By the end of the week the sophomore at Ole Miss, who is from Wilsonville, would defeat the legendary Hartwiger in the final by 3 and 2. She shot four under par for the thirty-four holes played.

"She [Hartwiger] really is a great player and a great person," Grantham said. "Knowing her history in this tournament you knew she'd hit some great shots. I just had the mindset to beat par and not just beat my opponent."

2009

Jordan Hardy of Sylacauga beat Haley Lawrence at Willow Point Golf and Country Club in Alexander City by 4 and 3. The Birmingham-Southern graduate beat former teammate Karlin Beck of Pike Road in the quarterfinals before taking out defending champion Sara Grantham in the semis.

"This was my first time playing in the State Amateur and my first time playing match play," Hardy said. "It was a wonderful, fun experience with great competition. I was very thankful for the opportunity to play and am continually thankful for the chance to pursue something that I love to do." †

The 2010s

2010

In a monumental match, Birmingham's Kathy Hartwiger beat Karlin Beck in the thirty-six-hole final of the State Amateur at Ol' Colony Golf



Kathy Hartwiger

Complex in Tuscaloosa. Tied after thirty-six holes of regulation, they played the first hole for the third time in a long, long day, made longer by a two hour, thirty-five-minute rain delay after fifteen holes of the first round, with Hartwiger coming out on top. Hartwiger, who has now won this title a record eight times (1999, 2002–07, 2010), had to come back from two down with three holes to play and trailed for most of the match.

Both ladies won two matches Thursday as Beck, who is from Pike Road and plays for Auburn, defeated Oxford's Ashley Cox in the quarterfinals 3 and 2 and then took out 2008 champion Sara Grantham 2 and 1 in the semifinals. Cox just graduated from Jacksonville State and Grantham, who led the qualifying scores with a three-under-par 69, just finished her collegiate golf career at Ole Miss. Hartwiger beat fellow former champion Martha Lang in the quarters and Cynthia Navis of Point Clear in the semis.

In a match that ebbed and flowed back and forth, Hartwiger was three up through the first nine holes, only to be overhauled by Beck over the next nine holes, as she won five of the nine holes to take a two-up lead through the first eighteen. Beck kept her two-up lead through twenty-eight holes and thirty-three holes, with holes changing hands before and between these points. Seemingly the title looked to be Beck's, but Hartwiger showed a true champion's grit with a birdie 3 to win No. 16 (hole 34) and a par 3 to win No. 17 (hole 35). They both parred the last to send it into extra holes, which Hartwiger won with a bogey 5. "What a battle," said a drained Hartwiger, who shot an approximate two under par for the final eighteen holes and had eight threes on her scorecard.

Beck, who spent one year at Birmingham-Southern College before transferring, just received her undergraduate degree from Auburn. She has one year of golf eligibility left and plans to return to play for the Tigers.

CAROL LELL (2007–10)

Carol Lell

My initial contact with the WAGA occurred in 1997 when, with great trepidation, I volunteered to meet with some very austere looking WAGA Board members wearing red blazers to help plan the Woman's Alabama State Amateur event. I quickly realized the "Red Jackets" were not interested in intimidating new volunteers, but rather in recruiting them to help improve and sustain women's golf in Alabama. I was hooked. Over the next three years, these highly competent and dedicated ladies who I greatly admire patiently mentored me regarding rules, tournament setup, and golf etiquette. In 2000, I proudly acquired my own red jacket when I joined the board as Area 3 director and also served as director of Junior Golf.

My initial contact with the WAGA occurred in 1997 when, with great trepidation, I volunteered to meet with some very austere looking WAGA Board members wearing red blazers to help plan the Woman's Alabama State Amateur event. I quickly realized the "Red Jackets" were not interested in

In 2007 I became WAGA president and over the next four years was privileged to work with an outstanding board of directors. Our mission proved threefold. First, we improved member communication and established online registration by providing a more comprehensive and reliable website with an integrated WAGA Tales newsletter. Second, we expanded the competitive golf program by initiating a fifth tournament, the Woman's State Four Ball Championship, which premiered at Old Overton in 2008. In order to facilitate student athlete participation, we moved the State Amateur event from the fall to the summer. Third, and most importantly, in 2010, WAGA joined the AGA to form a single entity dedicated to the long-term viability of both men's and women's golf in Alabama. I believe integrating the resources of these two organizations greatly benefits all who play the game.

Like all past presidents, I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to interact with some wonderful and dedicated people who share my love for golf. I currently consider it an honor and privilege to continue to hold a leadership position on the AGA Executive Board.

2011

Kathy Hartwiger wins the Women's State Amateur title . . . again, and she has been down this road before . . . nine times in fact. She captured her record ninth title at Heron Lakes Country Club in Mobile, when she swept aside seventeen-year-old Gabi Oubré of Mobile by a score of 6 and 4 in the final.

Hartwiger, who plays at Hoover Country Club, got off to a fast start in the final, winning the first three holes with a par and two birdies and never let up. Five up after eight, Oubré made a birdie on No. 9 to get one hole back, but Hartwiger kept



Kathy Hartwiger

“Golf can go on and on and I’m ready for this next chapter in my life.”

—Kathy Hartwiger

up the pressure and her great play, closing the match out on the fourteenth hole.

“I played phenomenal. It was my best play of the week . . . by far. I was three-under-par for the match and played very, very steady. I kept up the pressure as I didn’t want to give her an opening as you never know what can happen.”

In a match billed as youth (Oubré is seventeen, will be a senior, and is home schooled) against experience (Hartwiger is forty-five and won the 2002 U.S. Women’s Mid-Amateur title, as well as many state titles), experience won out. “I love the way Gabi plays. She’s very strong and she’s going to be very good. She reminds me a lot of Candace Schepperle [former Auburn standout golfer] in the way she plays. She was hitting the ball 50 yards past me off the tee.”

Hartwiger is facing a change in her life. She will go back to work, for the first

time in thirteen years, as a counselor at a local school. Naturally this will impact her golf, but it is a change she is ready for. “Golf can go on and on and I’m ready for this next chapter in my life.”

2012

It’s been said before, but they really ought to name the trophy after her as Kathy Hartwiger, who won the Women’s State title for a record tenth time, broke her own record once again. This title was a little different for Hartwiger, who defeated Alison Hovatter of Meridianville by a score of 2 and 1, as it occurred over her home course (Hoover Country Club) and after she started back to work last fall (as a middle school guidance counselor) after being a stay-at-home mom for a number of years. “I was nervous all match and never really settled down,” Hartwiger said. “I thought it might be because of playing at home, but that wasn’t the case as truthfully knowing the course really helped me. I just had trouble getting settled.”

There were several key moments in an up-and-down match that only saw three holes tied. Both players had multiple



Cammie Gray

three-putts as they struggled with the speed of the immaculate greens.

However, Hartwiger made several key putts, including one for a two on No. 12 and then a twelve footer for par on No. 16 to go two up. She would close the match out on the next green with a short putt for par. “It’s so rewarding to win

on my home course. The membership here are very supportive of me and my family. I could feel them [the numerous watching members] willing some putts into the hole.”

Hovatter, All-State all four years at Hazel Green High School and a Meridianville native, won two SJGT events in her junior career. She came into the week with low expectations due to injury. “I broke my arm February 20 and wasn’t sure if I would ever play again. It was a freak accident in the weight room at Ole Miss [where she will be a sophomore and in her first year of eligibility on the golf team].” She started hitting shots in late May and had only played three or four times since then, so her strong play that week had surprised her a little.

Hovatter bulldozed her way through the field shooting 72 to lead the stroke play seeding, followed by wins of 5 and 4 in the round of sixteen over Taylor Appleyard and Lucie King in the quarterfinals. In Thursday’s semifinal she beat Piedmont’s Erin Gunnels by 6 and 5 in another dominating performance that included five birdies. She had now lost in the semifinals to Hartwiger last year and

the final this year, so maybe next year will be the charm?

She never led in the match, but did pull it back to all square on three different occasions. “I was timid on too many putts and did not stay in my process. Instead of rolling the putts I was trying to make birdies happen. Playing against Kathy, I felt like I’d have to play my absolute best. I embrace that and it was awesome. I just had too many putts lip out.”

2013

Northport’s Cammie Gray beat Lea Green of McCalla in the eighteen-hole final by a score of 3 and 2 at Lakewood Golf Club in Point Clear. Gray, who is nineteen and just concluded her redshirt freshman year on the golf team at Alabama, now holds both the State Amateur and State Stroke Play Championships at the same time, having won the Stroke Play in 2012.

Gray led the stroke play qualifying with a round of 71 to be seeded first into match play. She proceeded to beat Nancy Gavin of Jackson Gap 5 and 4 in the round of sixteen; Tuscaloosa’s Susan West 4 and 3 in the quarterfinals; ten-time State

“It means a whole lot. I’ve worked a lot on my mindset in a competitive setting and I’m pleased to be able to come out and have a good, solid win. I’m absolutely thrilled.”

—Cammie Gray

Amateur champion Kathy Hartwiger of Birmingham in nineteen holes in the semifinals, before besting Green in the final.

The first five holes of the final were exchanged back and forth, but Gray never trailed. She was one up through twelve holes, before seizing control of the match with wins on Nos. 13 and 14 to go three up. Holes 15 and 16 were tied, seeing her home as the champion. “It was a good match. Lea played exceptionally well, but we both struggled on the greens. I think we both were a little physically and mentally worn down,” Gray said.

In the semifinal Gray was dormie 3 up on Hartwiger, then lost the final three holes, before winning on the first extra hole. “I was dormie again through 15 and smiled as I looked at some friends as I was in the same situation and wanted to learn from how I handled it [on Thursday]. I think I let down mentally [in

the semifinal] and it cost me. I was more focused this time around.”

Indeed she was as she had a steady par on No. 16 and it was good enough to seal her win. “It [winning the State Amateur] means a whole lot. I’ve worked a lot on my mindset in a competitive setting and I’m pleased to be able to come out and have a good, solid win. I’m absolutely thrilled.”

Lea Green teaches at Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa, so the final had a Tuscaloosa flavor to it. Her schedule is such that she gets summers off and can play in some tournaments.

2014

After playing a sloppy tenth hole in the championship match in the State Amateur at NorthRiver Yacht Club in Tuscaloosa, Elaine Wood said aloud to herself, “Come on, let’s play golf” as she stood on the eleventh tee. That she did

as she turned around a deficit to beat Virginia Green in the final by a score of 2 and 1.

Green, who lives in Point Clear and plays for Fairhope High School, has won the State High School individual championship the last two years, including as an eighth grader in 2013. She is fifteen and just completed her freshman year in high school. Wood just finished her freshman year at the University of Montevallo and is from Spanish Fort. She played flawless golf on holes 11–17, with two short birdies on Nos. 11 and 13 and the rest pars to go from one down through ten holes, to lead, and eventually win, the final. Wood talked about her self pep talk. “I’m a competitor and I pride myself on my mental game and keep positive.”

Wood was named Peach Belt Conference Freshman of the Year and to the All-Conference Team. She had two top fives, including a runner-up finish in Montevallo’s home tournament, plus five more top tens in a strong freshman campaign. She knocked off defending Women’s Amateur champion Cammie Gray in the quarterfinals and then



Elaine Wood with AGA's Ashley Looney.

twelve-year-old Michaela Morard, who just finished her sixth grade year at Huntsville Middle School, in a well-played semifinal match.

“We have played a lot together and are friends, but we are also competitors too. We both wanted to win. It feels good to win [her first state title]. All my hard

work pulled me through,” nineteen-year-old Wood said. She made a key up-and-down from the greenside bunker on the

“Come on, let’s play golf.”

—Elaine Wood

dangerous fifteenth hole to maintain her two-up lead. “I have a lot of confidence in my bunker game. I really trusted it.”

Green led two up after five holes, but her game on the back nine was not quite as sharp, and combined with Wood’s strong play, saw Green just fall short. “It was a great tournament for me and I love playing match play,” Green said. “I just couldn’t put it all together [in the final]. I’m happy to get to the final, but then, of course, I wanted to win.” †

Joe H. King Award

Joe H. King was a key person within the United States Golf Association, Southern Golf Association, and Alabama Golf Association, all for many, many years. In 1993, the AGA created an award in King's name to be given periodically to amateur golfers in Alabama for their contributions to golf. It is akin to the AGA's "Hall of Fame" and is their highest honor.

Some of the recipients are chronicled in other parts of this book based mainly on their play in state championships; some are not. Regardless, all have shaped golf in the state in a highly significant way and are profiled in this chapter.

Joe King

Joe King represented all that is right with the game of golf. He called himself "a good, but not great, player." What he was great at, however, was administration of the game on a local, state, and national level. And his longevity was legendary as

he officiated at many state tournaments well into his eighties.

King grew up in a home backing up to the second green at Anniston Country Club, so his memories of golf begin at an early age. His father, Tom, was a weekend golfer. However, Joe did not learn how to play golf just as soon as he could walk.

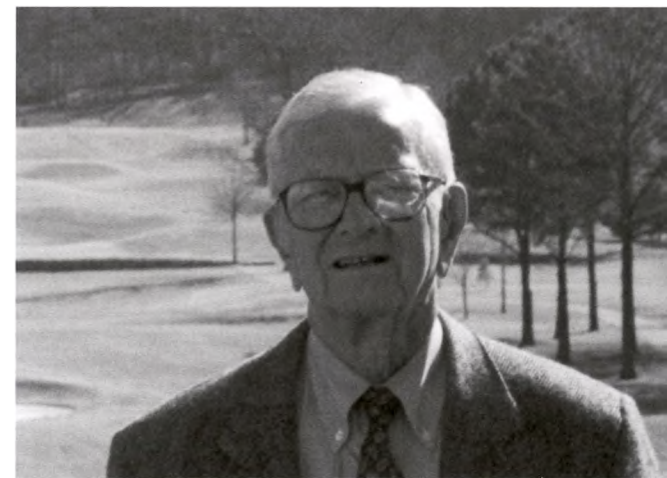
I learned how to play the game with the caddies. We'd get up very early in the morning and play.

I remember the golf pro was a Scotsman - Jock Allen. He lived at the club. He took a great interest in the young golfers. A friend of mine was Wilfred Galbraith and his father was one of the leading players at the club.

Mr. Galbraith allowed us into the old servants house where he had at least 30 to 40 wooden-shafted clubs. He gave Wilfred and I access to the clubs provided we would use them.

You can imagine what that was like. We were like kids in a candy store.

The time came for King to leave for college and he attended Georgia Tech, graduating in 1941 with a degree in mechanical engineering. He then served in the U.S. Army in the Corps of Engineers until he was honorably discharged with the rank of major in 1946.



Joe King

He then found his place in civilian life in his father's foundry business in Anniston. All the while his interest in the game of golf continued. As he alluded to, King never saw himself as great player, but he was good enough to play in some national tournaments. He fondly remembered a trip to play in the 1966 British Amateur at Ganton, the home club of Harry Vardon and Ted Ray.

It was a delightful experience. Weather wise it was horrible . . . rained every day and it was cold, but this did little to dampen our spirits. Billy Hamilton, who was also from Anniston, and I had gone over together. I managed to win three matches. In the first round Billy drew another American. The weather was miserable, but a Scotsman followed them all the way around. I asked him afterwards why he had followed Billy's group and he replied that he had looked at the pairings and saw that they were two Americans playing each other and thought they needed a little support!

Many years previously King had an idea that he'd like to become more

involved in the rules and administration of the game. He took an active role in the operations of Anniston Country Club and served as golf chairman and president. "My interest in the Rules of Golf began at the club level and I developed a strong interest in them. The rules of play, amateur status, equipment, etc. I found all

of it very interesting. Elbert Jemison Jr. was appointed to the Executive Committee of the USGA in 1970. I took his place as a Sectional Affairs Committeeman. This person acts as a liaison between clubs and the USGA on most all matters. One of the main responsibilities is finding qualifying sites for USGA championships."

On the business side, King and his father's company was bought by Birmingham-based U.S. Pipe and Foundry in the early 1960s. King moved to Birmingham later in the decade as vice president in charge of manufacturing and stayed with the company until 1974 when he took early retirement.

King's interest in the rules of play led him to attend Rules Schools. The USGA and the PGA of America run these jointly. They are four days long in which the rulebook is covered from cover to cover. After three days of information, the fourth day consists of an examination. To become a USGA official you need to score at least 88 (out of 100); for the PGA Tour it goes up to a 92. To be ratified you must attend and achieve the minimum score once every four years. King has been to countless schools and noted that Fred Stephens,

JOE H. KING AWARD RECIPIENTS

To date, there have been
seventeen recipients:

- 1993** - Joe King, Ann Upchurch, Elbert Jemison Jr., Charley Boswell, Buddy Walker, and Sam Farlow
- 1994** - Frank Campbell Sr. and Bob Lowry Jr.
- 2001** - Jackie Cummings and Art Gleason Jr.
- 2009** - Fred Stephens
- 2011** - Bee McWane, Sadie Roberts, and Buford McCarty
- 2012** - Jean Miller
- 2013** - Martha Lang
- 2014** - Derrel Curry

former director of Rules and Competitions for the AGA, was the best rules man in Alabama. He's made a perfect score in a number of Rule School tests.

King's knowledge of the game stood the test of time as he was invited to be a Rules official at twenty-six straight U.S. Opens.

My first one was at Medinah in Chicago when Lou Graham won. What a thrill it's been. I saw a lot of great golf courses and a lot of great golf. I remember well when Jerry Pate won at Atlanta Athletic Club in 76.

Back then you were assigned to a hole as a rules official (now an official walks with each group). I was assigned to number 3 and stationed myself by the green as that's where most questions came up.

There was a lady standing just outside the ropes wearing a straw hat with tickets and autographs all over it. She motioned me over and said that she'd seen me at the Atlanta Open two weeks before. I told her it couldn't have been me as I wasn't there. A little while later Jon Gustin came through the hole. He had qualified to play that year.

When he exited the green he saw me, held out his hand and said hello. A few groups later Jerry Pate came through and said hello. Then a little later Jack Nicklaus, who I had worked closely with in my role as project manager during the construction of Shoal Creek, played the hole and said hello.

By this point this lady couldn't stand it any more. She rushed over and asked me to sign her hat as she thought I must be somebody famous.

It is with Rules that King was always most readily identified. "Back in my days in Anniston the AGA had about 10 directors across the state in the bigger cities. Our rep in Anniston died suddenly and I took his place, and I remained a director for many years, being named Director Emeritus in the 90's." Through the years King served the Alabama, Birmingham, Southern, and United States Golf Associations. Numerous awards have come his way. In a program for the Joe H. King Award presentation the following paragraph appears:

It is Joe's administrative record, however, that distinguishes him from most all others. He was

Executive Director of the Alabama Golf Association from the mid-70's until 1985; became a member of the Board of Directors following this period; and now continues to serve as a Director Emeritus. He also was Executive Secretary of the Southern Golf Association from 1980-1993 and continues to serve there as a member of their Board of Directors. From 1982-1985, he was a Director of the Alabama Seniors Golf Association and its President in 1985. On a national level, he has been a member of the USGA Sectional Affairs Committee for over 30 years and for 26 straight years served on the USGA Rules Committee at the US Open Championship, during which time he also served the same duties at the US Amateur, US Mid-Amateur and US Senior Open.

Because of all these contributions, King has been recognized by the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1974; the Southern Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1998; received the Distinguished Senior Award from the Alabama Seniors Association

in 1993; was honored by the Alabama Golf Association in 1993 by naming their achievement award after him and awarding it to him; and received the Joe Dey Award (for service to golf by a volunteer) from the United States Golf Association, their highest award given to volunteers, in 1998, being only the third person to receive the award.

Joe King served the game of golf well and got enormous pleasure out of doing so. “I’ve got more awards and recognition than I’ve ever deserved for doing something I enjoy so much.”

If only we could all say as much. He passed away in 2008 at age eighty-eight.

Ann Upchurch

Ann (Samford) Upchurch was a consummate athlete and a three-time State Amateur champion (1946, 1956, and 1963). She won the first of her three state titles at age nineteen as Ann Samford while a sophomore Sweet Briar College in Lynchburg, Virginia. Her other state titles followed after she had married Mr. S. E. (Sam) Upchurch.

The golf titles won, tournaments directed, and committees served on are



Ann Upchurch

endless, but several stand out. She was president of the Alabama Women’s Golf Association, helped the Women’s Southern Golf Association as Rules chairman for twenty-one years, the Western Golf Association in a Rules capacity for many years as well, and was a founder of the Birmingham Women’s Golf Association. She served on the Women’s Committee of

the USGA and was devoted to junior golf nationwide.

Her own words probably explain this last passion: “Golf is the ultimate game of personal integrity. Golf has taught me more about dealing with other people and about dealing with myself. For the short term, you might be able to cheat for the moment and get by, but if you have any kind of personal ethic at all, you can’t sleep at night afterward. Proper behavior in golf is living the Golden Rule.”

Upchurch was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1969 and in 1985 was the first recipient of the LBGA Leadership and Achievement Award. As fellow Joe H. King Awardee Martha Lang said: “Ann spent a lifetime giving back to the game. All junior girl golfers in the state of Alabama for many, many years looked up to her as an excellent mentor.”

She passed away in 1996 after a valiant battle with cancer.

Elbert Jemison Jr.

Elbert Jemison Jr. and Joe King were great friends, so it was only fitting they were part of the inaugural group of



Elbert Jemison Jr.

Joe H. King Award recipients in 1993. Jemison had rubbed shoulders with the biggest names in golf as a player and administrator and played against many of them in his fine amateur career.

A gifted storyteller, Jemison never met a microphone he didn't like. But he was no name-dropper, although he most certainly could have been. One such story involved Jemison and an 8 iron he carried with him during World War II when he was stationed in France under General George Patton. "It was just short enough to fit into my bedroll and I knew hitting some balls off the deck of the troop ship would be a good diversion. General Patton found out about

this months later, and commented 'By God Jemison, if you can kill Jerry [Germans] with that [bleeping] thing, do it!'"

In 1970 Jemison was elected to the executive board of the USGA and served through 1977. In 1975 he was elected treasurer and launched the Associate Program (now the Members Program) where golfers pay a subscription to receive a USGA journal, bag tag, Rules of Golf, etc. "I wanted to launch it with some publicity, so I called Gerald Ford, who was President at the time, and he agreed we could make the announcement at the White House. I also called Arnold Palmer to help, which he did, and we went from there. I remember joking with Arnold and President Ford that at the time the USGA had spent \$21,000 in start-up money and we were the only three members signed up and none of us had paid!"

Another priceless story about playing with Ben Hogan . . . "I was new into the insurance business with Mass Mutual and my boss came to me with the idea of putting on a golf exhibition to raise money for charity. I told him it could work if we got a big enough name. Back then, they didn't come any bigger than Ben Hogan."

On a wing and prayer Jemison flew to New York to attend the Bob (brother of Bing) Crosby Show because he knew Hogan was going to be a guest. He didn't even have a ticket for the show, but charmed his way in the back door, met Crosby, who in turn introduced him to Valerie Hogan, the wife of Ben Hogan. "After the show Valerie introduced me to Ben, who checked his datebook and said he'd come. He charged a base of \$1250, plus 25 percent of ticket sales."

So it was that Hogan came to Roebuck in July 1951. He and Jemison defeated Herschel Spears, assistant pro at the time under Charlie Hall at the Country Club of Birmingham, and Paul Stapp, a leading amateur of the day who would become the future pro at Woodward and Mountain Brook, in front of more than three thousand people, according to a report by Alf Van Hoose in the *Birmingham News*.

"When all was said and done I had two checks in my pocket," Jemison recalled. "One for \$1250 and one for quite a bit more. I told Ben he could take either, but I'd recommend he take the smaller one of the two, as he could deduct the difference on his taxes. That's what he did after making



(Seated) Unknown, President Gerald Ford, and Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. (Standing) Joe H. King Award recipients Joe King, Charley Boswell, and Elbert Jemison Jr.



me promise not to tell the press [which Jemison didn't until fifty-plus years later].”

With a life as storied as his, it's no wonder he wrote a book about it. Wendell Givens, who was on the staff of the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and the *Birmingham News*, and Jemison penned some fascinating reading in *Playback: From Hickory Nuts to Hall of Fame*. The late Givens was the brother-in-law of the late Charley Boswell, one of Jemison's closest and dearest friends.

Multiple state titles and administrative roles were on Jemison's resume. He was inducted into the inaugural Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame class in 1965 and into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1982.

Jemison passed away in 2010. He had just turned ninety; his mind was still very sharp, but unfortunately his body failed him. He passed away in the presence of his sweet wife of sixty-one years, Jess Ann, and many other family members.

Charley Boswell

Charley Boswell has always been synonymous with Highland Park Golf Course. The life and legacy of this

incredible athlete, humanitarian, and Birmingham native is celebrated there by the following plaque:

Charles A. “Charley” Boswell

1916-1995

Shot an 81 at Highland Park Golf Course on 10/5/1956, a blind golf record at that time.

16-time National Blind Golf Champion

11-time International Blind Golf Champion

Presented By

Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center

Alumni Association

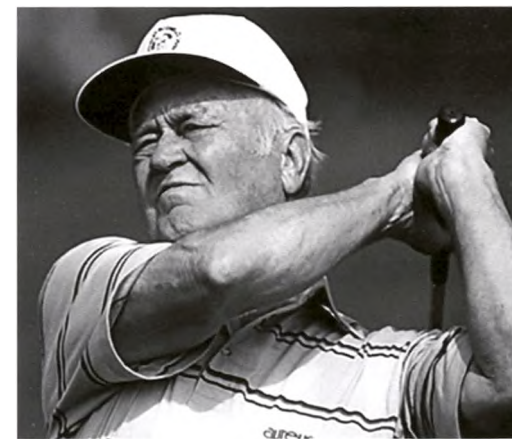
2013

Boswell was blinded in conflict in World War II, but he never let his affliction define him. Instead, he chose to rise above his challenges and became a champion blind golfer, as well as successful businessman and philanthropist.

Boswell, the sixteen-time National Blind Golf Champion and the eleven-time International champion, was permanently blinded by a tank explosion in World War II after attempting to save an American soldier's life. He was just twenty-eight years old. He, himself, went to the Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center and long championed its impact on his own life.

Before he was blinded, Boswell had never played golf. He was a competitive athlete at Ensley High School, lettering in three sports. After graduating in 1936, Boswell earned a football scholarship to the University of Alabama, where he played under Coach Frank Thomas. He would later move on to play minor league baseball for the Atlanta Crackers before being drafted by the United States Army.

Despite his blindness, Boswell still wanted to be a competitive athlete. He tested several sports before beginning golf. He became increasingly talented at blind golf and had a remarkable career including a long list of accolades. In fact, the City of Birmingham renamed the



Charley Boswell

course “Charley Boswell Golf Course at Highland Park” after he shot an 81 on October 5, 1956—a world record for a blind golfer at that time.

The Veterans Administration Blind Services in Birmingham opened the Charley Boswell Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center in 1982. Additionally, he founded the Charley Boswell Celebrity Golf Classic and chaired the event for fifteen years, raising more than \$1.5 million for Birmingham’s Eye Foundation Hospital. He did so alongside close friend and long-time *Birmingham News* golf columnist the late Jim Martin, who was long one of Boswell’s biggest supporters.

Boswell also served as the president of the United States Blind Golfers Association from 1956 to 1976. Locally, he was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1965, the first year it was awarded, and into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1972, as well as many other organizations. He received the Joe H. King Award in 1993, the first year it was awarded.

Boswell formed many great friendships throughout his life and golf career. Two of these friends included celebrity golfers Bob Hope and Bing Crosby. Hope even served

as an honorary chair for his celebrity golf classic and called Boswell “America’s greatest inspiration.” The joke goes that Boswell told Hope he’d play him in a match for as much money as he wanted. Boswell only had one stipulation; he would name the time . . . “Midnight” was his joking stipulation!

Boswell is deceased.

Buddy Walker

Buddy Walker, father of former AGA president George Walker, was part of the inaugural group of golfers to receive the Joe H. King Award. He received the award in 1993, the year before he passed away.

Auddis Marion “Buddy” Walker Jr. lived his entire life in Tuscaloosa, where he was part of the very strong local golf scene of the day including his next door neighbor Billy O’Connor, Tommy Nicol, Harry Pritchett, M. C. Fitts, Dick Pride, Jackie and Robert Maness, Gene and Harold Williams, Johnny Morris, Bill Burton, and Jackie Cummings. They were the foundation of Tuscaloosa golf.

Buddy Walker passed on his love of the game to most of his five children, chiefly George and his older sister, Marion

Frances Walker, who lost in the Girls State Junior finals to Beth Barry in 1966 and to Martha Jones the next year. She still enjoys the game, living in Birmingham and playing at Vestavia Country Club.

George Walker has many fond memories of his father, including that he never let the legendary Hubert Green forget he was 1–0 against the World Golf Hall of Fame member. “Daddy beat him in a match in the Birmingham Invitational, which was match play back then. Hubert was maybe 17. He would



Buddy Walker

always stick it to Hubert when he saw him.” George has long lived in Mobile, where he is an attorney. He played golf at the University of Montevallo, before returning home to go to law school at Alabama. “Growing up, Daddy would take us to the Country Club of Tuscaloosa to chip and putt around while he went out and played. I’ve never not played.”

The three other siblings are David, who enjoys the game in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and twin sisters Mildred Walker Seward and Mary Sue Walker.

After returning home from serving as a tail gunner in the U.S. Army Corps in World War II, Buddy Walker played golf for the University of Alabama in the late 40s. He married Mildred Newton in 1948. He owned and ran Background Music of West Alabama, supplier of Muzak (“elevator music”). He also played, and then helped administrate, a lot of golf.

Walker was a contemporary of Joe King and it was King who got him involved in the Rules of Golf and administration. A diabetic, Walker lost his right leg in 1983, but that didn’t slow him down a bit, according to George. “He was an AGA Director for many, many years and took great pride in doing so.

When he lost his leg, helping at tournaments truly extended his life. He loved to help, loved to be involved.”

When Walker stepped down from the AGA, his son took his place as a director, a role he has proudly filled for twenty-three years and counting. “Daddy could play the game and won some tournaments along the way. He shot a course record of 61 at Tuscaloosa Country Club, until Jackie Cummings came along a year later with a 60! But, as much as anything, helping at tournaments gave him great joy.”

Sam Farlow

Sam Farlow is probably the best-known amateur golfer in Alabama—and it’s been that way for many, many years. He has won an astounding seventeen Alabama Golf Association State championships, which is at least twice as many as anyone else. They number four State Amateurs, three State Four Balls (all with Mailon Kent), six State Senior Amateurs (in seven years), and four State Senior Four Balls (one with Kent and three with Don Blanton). Throw in five BGA Metro (Legacy) Amateurs, multiple appearances in USGA championships, including some great play in the U.S.

Senior Amateur, and you have quite the golfing resume.

Farlow had some very strong runs in the U.S. Senior Amateur including making the quarterfinals twice, the semifinals another year, and losing in the final to Stan Lee at Flint Hills National Golf Club in Andover, Kansas, in 2007. Through it all Farlow has remained humble and unpretentious. “AGA events have always been very special to me. They do such a good job running events, play at good



Sam Farlow

courses, set them up difficult, but fair. To win an event you can't have bad holes . . . one shot can kill you and that's where I've been lucky. For example, to win six senior amateurs, I've only been beaten one time [by Joe Frank Terrell], in seven tries is special. You never know if this is going to be the last one [AGA title]. If it is, that's OK," he said in 2004 after his sixth, and to date, final State Senior Amateur title.

Golf has been in his blood since he was two years old.

My Dad, Carl Farlow, would take me to the old Hillcrest Course in Homewood when I was two or three years old. That's my first memory of golf. He was a very accomplished player . . . he was scratch and got me interested in the game, as well as teaching me a lot.

We joined the Country Club of Birmingham when I was nine years old. Back then there was not near as much for kids to do. We played after school every day and 36 holes [a day] in the summertime. My contemporaries, who I played with all the time, were Hubert Green, Billy McDonald, Jackie Adams and Charles Willcox. Of course,

Hubert turned out to be the best golfer this state had ever produced, to my way of thinking. He pushed me to get better. He was a grade ahead of me at Shades Valley.

Farlow was by no means a child prodigy. An accomplished junior golfer for sure, but his young resume is not overwhelming. He did win the Charles W. Hall Junior Club Championship in 1964 and the BGA Junior the next year. It was the junior club championship that he remembers the most fondly. "Hubert had just returned from almost winning the U.S. Junior Amateur Championship. He had drowned his first three opponents before losing to Johnny Miller in the semi-finals. I beat him to win the Charles Hall trophy that year. Really Hubert and Mac McLendon were the best in my day. Mac was two years older than me and Hubert is nine months older than me."

Next stop for Farlow was the University of Alabama and the Crimson Tide golf team. He attended the university from 1965 to 1970, redshirting one year. He started with Jackie Maness as his golf coach, followed by Ronnie Lafoon and

finally Steve Sloan. Conrad Rehling came the year after Farlow graduated.

The top players were Mac McLendon [LSU] and Andy North [Florida]. Alabama was pretty much middle of the pack in the SEC. I had some decent tournaments. I suppose my best was winning the Spring Hill College Invitational down in Mobile.

My game got stronger after I graduated. I won six invitationals in 1970, including five straight: Birmingham, Vestavia, Musgrove, Monroeville and Tuscaloosa. Also Chace Lake. After winning Birmingham I turned pro. I was 23 years old and it was August 1970. I went to fall Q School in Greensboro, N.C. After three days I was 6-under-par and in good shape. But my final round wasn't so good and I ended up losing in a playoff.

There weren't all these mini-tours back then, so I didn't have too many options. I tried Q School again in 1971 and 72, but missed. I tried once more in 1973. I was just scratching out a living with help from my parents and a group of backers from the club, but this time I made it and got my Tour card.

Looking back, it was hard not to be a sightseer. I'd get so caught up watching guys, even though I was now inside the ropes. I ended up making four or five thousand [dollars]; you had to make at least \$10,000 to avoid Q School. So here I went again, only to miss my card in 1975.

He tried one more time in May 1976 and played very well, finishing second and gaining his card once again. One of his finest moments was shooting 65 to qualify for the prestigious Western Open. He didn't make the cut at Butler National, but gained some confidence and made eleven of his next twelve cuts. But once again he found himself on the outside looking in at the end of the year having not finished in the top sixty on the money list.

It came down to the U.S. Open. If I made the cut I'd earn over \$10,000 and thus be exempt, if I missed the cut then I'd be facing Q School again. Hubert was so nice. That was the year [1977] that he won the Open, and he was asking if Sam Farlow made the cut. He knew how much it meant to me.

So I'm 30 years old. The money we were playing for is somewhat equivalent to the Nike [now the Web.com] Tour now. I didn't want to be out there trying to scrape by and had the opportunity to get into medical sales - so I took it. I was a little burned out on golf, I guess.

To this day Farlow is still involved in medical sales. He kept his pro status for a few more years, playing in the Alabama Open and trying to make it into the U.S. Open, before finally becoming an amateur again in May 1983. He didn't take long to establish himself on the local amateur scene, as just a month after getting his amateur status back he won the State Amateur Championship at Pine Tree Country Club.

He got married to his wife, Susan, in 1984 and returned from his honeymoon to play in the State Amateur, but his mind, understandably, wasn't on his golf game. In 1985 she went into labor with their first child, Bo, and he withdrew from the championship, but come 1986 he entered into an unparalleled run of winning three straight State Amateurs, with his total of four matching the late Sam Perry.

He had every chance to make it a four-peat in 1989 at his home club, but he ended up losing to John Wright by a shot. Farlow said his twenty footer on the final green to force a playoff looked right in the middle, but veered out of the hole at the last moment. The next year was also a disappointment as he lost on the first hole of a playoff to Winston Walker at Willow Point.

The loss that hurts Farlow the most is the 1987 State Amateur. He took a six-shot lead into the final round at Saugahatchee, a course that he had had much success on in the past, only to see it disappear and John Coles III win it. Other noted successes for Farlow include winning the Country Club of Birmingham National Invitational in 1970, 1988, 1991, and 1992. He received the Joe H. King Award in 1993 and entered the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame the next year.

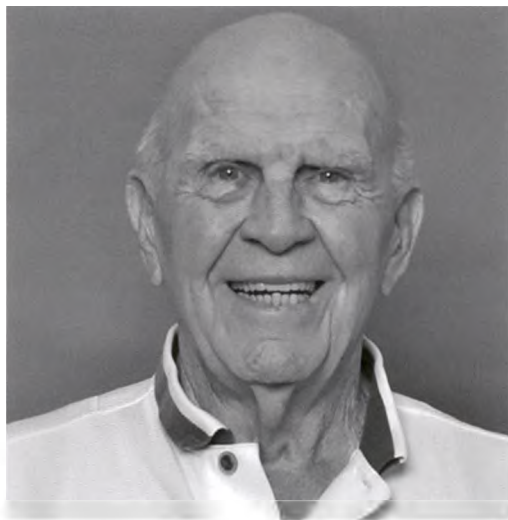
It's easy to be almost blasé about Farlow's achievements; what is true is he is one of the most celebrated golfers ever to compete in this state's amateur ranks. Granted he turned professional in 1970 and spent most of the next decade trying to scratch out a living (he didn't get his amateur status back until 1983, but had

given up on professional golf some years before), but it is as an amateur that he well and truly made his name.

Frank Campbell Sr.

One of the top golfers, amateur or professional, ever in the state, Frank Campbell Sr. dominated golf, particularly in Huntsville. He moved there in 1948 to pursue a career as an insurance salesman. He was a graduate of Woodlawn High School in Birmingham and Auburn University.

Campbell won the Huntsville Invitational nine times, the Huntsville Country Club championship six times,



Frank Campbell Sr.

and was two-time *Huntsville Times* city golf champion. He won the 1971 and 1972 Spirit of America and had well over one hundred tournament victories. He was runner-up in the 1959 USGA Public Links Championship losing to William A. Wright 3 and 2 in the final at Wellshire Golf Club in Denver, Colorado. He also made it to the final sixteen in the British Amateur in 1978. His game continued to flourish as a senior, winning the Alabama Seniors Association Championship (not affiliated with the Alabama Golf Association) a remarkable thirteen times, including eight straight years from 1984 to 1991, plus 1997–99, 2001, and 2002.

He was inducted into the Huntsville-Madison County Athletic Hall of Fame in 1989 and received the Joe H. King Award in 1994. “It is one of the greatest honors I’ve ever received since I’ve been playing golf,” Campbell told Al Bureson of the *Huntsville Times* in 1994. “The award is really special to me because of who it is named for. Joe King has contributed more to golf than anybody I know in the Southeast.”

Campbell, age eighty-seven, no longer plays the game. He still lives in the Huntsville area.

Bob Lowry Jr.

Bob Lowry Jr. was one of the most prominent amateur golfers in Alabama and in the South for more than forty years. He won the Alabama Open three times as an amateur (1964, '70, and '74) and was runner-up several other times, as well as winning the Huntsville County Club Invitational ten times and the club championship many times.



Bob Lowry Sr. and Bob Lowry Jr.

Lowry was a director of the Southern Golf Association from 1958 to 1984 and served on the USGA Greens Committee from 1960 to 1989. He competed in twenty-four Southern Amateurs, seven North-South tournaments, three Porter Cups, plus many, many more events. He qualified for the U.S. Amateur seven times, was a quarterfinalist in the U.S. Junior Amateur, and played in four U.S. Senior Opens and two U.S. Senior Amateurs, including making it to the semifinals in 1989.

Lowry served two terms as president of the Alabama Golf Association. He was inducted into the Huntsville-Madison County Athletic Hall of Fame in 1989 and received the Joe H. King Award in 1994. “Golf has meant an awful lot to me,” Lowry told Al Burleson of the *Huntsville Times* in 1994. “Not so much the tournaments that I’ve played or participated in, but for the people it has let me rub elbows with.”

He is deceased.

Jackie Cummings

Born and raised in Tuscaloosa, Jackie Cummings still calls the Capstone home. Ironically enough, Cummings attended

the University of Alabama, but never hit a shot for the Crimson Tide’s golf team. “I was, what you’d call, a late bloomer,” Cummings said.

He’s certainly got that right. Winning the 1990 U.S. Senior Amateur Championship puts him in select company.

Cummings didn’t touch a club until he was in high school, even though his parents were members of the old Tuscaloosa Country Club. “A lot of my friends at Tuscaloosa [now Central] High School were skipping afternoon classes to



Jackie Cummings

go play golf. I wanted to join them. I was probably about a sophomore. I never had any lessons; I still haven’t to this day. I just kind of picked it up along the way.”

Next came college. “A lot of my good buddies were going to Alabama, so I decided to join them. I was a lousy junior player and didn’t rate a tryout for a place on the golf team. I still played and practiced, but I never did try out.” Some of the players on the team at that time included M. C. Fitts, Buddy Manderson, and Jackie Maness.

Soon after college Cummings got married and didn’t have a lot of time for golf. His father helped him get into an International dealership—selling and leasing large trucks. As he became established in business, he had more time to devote to golf. “As I said before, I never took any lessons, but I did read a lot. Ben Hogan was my idol. I learned so much from his book [*Five Fundamentals of Golf*].”

He became a fixture on the local golf scene, winning his first tournament—the Montgomery Country Club Invitational—in 1958. “I remember I beat Dick Pride in the final (it was matchplay back then). His son Dicky, who plays on the PGA Tour, is my godson.”

Other wins followed the same year at Indian Hills and Selma Country Club (where he has a span of thirty-nine years between his first win and last win in 1997). He was now seen as one of the players to beat.

Cummings would win three State Amateur Championships, his first coming in 1961 over the West Course at the Country Club of Birmingham. He would beat one of his Tuscaloosa rivals, M. C. Fitts, by one shot. Rounds of 69, 71, and 73 had Cummings comfortably in charge, but he limped home with a final round of 80, which proved to be just enough to still win.

His other State Amateur wins came in 1965 at the Country Club of Mobile, where rain meant the championship had to be called at fifty-four holes, and at Vestavia Country Club in 1971, when two players who would go on to play on the tour—Mike Smith and Charles Krenkel—came in tied second.

“My biggest disappointment was not winning at Indian Hills [still his home course] in 1966. I had a five-shot lead going into the final round, but I shot 77 and Mac McLendon shot a 70 to beat me. But, over the years, I’ve won more than I’ve lost.” He also finished second in the State Amateur to Craig Clemons in 1970.

He noted another disappointment was never winning the prestigious Country Club of Birmingham National Invitational; again he had two runner-up finishes there. He did win the Country Club of Mobile Invitational three times—1961, 1962, and 1968.

Cummings had a tremendous amount of success in the sixties, but his game went into a decline by the mid-seventies. “I was working hard, plus I had back trouble. I ruptured a disk in my back and had to have surgery. This forced me to get into better shape as I was put on a physical training program and I did a lot of walking as well. By the time I turned 50 I was in better shape than I was at age 40. Hence, my golf game picked up too.”

He was about to enter a new arena—senior golf—one that would show his golf game never left, but rather was one that improved with age. At age fifty he was now eligible for the Senior Open, but would have to wait another five years to be of age to try for the Senior Amateur.

In total Cummings played in seven Senior Opens, making the cut in a very commendable four of them. He had to qualify for four of them and was exempt from 1991 to 1993 by virtue of his U.S.

Senior Amateur win. His best showing came in 1995 at Cherry Hills when he was the second-lowest amateur, just one behind Vinny Giles.

The crowning moment of his golfing career was one for which he nearly missed his qualifying tee time.

That spring my game wasn’t very good. I’d cracked a wrist and hadn’t been playing very much. I decided to go to Old Waverly in Mississippi to qualify. I’d been there before and thought I knew the way. But come 20 minutes from my tee time I was completely lost and things didn’t look good. Finally a road looked familiar and I thought I’d give it a shot. It was the right road and two minutes before my tee time I pull into the parking lot. I grab my clubs, have my golf shoes in my hand and run to the first tee.

You know, the U.S.G.A. doesn’t mess around about those things. If you’re late, you’re out. I made it just in time and with no practice swing I pushed my tee shot into a ditch and started with a big, fat double bogey. But a strange thing happened after that, I

never missed another shot and ended up shooting 70 to qualify by a shot.

So I headed to a place called Carefree, Arizona and the Desert Forest Golf Club. It was hot even though it was in October and the wind was blowing. It was the hardest course ever for a Senior Amateur, with the medalist shooting 150. I shot an 80 the first day, but followed that up with a 74 and made it into matchplay with ease. Things just kept getting better and better for me as the week went on.

He beat two-time Senior Amateur champion Clarence Moore of Winnsboro, South Carolina, in the quarterfinals and Rick Jones of Youngstown, Ohio, in the semifinals to set up a clash with Bobby Clark of Asheville, North Carolina. "It was [and still is] an 18-hole final and we both played poorly on the front nine after which we were even in the match. I got my game together on the back nine and had seven pars and a birdie to win the match 3 & 2."

Indeed he closed out the championship with the only birdie of the match, a six footer on the par-5

sixteenth. "I felt I could be competitive in the national Senior Amateur as the year before Bob Lowry of Huntsville had lost in the semi-final, as had Amos Jones of Dothan another year. I knew I could play with those guys. You know, it was just my week."

His win gave him a five-year exemption into the championship and he made through into match play every year. Twice he had good runs before losing quarterfinal matches, but now laments the fact that he can't compete with the younger guys.

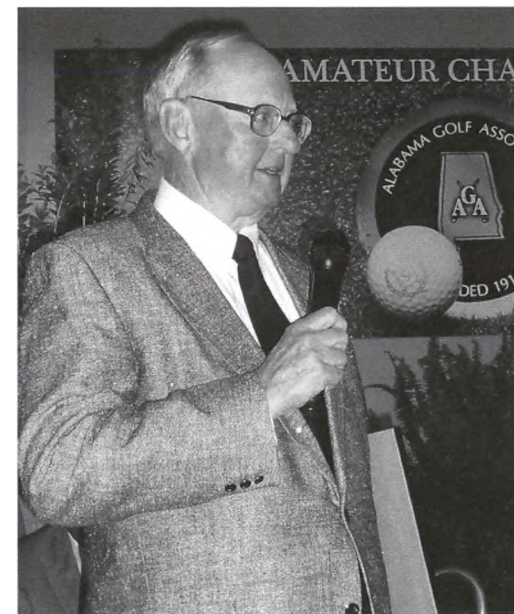
His record through the years stands alone in statewide circles. Sam Perry and Sam Farlow may have won more State Amateurs (four to Cummings's three), but no one in the state has likely won as many invitationals as Jackie Cummings. When asked exactly how many he threw his hands up and said he had no idea, but he did reel off the following list just for starters: Tuscaloosa seven times, Florence once, Vestavia three times, Selma three, Mobile three, etc., etc.

Cummings received the Joe H. King Award in 2001 and was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2010.

Art Gleason Jr.

Since 1999, the champion of the State Junior Championship has received the Art Gleason Jr. Memorial Trophy, named for Gleason, who chaired the AGA's junior committee for years. Many years Gleason himself presented the award. "He loved young people," said his wife, Rosemary.

Gleason grew up in Florida with golf in his blood. His father was the pro at Normandy Shores in Miami Beach, Florida, and his mother ran the pro shop. He played on the University of Florida golf



Art Gleason Jr.

team, married at twenty-two, and moved to Rosemary's hometown of Selma. Three years after playing at Florida, Gleason won the State Amateur in 1959.

He won the Selma Country Club Invitational five times: 1966, 1970, 1971, 1977, and 1980. Then, in 1981, he took a key role helping with the State Junior. That became his life's work, he said during a 1999 interview after the trophy was named for him. "I love the junior program," Gleason had said. "Children are a lot more fun than adults."

He was an imposing figure at first sight, "Larger than life," Rosemary described him. "You know where you stand with Art," Buford McCarty said. "And people listen to him when he talks."

"This isn't a competition for these kids; it's a learning process," Gleason said. "I'll keep doing it until the children cease to be enjoyable to me."

Gleason received the Joe H. King Award in 2001 for his contributions to amateur golf in Alabama. He and his friend, Jackie Cummings of Tuscaloosa, each were given their awards by King himself.

In 2005, he retired from Henry Brick in Selma after forty-three years of



Alli Jarrett of the USGA presents Fred Stephens with the Ike Grainger Award in 2013, commemorating Stephens's twenty-five-plus years of service to the USGA.

work and passed away the next year, age seventy.

Fred Stephens

Fred Stephens retired from working full time for the AGA in 2009. However, he continues to work every men's championship, many local USGA qualifiers, and assorted other events.

Stephens has always gone about his business in an understated way. He is an

excellent Rules official who knows the Rules of Golf like the back of his hand.

He first got interested in the rules not long after he joined Chace Lake Country Club. He was asked to be the club's Birmingham Golf Association representative, and only a couple of years later he was president of the club. He can trace his interest in the rules of the game to two separate incidents, both on the same hole: No. 7 at Chace Lake.

First, his tee shot rolled just over a cart path and into a bush. His playing partners said he got relief, but Stephens begged to differ, as he would be taking a technical advantage in taking a free drop. A similar incident happened nearer the green when

his playing opponent took cart path relief which Stephens believed should have been in a bush, but his opponent dropped the ball elsewhere and went on to make birdie.

Club pro at the time Allen Sims sided with the others, but Stephens felt he was

in the right, something King would later concur with. Indeed King suggested Stephens attend a USGA Rules workshop, as it was obvious Stephens had a special interest in the rules. That he did, and he never looked back.

Consistently among the top Rules officials across the country, Stephens officiated in twenty-four straight U.S. Opens. “Fred has contributed so much to the amateur game in the state and across the country. I don’t think it is a coincidence that the growth in golf in Alabama in the mid-1980s coincided with Fred’s association with the AGA,” Buford McCarty said. “He is a great friend of mine and golfers throughout Alabama.”

Stephens received the Joe H. King Award in 2009 and was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1986.

Bee McWane

Bee McWane comes from a storied golfing family. Her father, William McWane, was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in its inaugural year of 1965, with her mother, Louise, following three years later. Bee was inducted in 1998.

FRED STEPHENS



Fred Stephens (left) officiates the 1991 State Four Ball Championship final match at Green Valley Country Club, which was won by Lynn Farquhar (center) and Patrick Levio (right).

Joe King is the reason I am now with golf, so the Joe H. King Award really does mean a lot to me. Joe got me involved with Rules and is the reason I am where I am now with golf. He got me involved with the Rules of Golf and this led me to being an AGA director and now a director emeritus. It also led me to the USGA and the past twenty-four U.S. Opens, ten Senior Opens, twenty-one U.S. Amateurs, one Senior Amateur, one Junior, and one Mid-Amateur as a Rules official. No telling how many state tournaments, high school tournaments, BGA, and collegiate events. Golf has been my life for the past thirty years and still is.

It all started with the Birmingham Golf Association where Chace Lake Country Club asked me to be their representative to the BGA. I became president of the BGA in 1974 for one year. I was twice president of Chace Lake (1973 and 1989).



Jean Miller, Bee McWane, and Erica Wein, who was the first full-time executive director of the WAGA.

She dominated golf in the state in the late 1940s and early to mid 1950s, winning the State Amateur championship a remarkable six times in eight years (1948–50, 1952–53, and 1955). In 2007 she endowed a fund allowing the employment of the first full-time executive director of the Women’s Alabama Golf Association.

McWane was recognized with the Joe H. King Award in 2011. After living for many years in Naples, Florida, she moved back home to Birmingham.

Sadie Roberts

It is not too strong of a statement to say Sadie Roberts was responsible for the start of organized women’s golf in the state. Her story is well told on page 110, chronicling the early days of the Women’s Alabama Golf Association.

As the president of the Women’s Southern Golf Association in 1928, she wanted women golfers in Alabama to have their own organization and state amateur championship. The very next year her desire became reality as the first Women’s



Sadie Roberts

State Amateur was held at the Country Club of Birmingham. Subsequently she served as president of the WAGA for a remarkable twenty-two years.

Roberts was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1967 and received the Joe H. King Award in 2011.

She died in 1988, two months shy of her one-hundredth birthday.

Buford McCarty

The Alabama Golf Association has been in existence since 1915, but it was

not until December 1985 that its first, and only to this date, paid executive director was hired. That was Buford McCarty and thirty years later he's still leading this association that governs amateur golf in Alabama. He is set to retire at the end of 2015. His mark has been immense.

The State Amateur Championship began in 1915 and will celebrate one hundred years in 2016 (it was not played for two years during World War I). The State Junior began in 1946 and the State Four Ball in 1983. All other championships have been added under McCarty's watch. They are the State Mid-Amateur (started in 1989); State Senior Four Ball (started in 1995); State Net (started in 1996, but discontinued some years later); State Senior Amateur (started in 1998); and State Match Play (started in 2001).

Of course, the AGA has also run the five women's state championships since 2010 when the Women's Alabama Golf Association merged with the AGA to form one entity. The AGA also runs and/or officiates at countless other events including the State High School Championships and prominent college events such as the Jerry Pate National Intercollegiate and

the Graeme McDowell/Shoal Creek Invite, plus all area USGA qualifiers.

McCarty is also the executive secretary of the Southern Golf Association, so his role is a dual one. "I am very proud of the Southern Amateur, our flagship event. While always a prominent regional championship, it has risen to a top 10 ranking in the world, currently at No. 8, with only the U.S. Amateur, Western Amateur and NCAA's ahead of it in this country."

Other services offered by the AGA are myriad including the rating of golf courses,



Buford McCarty

a resource for rules questions, statewide computing of the GHIN handicapping system, seminars in regards to their tournament pairings program and Rules of the Game, administering Player of the Year points, etc., etc. And, of course, their most visible service is conducting the previously mentioned state golf championships.

McCarty's affiliation with the AGA goes back to 1980. He was appointed as an associate director that year at the urging of Jim Spader, AGA president at the time. The venerable Joe King was the executive director of the AGA, which he did on a volunteer basis.

"I was a member at Riverchase Country Club at the time and was appointed as a liaison between the club and the AGA for the State Amateur we were hosting. Richard Anthony was president of the AGA and he approached me in 1995 about a full-time position with the AGA. My circumstances were such that I wanted to do it and could do it. It was a case of being in the right place at the right time," McCarty recalled.

In recent years McCarty, although he would humbly say he was just doing his job, has been rightfully recognized for a job very well done. "All I was doing for the

BUFORD McCARTY



Fred Stephens, Rosemary Gleason (wife of the late Art Gleason Jr.), and Buford McCarty. Art Gleason served for many years as an AGA director with a strong emphasis on junior golf.

When I first became associated with the Alabama Golf Association in the mid 80's, Joe King was the man. Period. Joe was the person everyone looked to for anything regarding the administration of golf, the Rules of Golf, and, for that matter, anything relating to golf. But probably the greatest thing about Joe King was the man himself. Smart, resourceful, easy to get along with, and a perfect gentleman. And this is the man who became my mentor. How lucky was I.

Joe and I shared office space as he continued his volunteer duties as Executive Secretary of the Southern Golf Association, and I pulled double duty as ED of the AGA and Assistant ES of the Southern Golf Association and because of his daily presence was able to grow into my job as he felt it should be done and how it should be done. Because of Mr. King's esteemed status in golf in Alabama, when we began discussions about a possible Alabama Golf Hall of Fame, it was very quickly determined that instead of another HOF, why don't we honor Mr. King with the highest honor in amateur golf in Alabama by having our "Hall of Fame" be the Joe H. King Award. Our first "class" was awarded in 1993 and the list of names are all those that have had an impact on golf in this state, including Mr. King.

So to simply say I am honored doesn't really serve to recognize the import of this award. To have my name on the award named after my mentor, and in particular Joe H. King, is awesome. To be listed with those who preceded me is beyond words.

most part was taking care of the steering wheel while a lot of successful and smart AGA Officers and Directors were my navigators," McCarty said.

Upon finding out he had been chosen to be a recipient of the Joe H. King Award in 2011, he was moved to tears. "Joe was my mentor and I would not have been doing what I've been doing for the past 25 years [and counting] without him."

McCarty is very proud the USGA asked him to come to its headquarters in Far Hills, New Jersey, for a number of years to teach a class entitled "How to Conduct a Championship." It's quite the commendation when golf's governing body asks you to educate USGA interns and staff members on the best practices to run championships.

In 2011 he received the USGA's Ike Grainger Award for twenty-five years of service to the USGA. Additionally, he was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2014.

Jean Miller

Jean Miller has more energy and drive than most people half her age, and she is a driving force behind many local golf programs, especially for girls. "It gives me so



Jean Miller with Ashton Maddaloni

much pleasure to watch the little girls learn the game. Beginners who start to advance and, as my great friend Joann Bedow used to say, you give them clues, and their faces just light up when they hit one just right in the sweet spot. Those smiles, that happiness when they know they have done it right. I just love those moments.”

Miller, a fine golfer in her own right, has spent a lifetime giving back to the

game. “I take almost a selfish pleasure [in helping]. I have been fortunate that I do what I want to do and that is to help [grow the game of golf]. I like being useful. It’s fun to help and that’s the reason I do it and will continue to do so. As long as I can drive, I’ll be there to help.”

Miller gets things done and has been integral to groups such as LPGA/USGA Girls Golf, which introduces the game to

girls from ages seven to seventeen. She has worked or continues to work with the Ladies Birmingham Golf Association, Women’s Alabama Golf Association (now part of the Alabama Golf Association), and the Lady Legacy Scholarship Foundation, amongst others.

She was elected into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1980. She was president of the Women’s Alabama Golf Association in 1991–92, winning their “Special Award” in 1994. And she received the Joe H. King Award in 2012.

Miller has also worked with the USGA for over twenty-five years. She served on the Junior Girls Championship Committee for sixteen years and then their Women’s Committee for twenty-five years. You name it, she’s done it, and always with no fuss or fanfare.

She recalled traveling to the Girls Junior many times and would invariably fly via Atlanta airport. “You could pick out the girls [at the airport]. They were invariably tall and looked a little lonely. One year [1994] I met Marcy Newton who was holding a teddy bear and had a tear in her eye. Her parents were from rural South Carolina and she was traveling on

her own for the first time. I befriended her. I saw her again the next year in the airport. She'd grown up a lot, but still was a little unsure of herself. Do you know what, she won that year's championship!"

Martha Lang

Martha Lang has long been associated with the United States Golf Association, playing in over sixty of their championships and officiating and administrating at many, many more. It was recently announced she has been nominated for the USGA's 2015 Executive Committee. A true honor for a most deserving ambassador of the game.

Lang was born in Decatur and grew up playing the game at Decatur Country Club. Her parents, Bessie and Soney Jones, got her started in the game and she won the State Junior four years in a row. She played in the U.S. Girls Junior three times, losing to eventual winner Hollis Stacy in the semifinals one year.

She then went on to play on the first women's golf team at the University of Alabama from 1971 to 1975. In the AIAW, the precursor to the NCAA Tournament, she placed in the top four for three straight years, but never won it.

She then started work as an accountant for Shell Oil and moved to Houston. She transferred to Chicago, continuing to play a few national amateur tournaments. Her crowning moment competitively was her win in the 1988 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship. She came close in the U.S. Mid-Amateur again finishing runner-up in 1991, as well as losing in the semifinals of the U.S. Amateur the same year. This led to



Martha Lang

her selection for the 1992 Curtis Cup team, which she also captained in 1996.

After a move to Louisiana, she won an extraordinary ten consecutive State Amateur titles! Which, combined with a victory each in Alabama and Texas, means she has won state titles in three states. She also won the Louisiana State Mid-Amateur seven times and the Louisiana State Senior three times.

In 2006, she and her husband, Ken, moved back to the state to Birmingham. They play golf at Shoal Creek.

A career amateur, she is integrally involved in the USGA. The fourteen-member Women's Committee helps run all the USGA women's championships and picks the teams for both the Curtis Cup and the World Amateur. She served on this committee since 1999.

She is a highly respected administrator and in 2011 and 2012 she was the chairman of the USGA's Women's Committee, having served as vice chairman the previous two years. This is the top volunteer role in women's amateur golf in the country. "I've always loved working with the USGA," Lang said. "I love the game of golf and all that

MARTHA LANG



Martha Lang officiates at a USGA championship.

My first association with the Alabama Golf Association was through the WAGA. As a youngster growing up in Decatur, the first tournament I competed in was the Girls' State Junior when I was twelve. I have memories of all of the directors in their "white coats" conducting the tournaments through all of my junior tournaments. Their devotion to the game and willingness to volunteer made these tournaments special to all of the young players. I remember Ann Upchurch (a Joe H. King Award winner) with her passion for the game and also her love of the Rules of Golf, good competition, and her utmost interest in the players. She spent countless hours volunteering for the WAGA, Women's Southern, Women's Western, and

the USGA. She was an inspiration to me as a player, a Rules official, and as a volunteer. I considered myself fortunate to have played golf in the Upchurch era.

As I fast forward many years and am now living in Alabama again, it has been so nice to see the tradition of outstanding volunteerism has continued. So many people have given so much through the years to keep the AGA at the top of the golf world. The merger of the AGA and WAGA has made golf in Alabama much stronger. The hard work of Jean Miller, Carol Lell, Buford McCarty, Derrel Curry, and many others has ensured the strong tradition of exceptional championships, junior golf, and scholarship will continue to grow and improve. The combination of an excellent staff and strong volunteers is a recipe for success. The AGA is a terrific organization and I am very optimistic they will continue to make us a leader during the next one hundred years.

it stands for. I particularly enjoy amateur golf and have always been partial to it. I take great pride in the Women's Amateur and the Curtis Cup." She has played on, captained, and helped select the team for this biannual match against a team from Great Britain and Ireland.

In recent years she has won the Alabama Golf Association's Women's Senior Amateur multiple times. She has worked in a rules capacity at well over thirty USGA national championships, including the Women's Open nearly half those times. And, along the way, she played in seven U.S. Opens, making two cuts, and she was just sixteen when she played in her first one!

Lang was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2009. She received the Joe H. King Award in 2013.

Derrel Curry

Derrel Curry, a CPA in Birmingham, grew up in Duncanville, just a blip on the map about ten miles from Tuscaloosa. "We lived in a rural area and I didn't know anything about golf. I had hardly touched a club until I started working. A co-worker

and a neighbor invited me to join them. I learned by watching them.”

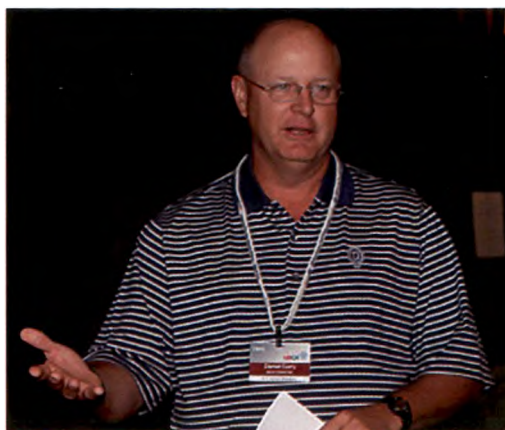
His interest in the Rules of Golf was piqued early on. “I kept firing [Rules] questions at my friends about the correct procedures and it became obvious that they didn’t know [all the answers] for sure.”

After graduating from the University of Alabama he wanted to “spread his wings” and took a job with Ernst and Young in West Palm Beach, Florida. “I’d planned to stay three to five years, but came back after a year because of an awesome opportunity in Birmingham.”

Not a competitive golfer, he enjoyed the game, but softball was his passion. However, after marrying his wife, Becky, and starting a family, the weekends filled with softball were a thing of the past.

He joined Hoover Country Club and started to play pretty regularly. “I figured out even more than that I didn’t know as much [about the rules] as I wanted to know. I always viewed, and continue to do so, the U.S. Open as the pinnacle in golf. I knew I’d never be there with my clubs in my hand, but wanted to be inside the ropes.”

He credited the head golf professional at the club at the time, Tommy Truss, with



Derrel Curry

taking a key interest in him and his desire to have a better knowledge of the rules.

Curry became golf chairman and took great pride in various leadership roles at the club. Curry saw Joe King, and even more so, Fred Stephens, as his mentors. “Fred was doing what I wanted to do -- and he still does. He has officiated at so many USGA championships and I continue to learn from him. He whet my appetite to get involved.”

Curry’s first AGA contact was with Frank Vines Jr. at Hoover Country Club. “Frank was on the AGA’s board and talked to Buford McCarty about me. Almost immediately I got a call from then president Art Gleason. He made it clear he wanted me to be involved. He knew of my financial

background as a CPA and recognized that the AGA needed help in this area. It was a conditional deal and I was happy to help.”

Back then the AGA did not have the number of full-time staff they do now, and Curry helped work many, many championships as a Rules official. That led to him “dipping his toe” in the waters of the USGA local qualifiers and then national championships.

Twenty-two years later he is still helping the USGA conduct championships. He began with the U.S. Junior Amateur and has been a fixture with it ever since, having never missed one. It began at the urging of McCarty and Stephens who knew there was an opening on the Junior Championship Committee.

Curry admitted it would not have been his initial first choice, but he quickly settled into the role. He began as one of the youngest on the committee and has matured into one of the “old hands.” He takes particular pride in helping conduct a pre-championship outing for his fellow committee members and looks forward to the championship every year.

Curry was awarded the Joe H. King Award in 2014. †

Profiles of Key People

This chapter is devoted to those who have integrally helped shape the Alabama Golf Association and amateur golf in the state, be it with their play on the golf course in state championships or their impact away from it administratively or in some other way. It is far from an all-inclusive list, as space constraints must dictate, as well as the fact that features have been written on many other difference makers elsewhere in this book, be it stand-alone stories or cumulative stories about their play in state championships.

In no particular order thereafter, but there is no other person to start with than Bob Phillips.

Bob Phillips

Bob Phillips would serve the AGA with distinction from 1937 to the year of his death, 1977. There is no telling the course the AGA would have taken without Phillips's unerring hand on the tiller.

Not an athlete on the field of play, he wrote about sports with distinction as the sports editor of the *Birmingham Age-Herald* from 1931 to 1950 and as executive sports editor of the *Birmingham Post-Herald* from 1950 to 1973. A graduate of Sewanee, he also covered football and baseball, but golf was his first and enduring love. He was probably best known for his column *On the Roof*.

Phillips was inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in 1965, part of their inaugural first class, and was a charter inductee of the Alabama Sports Writers Hall of Fame. He was also a charter member of the Monday Morning Quarterback Club and served as the treasurer of the organization for twenty-nine years. He was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, Media category, posthumously in 2005.

He served as secretary-treasurer of the AGA for forty years until his death,



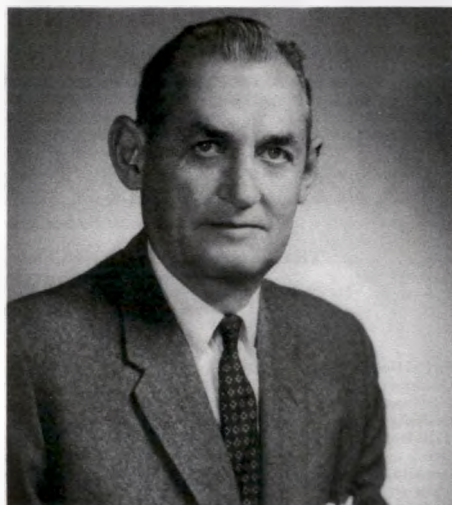
Bob Phillips

Bob Phillips Memorial Sixty-first Men's Amateur Championship *of the* Alabama Golf Association

to be held at The Country Club of Mobile, Ala. 36608

THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1977

TUESDAY, AUGUST 2 and WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3



Bob Phillips Memorial
Sixty-first Men's Amateur Championship

of the

Alabama Golf Association

to be held at

The Country Club of Mobile
Mobile, Ala.

August 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1977

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

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ELIGIBILITY

Championship is open to amateur male golfers who have been resident members of an AGA member club at least 60 days prior to the tournament. Alabama Golf Association gives the host club final decision on the acceptability of any entrant. In his application an entrant agrees not to protest rejection of his entry.

A member club for the foregoing purpose is one which has paid 1977 dues not less than one month prior to the tournament. A former member club may pay as late as starting day. Tournament entry fee is \$30.00. Junior Senior entrants pay an additional \$5.00. One dollar of each entry fee will be donated by the AGA to the USGA's Turf Research Program. Entry forms are available at all Member Clubs and also from Bob McNeely, The Country Club of Mobile, 4101 Wimbledon Drive, Mobile, Ala. 36608.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 7:30 P.M.—Contestant's Dinner for all contestant's, wives and guests. This is a complimentary dinner for all contestants. Wives and guests are invited, with reservations, at \$10.00 per plate, to be paid for at the door.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 7:30 P.M.—Annual Meeting of the Officers and Directors of the Alabama Golf Association at The Country Club of Mobile.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 7:30 P.M.—Cocktails and dinner at The Country Club of Mobile for the Association Officers, Directors, Associate Directors, and their ladies.

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

Bob McNeely, Chairman; Gordon Smith, Honorary Chairman; Franklin King, Jamesie McPhillips, Mac Patrick, R. R. Coats, Al Jones, Dr. Robert Graves, Harold Wesley, Homer Wright, Billy Ray Roberson, Jim Spader, Tom O'Melia, William F. O'Connor, Buddy Davidson.

RULES COMMITTEE

Elbert Jemison, Jr., Chairman; Jim Brennan, Bob Lowry, Jr., Joe H. King, Dr. O. B. Evans, Dr. Philip Moss, Allyn Thames, Dr. Walker Reynolds, Jr.

AGA OFFICERS

Homer "Jug" Wright, Auburn, President; Tom O'Melia, Grove Hill, Vice-President; Buddy Davidson, Auburn, Executive Secretary.

Saturday, August 6

18 holes stroke play.
stroke play in Flights of 16.
into Flights for third and final 18-hole round.
number of Flights will depend upon size of en-

Sunday, August 7

Field split into A and B divisions for fourth and
and final 18 holes stroke play.
champion shall be the contestant in the A or B
72-hole score. In other groups, a contestant is
his own group and shall not move up at the con-
total score than someone in a flight above him.
er the A or B Division or in any Flight, there will
by holes.

Trophies

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th players.
1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th players.
phies to 1st, 2nd and 3rd players.
which is based on first 36 holes; to club for Win-
based on first 36 holes, and to each Member of
to 1st and 2nd players in each Flight. Presenta-
held at 6 p.m. Sunday.

at age seventy-six. Joe King then took on the volunteer role before Buford McCarty became the first full-time, paid executive director in December 1985.

Phillips was noted as helping establish the State High School Golf Championship, as well as the State Junior Championship, the first of which was won by Birmingham's Walter Wood in 1946. Phillips was also a board member with the Southern Golf Association and for many years a USGA representative.

As noted in a "Golden Anniversary Program" to commemorate fifty years of the Alabama Golf Association in 1966,

Phillips is almost solely responsible for the steady spiral in the growth of the AGA from a membership mark of 13 clubs in 1937 to its high water mark of 66 in 1965.

Because he has done so much for the Alabama Golf Association in particular, the directors of this Association are proud to pay tribute to him in this the 50th Anniversary Souvenir program."

Phillips had come on board some thirty years earlier at the behest of his friend, Sam Perry, who was the incoming

president of the AGA. Perry saw the AGA was in a very tough spot financially and tabbed Phillips to help lead them to a more solid financial footing. That he most definitely did, and so much more as he firmly established the Alabama Golf Association, while continuing his "real job" writing and editing.

The State Amateur was played at the Country Club of Mobile in 1977 and was dedicated in his memory as he had passed away in February of that year.

Bobby Wyatt and His Historic Round of 57!

Wednesday, July 28, 2010, was the day Mobile native Bobby Wyatt shot his historic round of 57 in the second round of the sixty-fifth State Junior Championship at the Country Club of Mobile. And what a stunning display of golf at its very finest. It will go down in golfing history as one of the lowest competitive rounds ever.

Wyatt, who was a high school senior headed to the University of Alabama at the time, has achieved a great deal in the game. He was on back-to-back National Championship winning teams at Alabama in 2013 and 2014, played for his

country in both the Walker and Palmer Cups, and is now making his way in the professional game.

Now, let's remember that magical day. Wyatt, who turned eighteen the weekend after the championship and thus was playing in his final State Junior, blitzed the par-71, 6,628-yard Country Club of Mobile



Bobby Wyatt proudly holds his scorecard showing his sensational round of 57!

course with twelve birdies, an eagle, and five pars in his record-breaking round.

He was the three-time defending champion of this state championship being played on his home course. His round smashed the course record (previously 63 by Zac Doran and Jonathan Dismuke in the 2003 Labor Day Invitational) and the lowest round in the State Junior (61 by Glenn Northcutt at Saughatchee Country Club in Auburn in the 2004 State Junior) or any other Alabama Golf Association state championship, for that matter.

It was also one of the lowest rounds ever recorded in the history of the game. The only lower round in a tournament was shot by Homero Blancas, who played on the PGA Tour in the 1960s and 70s. He shot a 55 in the 1962 Premier Invitational in Longview, Texas, as an amateur. His round was fifteen under par on the par-70 layout, which only measured a little over 5,000 yards and was played over the same nine holes twice. There is no doubt that Wyatt's round, achieved on a storied Donald Ross design playing over 6,600 yards, is one of the very best rounds ever played in the history of the game.

Wyatt was watched by his then coach-to-be Jay Seawell of the University of



Bobby Wyatt hits a shot on his way to his record-breaking 57.

Alabama and by large crowds that swelled with every hole as news spread across the course of yet another Wyatt birdie. At the round's conclusion, the final green and adjoining patio were filled with people,

many dressed in business attire who had left their offices to watch history unfold. "It was unbelievable," a remarkably calm Wyatt commented after his round. "I got off to a fast start with birdies on my first

“People were congratulating me as I made the turn, but I knew there was a lot of golf to be played.”

—Bobby Wyatt

two holes, then was three-under after four and it kept going from there.”

That it did as he made the turn in an astounding 26, nine under par. “People were congratulating me as I made the turn, but I knew there was a lot of golf to be played. I had to take a few extra practice swings on the 10th tee to get my focus back.”

Two birdies followed on 10 and 11 and he was keeping pace with a birdie a hole through eleven holes. “I knew at that point that another birdie meant I could shoot 59 and I sort of relaxed at that point.”

The next birdie came on 13, a par 5, when he hit a hybrid from a fairway bunker over a creek onto the green and was putting from twenty feet for eagle. It didn’t drop, but he was now on pace for a 59. A decent chance followed at the next hole, but he did not convert. Then came the fifteenth hole, which proved to be pivotal. A pushed tee shot left him in the trees, but he had a gap and played an

excellent recovery shot just short of the green. A weak chip left him an eight-footer for par, but he drilled it home. Next came back-to-back birdies on 16 and 17 and his putt on the final hole for yet another birdie hung agonizingly on the lip.

As he tapped in for par, the crowd erupted in applause. “I want to thank my two playing partners [Michael Johnson and Trey Mullinax, who will be his roommate at Alabama]. They are two good friends of mine and they talked to me as we went around which helped relax me, but didn’t say anything about the round I was having.”

Wyatt had twenty-three putts in his round and couldn’t begin to estimate the length of all the putts he had made. “I was definitely aware of where I stood in my round the whole way around. I tried to act like I was even par making the turn, wanted to make some birdies, and wanted to think in increments (of holes) that I

still had to play. I kept releasing the putter head well and kept making putts.”

His previous low round had been 62 in a tournament in Louisiana.

Smylie Kaufman was playing in the final group, one group behind Wyatt’s. “We were very aware of what Bobby was doing. Michael [Johnson] kept holding up fingers to say how many birdies Bobby had made. We said to ourselves he was going to run out of fingers and have to start using his toes too. Sure enough, he ran out of fingers!”

Wyatt would go on to win the State Junior the next day, with his scores reading 68-57-70-195, eighteen under par. Kaufman shot 67-66-68-201, a total that would have been good enough to win just about any other year, but left him six back.

The win was Wyatt’s record fourth straight title and his seventh straight age group title. Two more records that are highly unlikely to ever be matched, let alone beaten.

Hall Thompson

I was a wide-eyed, young golf writer as I was ushered into Hall Thompson’s office next to the thirteenth tee at Shoal Creek in the fall of 1996. I had been

commissioned to write a book about the first twenty years of this historic club. Not a long period of time to reflect upon as golf history books go, but Thompson's Shoal Creek had packed a lot in those



Hall Thompson

twenty years: two PGA Championships (1984 and 1990) sandwiched around a U.S. Amateur (1986). So it was that my association began with Shoal Creek and the man who made it all happen.

Thompson, who passed away in 2010 at age eighty-seven, brought big-time golf to the state. That wasn't his overriding intention when he conceived of and built the Jack Nicklaus-designed Shoal Creek, but it was a natural fit. The book I wrote was as much his as mine and was like his memoir.

I came to understand I was in the presence of a respected businessman, under-the-radar philanthropist, and visionary developer, but more than anything he was a man at peace at Shoal Creek. He was a fiercely proud person who brought major championships to his beloved course and surrounding development. Thompson had an integral hand in the design and it could just as easily have been called a Nicklaus-Thompson collaboration.

And the catalyst for the course? His wife, Lucy, whom Thompson had told many times that he wanted to build a course. The story goes he mentioned it to her one too many times and she said to

start building it and stop talking about it, or words to that effect.

On November 1, 1977, Nicklaus was there, along with local major champions Jerry Pate and Hubert Green, for the ceremonial opening round. They all watched Thompson strike the opening tee shot straight down the middle.

As well as the two PGAs and a U.S. Amateur, the U.S. Junior was played in 2008 and the Regions Tradition, a major on the Champions Tour, has been played from 2011 through 2015, with the U.S. Women's Open on board for 2018.

Hall Thompson would be very proud. He is Shoal Creek and always will be.

Hubert Green

Hubert Green was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2007. "An induction into the Hall of Fame is a tremendous honor and it caps off a career that I've enjoyed playing and competing," Green said at the time. "The most important thing in life, and it won't be in my exhibition at the Hall of Fame, is be proud of what you've done. My father always said: 'If you dig a hole, dig a good hole.' I never cared about finishing second."



Hubert Green with the Southern Amateur trophy he won in 1966 and 1969.

Things came full circle for Green, who grew up right next to the Country Club of Birmingham. Jon Gustin was the pro at the club for many years and he took Green under his wing.

Green left town to move to Tallahassee, playing college golf for Florida State. He then turned pro in 1969, after a sparkling amateur career highlighted locally with

two State Amateur wins in 1967–68 bookended regionally with two Southern Amateur wins in 1966 and 1969.

His professional career reached legendary status in the 1970s when he won sixteen of his nineteen championships, including the 1977 U.S. Open. He would capture his second major, the PGA Championship, in 1985.

Green also won four times on the Champions Tour before retiring from full-time golf. He lived for many years in Panama City Beach, before moving back home to Birmingham later in life.

Press Thornton and the History of the Future Masters

The Press Thornton Future Masters is one of the most traditionally rich junior tournaments in the world. From its inception in 1950, an idea of the late Press Thornton Sr., it has become a proving ground for golf's brightest junior stars, as well as home for sportsmanship, the thrill of competition, and the love for the game of golf. It was for those reasons the Dothan Country Club first served as host for the tournament.

An impressive list of golfing greats who have competed in the tournament

includes Hubert Green, Jerry Pate, Larry Mize, Bob Tway, Mark Brooks, Shaun Micheel, Bill Rogers, Ben Curtis, Andy Bean, Bruce Lietzke, Mac McClendon, Buddy Gardner, Steve Melnyk, Phillip Hancock, Gary Koch, Hal Sutton, Chris Couch, Chip Beck, Curtis Strange, Steve Lowery, David Duval, Stewart Cink,



Press Thornton

Briny Baird, Charles Howell III, Casey Wittenberg, Lee Williams, and many more.

In 1996, Press Thornton Sr. and the Future Masters were inducted into the Wiregrass Sports Hall of Fame. The Future Masters is staffed by approximately 125 volunteers, many who have performed their duties for decades. The club membership gives up the use of their course and facilities, the club staff works extended hours to accommodate all the visitors, and the City of Dothan welcomes the participants and their families with open arms and southern hospitality.

Dr. Press Thornton Jr., now eighty-six, is the general chairman of the Future Masters, with all five of his children involved, as are many of his grandchildren as well. As stated on their website, "The Future Masters is not, nor has it ever been, only about golf, it is about the spirit of competition, friendships made, sportsmanship on the course and the challenge of preserving over a half-century of growing golf -- Mr. Thornton's dream realized."

Jerry Pate

Jerry Pate never did play in a state championship in Alabama, but he is indeed synonymous with the state as he grew up here, went to university here, and continues to run multiple businesses in the state to this day.

Pate was born in September 1953 in Macon, Georgia, but moved to Anniston as an infant. His father, Pat, worked in various businesses in the Anniston area including for a hardware store, Sunny King Ford, and the Coca Cola bottling plant. It was through Coca Cola that he moved his family to Pensacola, Florida, the town coincidentally Jerry has called home for many, many years now.

Pate grew up the fourth of six children—two girls and four boys. Golf was part of their blood. "My grandfather was a scratch golfer in Atlanta and he was one of the founders of the Ponte Vedra Club in Jacksonville, Fla. My Dad went to the first 15 Masters as a kid growing up. He saw Horton Smith win the first one in 1934. Golf was always going on in our family."

Pate's first memory of competitive golf dates to 1964 as a ten-year-old playing in the Southeastern Junior in Columbus,

Georgia (a town in which he would win the Southern Open as a member of the PGA Tour in both 1977 and 1978).

It was nine holes a day and I shot around 50 the first day. The second day I played better and had a 40 footer on the final green to shoot 42 or 44. I knocked it right in the middle with my Bullseye putter to win by one.

George Smith, who was the sports editor of the *Anniston Star*, made a big deal out of it. He, and a photographer, came to our house. The prize was a five-piece, sterling silver tea set - which I've still got - and they took a picture of me with it. It made the front page of the paper.

Pate continued to learn the game as he played at Anniston Country Club. Darwin White and Jim Scott followed each other as the professionals at the club, both helping the budding player. "I remember Julius Boros and Byron Nelson putting on an

"Golf was always going to be in our family."

—Jerry Pate

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Jerry Pate

exhibition. Also Dynamite Goodlow and Charley Boswell. Chris Bannister and Billy Hamilton were good players at the club.”

He won his fair share of junior tournaments—the Dixie Junior at sixteen was a highlight, but he was not overwhelmed with scholarship offers for college.

I ended up at (the University of) Alabama because of Coach Conrad Rehling. I'd always liked their football team and had known Conrad since he had given me some lessons at Scenic Hills (in Pensacola). He thought I had some potential and offered me some fatherly advice. At that time Ronnie Lafoon was the coach at Alabama.

He had some good players, but when Conrad took the job that sealed the deal for me. I started in the fall of '71. I think my Dad liked the idea of Conrad keeping an eye on me. I had a lot of tenacity and desire, but lacked a little direction. My freshman year I just did my thing. I was mainly number six man and made a few tournaments. I met a girl, joined a fraternity . . . tried to fit in socially and my game suffered. My Dad would call Conrad and ask him to work with me, to help lead me.

My sophomore year things got a little better. I won the Alabama Intercollegiate and no one could believe it. Then I won our next tournament. We played in the Arnold Palmer International Golf Championship at St. Andrews. It went into a team playoff with 12 players. I made a 20 footer on the first hole for us to win. That was my first big pressure putt. Wheeler Stewart, who was a senior, told me I'd stolen all the glory.

Pate came back as a junior in the fall of 1973 as a player with lots of goals, ambition, and energy.

The following summer of 1974 he was playing against other players who would also go onto the PGA Tour—names such as Andy Bean, Gary Koch, and Curtis Strange. “I was starting to get into some national amateur events. Andy Bean got me in the field for the Florida Amateur at Grenelefe. We were in the final group and I ended up winning the championship. I looked at some of the names on the trophy - Doug Sanders, Dave Ragan, Bob Murphy, Gary Koch and Eddie Pearce - and got a little emotional. I thought to myself I might be a pretty good player.”

He moved on to the Southern Amateur and kept his good play going with a third-place finish. He then won the regional U.S. Amateur qualifier at San Jose Country Club and booked his place in the top amateur championship in the world, which was played that year at Ridgewood Country Club in New Jersey.

I kept winning matches . . . beating Bob Baugh, Bob Young, Ed Tutwiler, Bill Campbell, George Burns and Curtis Strange in the semi-final. John Grace beat Gary Koch in the other semi-final, so we had a Pate-Grace final when most people expected a Strange-Koch final.

After the morning round (of the thirty-six-hole final) I'm one or two down. John Grace was a tenacious player - he was John Mahaffey's roommate at Houston.

Between rounds I went into the locker room and there was a telegram taped to my locker from Coach Bryant.

“I thought to myself I might be a pretty good player.”

—Jerry Pate

It said “Good luck. Win one for Alabama and bring home another national championship.” You can imagine how that fired me up. But I started the second round poorly and was three or four down with 15 to play.

Something clicked and I started making birdies. I birdied 15 and 16 to go 2 up and a par on 17 gave me the win by 2 & 1. That was pretty exciting to come back like that.

Sunday night I got back to campus and they told me that Coach Bryant wanted to see me right away. That was the first time I'd ever been in his office. “Son,” he said “You've made everyone proud. You must be a winner and I like winners.” From then on I had the run of the athletic department. They even had a sign on the football stadium congratulating me.

Pate was also on the winning team and won the individual title at the 1974 World Amateur at the Pete Dye-designed Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic along with George Burns, Koch, and Strange. Winning the national amateur opened a lot of doors for Pate.

He had numerous invites to pro tournaments, the first of which was the Jacksonville Open. "Going into the final round I'm in the last group with Arnold Palmer. He's leading and I'm second. I was 21-years-old, an amateur and thought I could win." He shot 76 to finish twelfth. He went on to make the cut at Harbour Town, The Masters, and Pensacola, where he finished fifth. Needless to say, his focus in his senior year at Alabama was tested. At the 1975 NCAA's at the Scarlet Course in Columbus, Ohio, he was one of the favorites, but was done in by a first round 75. He fought back to lose the individual title to Wake Forest's Jay Haas by one shot. The Alabama team of Alan Pate (no relation to Jerry), Mike Preston, Tony Holifield, Rick Karbowski, and Pate also came in second to Wake Forest.

He immediately turned pro. By this time he was engaged to be married to Soozi, whom he had met his junior year. She was a student at the University of West Florida. They were married in the fall and they headed off to "Q" School over the courses at Disney in Orlando.

Two of the rules officials were Jack Tuthill and Gordy Glenz, who I

knew from Pensacola. They told me not to worry, that I'd make it through easy. I doubled the first hole. Soozi had broken her leg so she's hobbling around watching me. I've not got a college degree, thinking I should have played more amateur golf, cussing myself. In my mind, I've missed the cut after the first hole. I stopped myself and took a deep breath. "Think, don't panic," I told myself. I made a couple of birdies, shot 70 and ended the week as medalist out of 440 people.

Things were looking up. Wilson Sporting Goods gave me \$10,000 as a rookie, which was a lot of money. We got in the car and drove west. I didn't make the field at my first event in Tucson. Remember, making it through Q School just gave you the chance to Monday qualify, you didn't get on the Tour automatically.

After a few rough weeks, he made it through qualifying into Bob Hope's tournament in Palm Springs after a 65. "I got the truck out of the ditch once again."

From then on he kept making the fields, made some cuts, and started

to contend. He finished fifth at Jack Nicklaus's tournament at Muirfield Village and then lost to Tom Kite by one in Philadelphia. He could feel his first win wasn't far away and what a tournament to win: the 1976 U.S. Open at the Atlanta Athletic Club. "I played my way into contention. To start the third round I three-putted the first two holes for two bogeys. I could hear people saying 'The rookie's gone now.' But I eagled 12 and ended up with a 68. This put me in the final group on Sunday with John Mahaffey. Coming to the 15th hole I was two behind him, but a hit a 1-iron close and made birdie, now I'm just one back. He bogeys the next two holes and I make two pars, so I'm one ahead."

Pate then played one of the most memorable holes in championship golf history.

The final hole is a long, danger-filled par four. Mahaffey drove his ball in the thick rough and was now in dire trouble. He tried to force his ball out of the rough and ended up in the water, so he was out on contention. But both Tom Weiskopf and Al Geiberger made long putts ahead of us. I don't know if they are for birdie

or par [both were for par]. I'm faced with 190 yards over water out of a lie that could jump. My caddie, John Considine, knows I'm pumped up and hands me a 5-iron. I still remember the shot like it was in slow motion. As soon as I hit it I knew it would be close. It ends up two feet from the hole. I'm walking up and see Soozie who is beside herself.

"Can I two putt and win?" I ask someone. "Yes," they reply. I stood over the putt and my hands are numb. I tell myself to hit it as easy as I can and it just fell in. I wasn't nervous until I knew I could win and then it hit me: I'm the U.S. Open champion.

Pate proved he wasn't a one-tournament wonder after he won the Canadian Open later in the year. He was well on his way to being golf's next big superstar, but what happened to Jerry Pate? What led to the demise of his vaunted golf game?

By the end of 1976 Jerry Pate had the golfing world at his feet. He'd captured the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Open in the space of two short years and had won the

Canadian Open later in 1976, as if to prove he wouldn't be a one-tournament wonder. But he would never again reach the dizzy heights of golfing success as he had that glorious year.

Certainly more tournament wins would follow and he won eight times in total, with his final win the 1982 Players Championship. He also finished one shot out of a playoff for The Masters in 1982 (Craig Stadler beat Dan Pohl), but it would not be long before Pate's playing career would come crashing down around him. A freak shoulder injury curtailed and then effectively ended his playing career.

So what to do? He had career earnings of over \$1.5 million, but his regular touring career was effectively over and he was only in his early thirties. Course design work, TV commentating, and various golf businesses were the answer, as well as a spell on the Champions Tour.

Lee Williams

Lee Williams never captured the State Amateur, but it was about the only thing missing from his sparkling amateur career, which was capped by playing on two Walker Cup teams (2003 and 2005). He was also a

member of the victorious 2004 USA World Amateur Team played in Puerto Rico.

Williams grew up in Alexander City and would play for Auburn. His amateur career included wins in the 2000 State Junior, as well as being a two-time State High School champion for Benjamin Russell High



Lee Williams

School, plus the 2000 Future Masters and 2000 State Four Ball (with Sollie Foy). All this before he even teed it up in college!

He then won the 2002 Southern Amateur, won the Dogwood Invitational (2003), Greystone's Invitational twice (2001, 2003), was runner-up in the 2003 NCAA, lost in the semifinal of the 2003 U.S. Amateur, and qualified for the U.S. Open in 2005, while still an amateur.

Williams subsequently played in the 2006, when he finished tied at fortieth at storied Winged Foot, and 2007 U.S. Opens as a professional. He also won the 2008 Alabama Open. He played on the PGA Tour in 2013 and 2014 after playing various mini-tours for a number of years.

Mac McLendon

B. R. "Mac" McLendon wanted to play baseball, not golf. "Baseball was my first love. I wasn't much of a hitter, but I could pitch pretty well," McLendon said. "I grew up in Trussville and when I was 10 we moved to Montgomery. By the age of 13 I was playing in the Babe Ruth League, but I was cut from the team because I couldn't throw a curve ball. I remember walking

home just devastated. By that time my parents had joined Bonnie Crest Country Club (in Montgomery). Something inside me told me I was going to dedicate myself to golf, and that was the start."

McLendon turned pro in January 1968, but a lot of water passed under the bridge between his decision to dedicate himself to golf and that day in early 1968.

McLendon gave tremendous credit to Bob Borland, who was the head pro at Bonnie Crest for many years. "Mr. Borland only ever showed me one golf book: *Ben Hogan's Five Fundamental Lessons*. He taught only Hogan's teachings," McLendon recalls. He continues,

He took a great interest in the kids and spent additional time with me.



Mac McLendon

He was really like a second father to me. A remarkable fact is that out of that small country club, a club that didn't have 300 members, came four touring pros. Myself, Buddy Gardner, Bill Rogers and Mike Reid. Both Bill and Mike's fathers were stationed at nearby Gunter Air Force Base.

And you know the reason that small club produced four touring pros was Bob Borland. He left us too young, but he showed the positive influence golf professionals can have on young people. It's important to keep the future generations of the game coming through.

McLendon is a financial consultant, Gardner is off the Tour as well, and Rogers works as a club pro in San Antonio, Texas. Rogers achieved the most fame, winning the British Open in 1981 at Royal St. George's. Reid is on the fringes of the Champions Tour.

McLendon showed a flair for the game from the beginning. That first summer, as a thirteen-year-old, he won a tournament and regularly shot in the 70s. "My game improved in spurts. I

"Something inside me told me I was going to dedicate myself to golf, and that was the start."

—B. R. "Mac" McLendon

was fortunate that my father let me play a lot in the summers. I became a very accomplished player in a short period of time. Really, from the ages of 15 to 17 I played the best golf of my life."

Nineteen sixty-two was certainly a banner year for him as he won the Future Masters, State Junior, and State Amateur all before he was seventeen. His lifelong friendship with Hubert Green began in those junior tournament days.

We've known each other for 50 plus years. He had it a little harder in the summers because he had to work and I didn't. He wasn't really that good until he was 16 or 17. I remember we were playing in the Dixie Junior at Selma Country Club. The first round I shot 71 and he had a 69. The final day we played 36 holes and I was in the

group ahead of him. That day I had rounds of 66-65 and he had a pair of 65's. He shot 14-under to beat me by three. I knew right then that he could play. I think my father let me play so much because he thought I had a future in the game. After I won the Future Masters when I was in the 10th grade, the LSU coach Harry Taylor did a snow job on my parents. I visited [the University of] Tennessee, but I liked Baton Rouge a lot more than Knoxville.

Coach Bryant told me he wanted me to come to Alabama, but they didn't have the golf program at that time to compete for a national championship. At LSU they wanted to build a national championship team and they were offering four full scholarships. That was also a big factor.

So LSU it was for McLendon. As a freshman he couldn't play for the team his first year, but he made up for lost time by winning the SEC Individual Championship three years in a row from 1965 to 1967. He also fit in another State Amateur crown in 1966. "I won it at Indian Hills

in Tuscaloosa and Joan and I were on our honeymoon.” They’d married July 22, 1966, after his junior year at LSU and Hubert Green had played matchmaker.

I had no plans to leave early to turn pro. You’ve got to remember that was a tumultuous time in the country with Vietnam. I’d also worked hard on my accounting degree and had a goal of becoming a partner in a Big 8 firm.

That wasn’t to say I didn’t have the necessary backing to try the Tour, as a group of guys from Montgomery had offered me some sponsorships.

I finished my undergraduate studies and decided to get my Masters in business which would take about another year and a half. I checked with Selective Services [the Draft Board] and they agreed to this. However, I was so bored with the classes as they were so similar to previous ones I’d taken that I said enough was enough. I called Selective Services and they said I needed to take a physical and that I would probably be drafted. I failed the physical because I’d had asthma as a child. I never dreamed that I would fail. So I said, “What

now?” I decided to finish the semester and then turned pro.

That he did in 1968 and he stayed on the PGA Tour through 1980, winning four times. He then stepped away . . . for good from the grind of life on the road.

He and Joan enjoy playing the game at Shoal Creek. “Why go elsewhere when I can play one of the top six or seven courses that I’ve ever played right here? Shoal Creek is a true championship course . . . they could host any event there. Regardless of what I shoot, the course always shows me something new.”

Yes, Mac McLendon is content to be away from the spotlight. He was rightfully inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, that honor coming in 2000.

Buddy Gardner

Frank Webb Gardner Jr., known to one and all as Buddy, hails from Montgomery. He twice won the State Amateur in 1974–75 and did so as a teenager both times. A remarkable achievement. He played college golf for Auburn University, where he was an All-American in 1977, and turned professional shortly thereafter.

He made his way onto the PGA Tour the next year and stayed on it for the next fifteen years. Four times he finished in second place, including losing in a playoff in the 1987 Big “I” Houston Open to Jay Haas.

He then played the Nike Tour from 1994 to 1997, while still playing some PGA Tour events. In 1990 he won the Ben Hogan Panama City Beach Classic, held at the Hombre Golf Club.



Buddy Gardner



Glenn Crisman

Long now removed from the professional game, Gardner still plays golf at the Country Club of Birmingham.

The Crismans

The name Crisman is renowned in Selma and in golfing circles much further afield.

Otey Jr. is in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame for his golfing exploits. He won four Southeastern PGA titles, but he is best remembered for the mallet head style putters that bear his name. At the



Lewie Crisman

height of their popularity, many PGA Tour players wielded an Otey and they are still in specialty production to this day.

But while Otey Jr. may have been the most famous of the Crisman clan, all were keen followers of the game. Glenn, the oldest, won the Southern Amateur title in 1925 at just nineteen years of age, the State Amateur three times, and dominated play at Selma Country Club for decades.

Lewie also won the State Amateur championship and was a fine player in his own right. Indeed, Bessie Welch, Selma's

pioneer woman golfer, once observed, "Bobby Jones had the prettiest golf swing I ever saw. Lewie Crisman had the second prettiest swing I ever saw."

Sister Frances and brother Jimmie never seriously pursued the game.

Gordon Smith Jr.

Gordon Smith Jr. was a top athlete at the high school, college, and amateur levels. He was born in Mobile in 1903 and attended UMS Wright High School where he participated in football, baseball, basketball, golf, tennis, and swimming. He then went to Spring Hill College in Mobile, where he excelled on the baseball team.

Gordon was on Smith's Bakery amateur team, playing pitcher and shortstop. Once, in a double-header, he

"Bobby Jones had the prettiest golf swing I ever saw. Lewie Crisman had the second prettiest swing I ever saw."

—Bessie Welch



Gordon Smith Jr.

pitched the first game right-handed and the second left-handed, winning both games! The Boston Red Sox, New York Giants, and Pittsburgh Pirates offered him contracts.

He turned more to golf and in 1931 was the State Amateur champion. He was the seven-time champion of the Country Club of Mobile Labor Day Tournament. He served as president of the Alabama Golf Association and was a director for many years.



Jim Spader

And, as noted elsewhere in this book, his son, Gordon III “Buddy,” and daughter, Carolyn, have also won multiple state titles.

Jim Spader

Jim Spader was a friend to golf and golfers in the state for many decades. “One of the first times I worked [a tournament] with Jim was the first Birmingham Centennial Classic, the LPGA event that was played at Green Valley [now Hoover] Country Club from 1972 to 1982,” Fred

Stephens recalled. “Jim said he would do anything to help, which was typical of him, and he was put in charge of hospitality. Someone asked me what Jim knew about hospitality, and I told them he may not know all there was to know, but he would get the job done right and come in under budget. Both were true [statements] as he saved us \$10,000 that year.”

“I remember the day when Jim walked into my office and said he was there to volunteer for the Bruno’s Memorial Classic. I’d been on the job less than a week. He was the very first volunteer for the tournament and was with us every year,” remembered Gene Hallman, who along with Ronnie Bruno, helped get this very successful Champions Tour event going in 1992.

Buford McCarty credited Spader with his tireless work at many of their

“Jim [Spader] was truly one of those individuals that you loved having around.”

—Buford McCarty

championships and, on a personal note, with approaching McCarty about serving on the board of a long ago State Amateur. “This got me involved [with the AGA] and more than likely I would not have otherwise had the opportunity to serve the AGA in my present capacity.”

McCarty alluded to Spader’s work ethic and his joy to be involved as a volunteer. “Jim was truly one of those individuals that you loved having around.”

Spader’s list of accolades is long, as was the length and breadth of his volunteer golf work. As well as helping with the LPGA and Champions Tour events, he was involved in the Charley Boswell Eye Foundation tournaments and both PGA Championships and the U.S. Amateur, all held at Shoal Creek. He was elected into the BGA Hall of Fame in 1981 and also served them as president. He served on the board of directors for the AGA from 1967 to 1992, when he was elected as an emeritus board member. In 1980 he was president of the AGA.

Suffice to say, he lived a full life and truly loved the game of golf and all it stood for. McCarty said it best: “Someone once made the comment to me that the

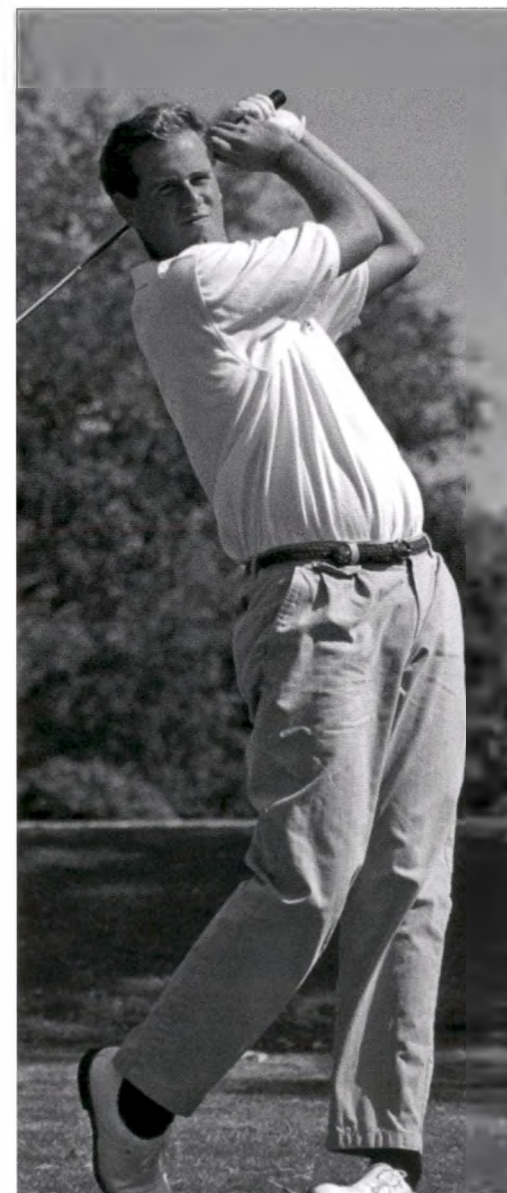
greatest compliment that could ever be paid to an individual is simply to say, he will be missed.”

Spader passed away in 2007 after a brave fight with cancer.

Stewart Cink

Stewart Cink learned the game under the tutelage of Chris Burns at Florence Country Club and won the State Junior in 1990 and the State Amateur two years later. He then played collegiately for Georgia Tech before making his way professionally first on the Nike (now Web.com) Tour, earning Player of the Year honors in 1996, and then on the PGA Tour. There he won six times, highlighted by his playoff win over Tom Watson in the 2009 Open Championship. He has played the PGA Tour every year since 1997 and played on the U.S. team in a total of nine Ryder and Presidents Cups.

Burns remembered when Cink’s parents, Rob and Anne, and his sister, Danielle, moved to Florence from Huntsville when Stewart was six years old. They joined the country club soon thereafter and Cink started coming to Burns’s weekly junior clinics. “The club



Stewart Cink in 1992, the year he won the State Amateur.

“It was obvious from an early age that he [Stewart Cink] was so talented, so eager to learn and he loved competition.”

—Chris Burns

had a rule that you had to be eight to play on the course, so when his parents played golf Stewart would chip and putt the whole time for hours and hours. His short game got really good really quick.”

Burns said that pretty soon Cink was “winning everything in sight.” Indeed, he won his age group numerous times in the State Junior, including the overall title in 1990, as well as the Future Masters. He was named the Junior Rolex Player of the Year by the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA).

Burns remembered Cink was “sort of quiet and kept to himself as he worked on his game. It was obvious from an early age that he was so talented, so eager to learn and he loved competition.” When he left for university he moved to Atlanta and still lives in Duluth, a suburb of the city.

Steve Lowery

It is widely thought that Steve Lowery learned the game while growing up at Green Valley Country Club, but this statement is only partially true. He first played the game at the old Woodley Country Club in Montgomery under the watchful eye of pro Scudday Horner. When he was ten years old, his family moved to Birmingham and young Lowery continued with his golf at Green Valley (now Hoover) Country Club. He attended golf clinics given by the long-time Green Valley pro Bob Ledbetter and remembers the club fondly. “I remember winning the club championship one year [1978] and my picture was on the wall in the men’s grill, but I wasn’t old enough to go in there myself. That’s always struck me as funny. I made a lot of good friends playing golf there . . . lots of good times.”

He also won the Birmingham Golf Association Junior and State Junior before embarking on his four years of college at the University of Alabama. He played for Coach Conrad Rehling from 1979 to 1983, but wasn’t sure he’d end up at the Capstone. “LSU recruited me hard, but my grandfather - Jimmy Goosetree, who died



Steve Lowery

last year, - was the trainer at Alabama and he was the main reason I chose to attend there. He'd worked for Coach Bryant at Kentucky, Texas A&M and then Alabama. In my opinion, they portrayed him a little harshly as a hard drinker and as hard-nosed in the book *The Junction Boys*. I'm a big Alabama football fan and my sister Sharon went there too, so I was sold."

Among his contemporaries on the team were fellow Tour player Lee Rinker; former Tour players Tom Garner and John Poole; Steve Hudson; and Cecil Ingram III, son of former athletic director at Alabama Hootie Ingram. "Coach Rehling was always fun. I suppose I was on the in crowd with him because I played in a lot of tournaments for him."

And he invariably played well. So well he was named the 1983 SEC Player of the

Year and was ranked in the *Golf Digest* Top 10 listing of amateurs across the country in 1982, due in part to his victory in the prestigious Southern Amateur played at Moss Creek on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. He also received All-American honors in both 1982 and 83. "Three out of my four years I played in the NCAA finals, but never did too much. We lost as a team to Georgia in the SEC Championship one year. I won five or six tournaments. I'll always remember the Alabama Intercollegiate. We shot 27-under-par as a team and won by 28 shots. I won the individual title, with my rounds including a 64. I also won in Memphis and at Furman, which was a pretty big tournament."

On a state level he is the only player in the history of Alabama golf to have won

both the State Open and State Amateur in the same year—1981. He also won the Southern Amateur the following year.

Upon graduation he turned professional, bright eyed and inevitably a little unsure of himself, but he would enjoy a long career on the PGA Tour, including three wins, and continues to compete on the Champions Tour. After moving to Orlando, Florida, not long after he got his Tour card, he moved back home in more recent years.

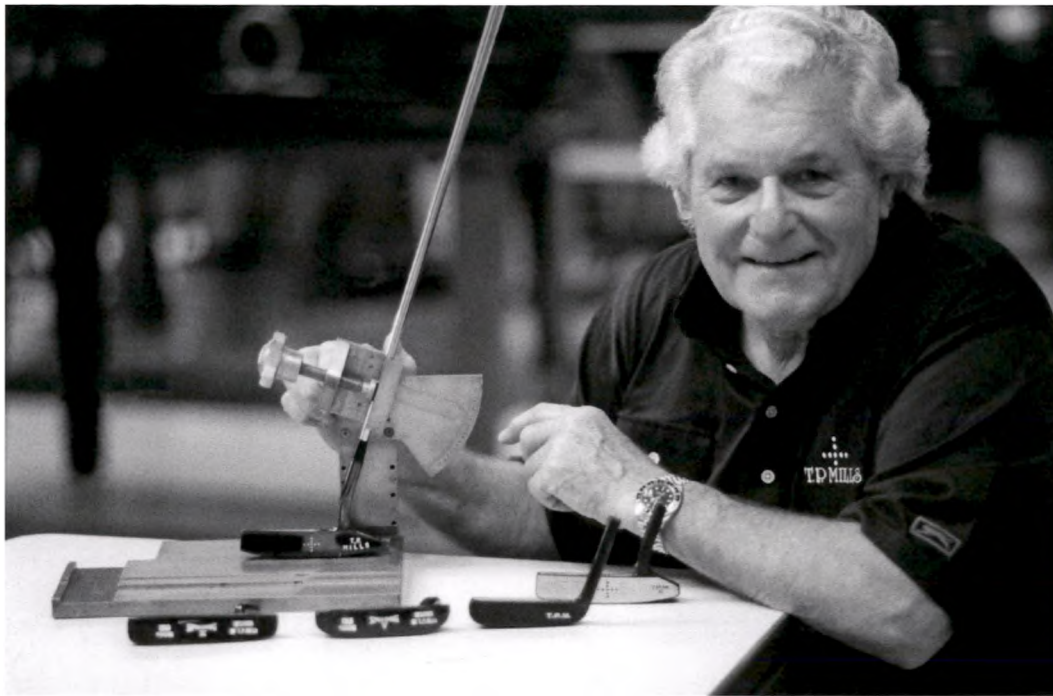
T. P. Mills

The name T. P. Mills and handcrafted putters go hand in hand. This Tuscaloosa native believed in the early 1960s he could design and produce a putter that would be superior to the one he used. This was the start of the T.P. Mills Company. Today that same desire still motivates the company that carries his name.

Truett P. Mills Sr., who passed away in 2006 aged eighty-five, started with little more than basic hand tools and unformed blocks of carbon steel. He began designing, shaping, and building true handmade putters that would lead a whole industry. For over forty years, the

"I remember winning the club championship one year and my picture was on the wall in the men's grill, but I wasn't old enough to go in there myself. That's always struck me as funny."

—Steve Lowery



T. P. Mills

company has set the standard by which all carbon-steel putters are measured. Along the way the company has collected many patents and T.P. Mills Company designs continue to be copied by putter manufacturers to this day. What started out as a hobby became his job . . . one he loved and is continued by his son, David.

His handmade putters, thanks to word of mouth, soon found themselves in the hands of some of golf's greatest

players. Arnold Palmer, Lee Trevino, and Phil Mickelson are just a few of the players who have won major championships using a T.P. Mills putter. "In fact, the time Phil Mickelson beat Tiger Woods head-to-head, he used a T.P. Mills putter to beat him," David Mills told the *Tuscaloosa News*. "And he paid \$800 for it."

Charging for his putters, no matter the recipient, was one thing T. P. Mills always did. Mills told the *Tuscaloosa*

News a story of how a young rookie in the late 1960s was shown a T.P. Mills putter by Palmer. The rookie loved the club and asked T. P. Mills to make him one, but the young golfer said he never paid for his equipment. "And my Dad said, 'But I don't give mine away,'" Mills recounted.

So it was that Jack Nicklaus found a company that would give him a putter, and he would go on to win a record eighteen majors. "Had my Dad not stuck to his principles, Jack probably would've won the majority of those championships with a T.P. Mills club," said Mills.

Burton Manufacturing Company— Golf Bags

T. C. Burton and his two sons, Charlie and Bob, founded Burton Manufacturing Company of Jasper. The Burton family originally came from Georgia.

Since 1907, when T. C. Burton began crafting the finest leather horse collars and harnesses anywhere, the name "Burton" has become synonymous with quality and workmanship. Soon after, Burton's company expanded its product line to include golf bags—not just any golf bags, but the finest in the world. Using



Burton Manufacturing Company began life in Jasper in 1907, quickly starting to produce the finest leather golf bags on the market.

the best materials, while paying the utmost attention to detail, Burton Golf has continued to grow and develop, never losing sight of its commitment to quality.

Still going strong today, well over one hundred years later, Burton blends the latest fashion and design trends with its foundations of form, function, and quality. By successfully combining state-of-the-

art technology with traditional practices, Burton assures the practical beauty of master craftsmanship along with elegant style. Burton continues to uphold its reputation for quality and innovation with its collection of golf bags.

Burton Golf Bags are now produced in Virginia after a previous move from Jasper to Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

Otey Crisman Putters

The Otey Crisman Golf Company was founded in the summer of 1946 when William Otey Crisman Jr., a touring professional golfer from Selma, was preparing for a U.S. Open qualifier. He was putting poorly with a blade putter commonly used at the time, but had an idea for a mallet-style putter, which he felt might correct his problems. He whittled a model of what he had in mind, took it to a foundry in his hometown, had

them cast a head of soft aluminum, stuck a hickory shaft on it, and proceeded to qualify for the 1946 U.S. Open.

What he had stumbled upon was the concept known today as face balancing. As he went around the country playing tournaments that year, local club professionals would ask him to send them a dozen for their shop if he decided to market them. After several months on tour taking orders for his mallet, he realized he could make more money selling his putter than playing with it.



Otey Crisman Putter Company continues to make their hickory-shafted specialty putters to this day.

Thus Otey Crisman Golf Company was founded, and Otey's son, Otey Crisman III, runs the shop to this day and continues to make hickory-shafted putters the way his father taught him.

A May 1993 *Golf Digest* article on famous putters listed the Otey Crisman "gooseneck mallet shapes, accompanied by a trademark hickory shaft and leather grip" with the likes of Bobby Jones's Calamity Jane, the Wilson 8802, and the Titleist Bulls Eye as putters to "have entered the realm of legend over the years."

In fact, five Masters have been won with Otey Crisman putters, and of the eighty-five contestants participating at the 1957 Masters, twenty-seven played with an Otey. They knew that nothing transmits the feel of stroking a putt and softly striking the ball like hickory, as well as their natural beauty.

Quite something for "the putter man from Alabam'" as he was touted.

The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail

There simply is no other golf course project in the United States with the scope of Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail: eleven locations, twenty-six courses,



Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Capitol Hill, Senator Course in Prattville, No. 17. (Jonathan Hoomes, Raycom Media)

468 holes, over one hundred miles of courses. From Huntsville to Mobile and all points in-between, the Trail has changed the golf landscape of not just Alabama, but much farther afield.

The brainchild of Dr. David Bronner, a true visionary, he took an idea of huge dimensions and made it reality. Some may have scoffed and said it would never work, but they are far from laughing

now, especially those (unnamed) designers who turned down Bronner point blank when he touted his idea to them. Often mimicked, the RTJ Golf Trail is the original "Golf Trail," coming to life in 1992 under the watchful eye of the legendary course designer for which it is named.

Bronner is one of the most influential movers and shakers in the

golf business. As CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA), he controls the pension fund of close to 300,000 Alabamians (a combination of school teachers and state workers), and it was his concept to invest a small portion (albeit, over \$150 million) of the fund to build the Trail.

It's been told before, but why a golf trail? "The genesis was two things: to combat some of the negative publicity about the state and golf in the state. It wasn't just in the sports pages, but the business pages too," Bronner said. "And second, a study showing that 90 percent of corporate leaders played golf."

The story of how the legendary Robert Trent Jones Sr. came to be involved is a good one. "As the idea crystallized, we knew we needed someone big to help with the designs, with the concept." The time frame was the early 90s. The Trail subsequently began in 1992 with the opening of sites in Mobile (Magnolia Grove) and Birmingham (Oxmoor Valley), with nine more to follow.

Bronner wrote the same form letter to five well-known course designers. In the letter he outlined some of the scope of the project, including having fifty-four-hole sites. He didn't know who or what he was specifically looking for to begin with, he said.

Two never responded, one sent a form letter saying he wasn't interested, and one wrote him back inferring it would never work. "Trent," as Bronner always referred to Jones Sr., was the only one to pick up the phone and call.

Skeptical at first, he called initially to see if Bronner was really serious. "I told him, of course I was serious . . . I wouldn't have written the letter if I wasn't . . . we hit it off and the Trail was off and running."

The words Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail do kind of roll off the tongue. †



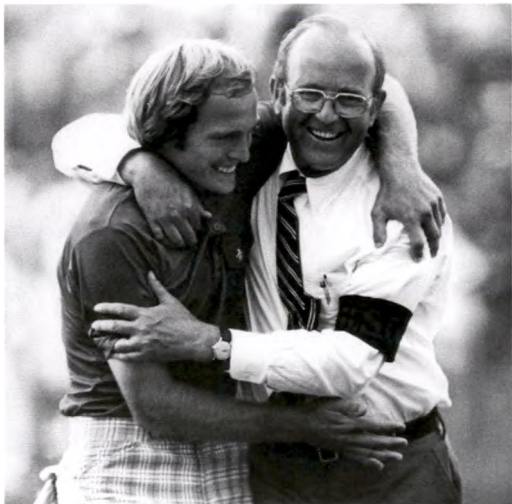
Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Ross Bridge in Hoover, No. 7. (Jonathan Hoomes, Raycom Media)

USGA Championships

USGA National Champions with State Ties

Mason Rudolph—1950 U.S. Junior. Rudolph had strong family ties to Tuscaloosa and lived there later in life until passing away in 2011.

Jerry Pate—1974 U.S. Amateur. Pate was on the golf team at the University of Alabama



Jerry Pate celebrates with Elbert Jemison Jr. as they make their way to the final green at Atlanta Athletic Club in the 1976 U.S. Open.

when he won the national amateur. Born in Macon, Georgia, he grew up in Anniston.

Jerry Pate—1976 U.S. Open. A rookie on the PGA Tour, he won the national open in spectacular style with a closing hole birdie at Atlanta Athletic Club.

Hubert Green—1977 U.S. Open. Birmingham born and bred, Green



Martha Lang

dominated all levels of the game and is rightfully in the World Golf Hall of Fame (inducted in 2007).

Larry Nelson—1983 U.S. Open. Nelson was born in Fort Payne, but moved to Georgia as an infant. He was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2006.

Martha Lang—1988 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. Born and raised in Decatur, Lang has played in and administered many, many USGA championships. She has played on and captained Curtis Cup teams.

Jackie Cummings—1990 U.S. Senior Amateur. A lifelong resident of Tuscaloosa, Cummings has won countless amateur titles, none bigger than the national senior amateur.

Virginia Derby Grimes, Kathy Hartwiger and Beth Williams—1997 U.S. Women's State Team. All three State Amateur champions, they teamed to give the state its first and only, to this date, national team title.



Jackie Cummings won the 1990 U.S. Senior Amateur. He's pictured here at the 1991 U.S. Senior Open played at Oakland Hills.

Virginia Derby Grimes—1998 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. Not only did this native of York win the national mid-amateur, she played on three Curtis Cup teams.

Kathy Hartwiger—2002 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. A prolific winner with a record ten Women's State Amateurs and eighteen total state championships, she reached the pinnacle of her sport with this national mid-amateur title.

Cory Whitsett—2007 U.S. Junior. He would star for four years at the University of Alabama, including being a key part of their back-to-back National Championship teams in 2013–14.

Graeme McDowell—2010 U.S. Open. A native of Northern Ireland, McDowell rewrote the record books in his three years at UAB, including being named the 2002 Haskins Award winner, college golf's Player of the Year.



Cory Whitsett

Emma Talley—2013 U.S. Women's Amateur. A member of the women's golf team at the University of Alabama.

Kristen Gillman—2014 U.S. Women's Amateur. An incoming member of the women's golf team at the University of Alabama.



Kristen Gillman



Margaret Shirley

Margaret Shirley—2014 U.S. Women’s Mid-Amateur. Former Auburn University golfer and assistant women’s golf coach.

Major Championship (other than a USGA) Players with State Ties

JoAnn Prentice—1974 Colgate-Dinah Shore Winner’s Circle. Prentice grew up in Birmingham, won the Women’s



Hubert Green won both the 1977 U.S. Open and 1985 PGA Championship. He’s pictured here at his home club, the Country Club of Birmingham.

State Amateur, and played on the LPGA Tour for twenty-four years, highlighted by this major win.

Larry Nelson—1981 PGA Championship.

Hubert Green—1985 PGA Championship.

Larry Nelson—1987 PGA Championship.

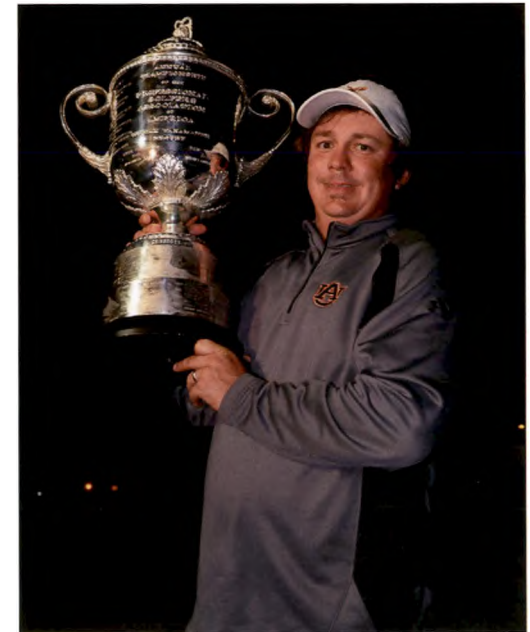
Stewart Cink—2009 Open Championship. Born in Huntsville, he grew up in Florence, won the State Junior

and State Amateur, and played at Georgia Tech before embarking on an ongoing successful PGA Tour career.

Jason Dufner—2013 PGA Championship. Played for Auburn University and still resides there.

Walker Cup and Curtis Cup

The Walker Cup is played every other year and is conducted jointly by the USGA and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of



Jason Dufner, who is Auburn University through and through, returning home with the Wanamaker Trophy after winning the 2013 PGA Championship.



Virginia Derby Grimes

St. Andrews (the governing body for golf outside the United States, Canada, and Mexico). To be selected for this elite team is the pinnacle of amateur men's golf; the same goes for women's amateur golf and the Curtis Cup. Those with state ties to have been so honored and the year(s) they played are listed below.

Walker Cup

- 1975** Jerry Pate (Team USA)
- 1993** Brian Gay (Team USA)
- 2001** Graeme McDowell (Great Britain and Ireland)



Emma Talley

- 2003** Lee Williams (Team USA)
- 2005** Lee Williams (Team USA)
- 2009** Bud Cauley (Team USA)
- 2011** Blayne Barber (Team USA)
- 2013** Justin Thomas, Cory Whitsett, and Bobby Wyatt (all Team USA); Gavin Moynihan (Great Britain and Ireland)

Curtis Cup

- 1972** Beth Barry (Team USA)
- 1974** Beth Barry (Team USA)
- 1992** Martha Lang (Team USA)
- 1996** Martha Lang (non-playing captain for Team USA)

- 1998** Virginia Derby Grimes (Team USA)
- 2000** Virginia Derby Grimes (Team USA)
- 2002** Courtney Swaim (Team USA)
- 2006** Jenny Suh and Virginia Derby Grimes (Team USA)
- 2010** Cydney Clanton (Team USA)
- 2012** Brooke Pancake (Team USA); Stephanie Meadow (Great Britain and Ireland)
- 2014** Emma Talley (Team USA); Stephanie Meadow (Great Britain and Ireland)



USGA Championships Played in Alabama

There have been three United States Golf Association Championships played in the state, with another on the horizon.

1986 U.S. Amateur Stewart “Buddy” Alexander, the golf coach at LSU at the time, defeated Chris Kite of Hiddenite, North Carolina, 5 and 3 at Shoal Creek in the 1986 U.S. Amateur, the first USGA Championship played in the state. Major golf had visited the same venue just two years before with the 1984 PGA Championship won by Lee Trevino and would return again in 1990 for another PGA, this one won by Wayne Grady.

The Country Club of Birmingham’s West Course co-hosted the stroke play qualifying with the competitors playing eighteen holes at each venue. Match play was then contested at Shoal Creek.

Chris Gustin (son of Jon Gustin, the long-time head golf professional at the Country Club of Birmingham) made match play and won three matches before succumbing to Kite in the quarterfinals. Birmingham’s Sam Farlow also made it to match play, but lost in the first round. Len

Mattiace earned medalist honors with a five-under-par total of 137. Kite defeated him in the second round, one up.

Kite was two up after six holes of the thirty-six-hole final, but his lead was cut to one hole when Alexander birdied the par-3 eighth. The margin went back to two when Alexander three-putted the ninth. Alexander squared the match with a par on the tenth and a birdie on the eleventh and earned his first lead of the match with a par on the sixteenth. A scrambling birdie on the par-5 seventeenth to a three-putt



Buddy Alexander

par by Kite gave Alexander a two-up lead after the morning round.

Alexander’s lead grew to three holes when Kite bogeyed the twentieth hole; but Kite birdied the twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth holes to pull within one again. That was as close as he got, however, as Alexander birdied the twenty-fifth and won the twenty-seventh with a par to go three up again. The thirtieth and thirty-first holes were halved with birdies and, in the continuation of a finely played match, Alexander closed out the match with birdies on the next two holes.

Prior to coaching at LSU, Alexander played for and then coached at Georgia Southern. He also worked briefly for IMG before getting back into coaching. However, he would be best known as the men’s golf coach at the University of Florida, a role he embraced, saw two national titles, and from which he retired in 2014 after twenty-seven years at the helm.

2008 U.S. Junior Amateur It would be over twenty years before another USGA championship would visit the state and



Cameron Peck

Shoal Creek was the venue once again. This time it was the 2008 U.S. Junior Amateur.

Cameron Peck, age seventeen, of Olympia, Washington, won six of the first eight holes against Evan Beck, also age seventeen, of Virginia Beach, Virginia, and went on to win 10 and 8.

Peck won three of the first six holes on the 7,251-yard, par-72 layout, which had seen a number of holes specifically

lengthened for the championship, with birdies. He kept marching forward and was six up through nine holes.

Beck finally won the tenth hole and cut Peck's margin to four holes by winning the next as well. But that was the end of Beck's rally and the last hole he would win.

Peck regrouped and had his lead back to six up by winning two of the last three holes before the morning break. It was only a matter of time before he sealed the deal and he

subsequently won four more holes to win in a canter.

Peck, a highly ranked player who would go on to play college golf for Texas A&M, reached the championship match with a come-from-behind win over Dominic Bozzelli of Pittsford, New York, in the semifinal round. He won the last two holes of the regulation eighteen to square the match and led for the only time

against Bozzelli at the end, after he made par on the second extra hole. Bozzelli would go to play for Auburn and is now on the Web.com Tour.

Beck reached the final by beating fourteen-year-old Jordan Spieth of Dallas, Texas, one up. And everyone has now heard of Spieth, a top-ten ranked player in the world, with multiple professional wins. Spieth would also win the U.S. Junior twice, the very next year in 2009 and again two years later.

2013 U.S. Mid-Amateur Not such a long wait this time for a return visit from the USGA, with just five years passing. The U.S. Mid-Amateur was played in October 2013 at the Country Club of Birmingham, with Michael McCoy of West Des Moines, Iowa, a very worthy champion. This was the first time a USGA national championship was conducted fully at somewhere other than Shoal Creek in the state, and the conditioning and challenge of both the West and East Courses was very much up to par.

The qualifiers for the championship, all 264 of them, each played a round on both courses to whittle the field down to



Mike McCoy

sixty-four for match play. McCoy had to survive six matches, including the scheduled thirty-six-hole final, to be crowned champion. That he did as he overwhelmed Bill Williamson of Cincinnati in the final.

In a throwback to golf from yesteryear, at least three hundred people followed the final, creating quite the atmosphere for the players and spectators alike. Picture perfect weather added to the mix.

“It’s a great day for me. And I’m very thrilled to finally have won a [national] championship.”

—Mike McCoy

McCoy, age fifty, won his first national title in his thirty-eighth try. “It’s a great day for me. And I’m very thrilled to finally have won a [national] championship,” McCoy said after his final match. “I tried not to [think about Augusta and qualifying for The Masters by winning during the final]. Obviously it was on my mind though. When I got dormie [he was seven up with seven holes to play and subsequently closed out the match with a birdie on No. 12 in the afternoon round], I have to admit it crossed my mind a few times. But I was really trying to stay in the present.”

An insurance executive, he is also one of the oldest Mid-Amateur champions, with Randal Lewis’s win at age fifty-four in 2011 the oldest. McCoy said he immediately felt at home on the courses and at the club and especially on the greens.

He began his week by easily advancing through stroke play qualifying with rounds of 68-72-140 to finish tied fifth. He faced his toughest match in his first match when he beat Bobby Leopold of Coventry, Rhode Island, one up in the round of 64. He followed that close call with a 4 and 2 win over Scott Rowe of

“I’m sure it will mean a lot to me the rest of my life. To be a [national] champion and part of USGA history.”

—Mike McCoy

Hinsdale, Illinois; then a round of 16 win by 2 and 1 over Zach Atkinson of Hurst, Texas.

Next came a lopsided quarterfinal win over Bradley Bastion of Clinton Township, Michigan, by 7 and 6. This was followed by a 4 and 3 semifinal win over Kevin Marsh of Henderson, Nevada, who won the 2005 Mid-Amateur.

In the scheduled thirty-six-hole final he overwhelmed Bill Williamson of Cincinnati by a score of 8 and 6, with the result in little doubt when McCoy took a five-up lead after the morning eighteen holes. He kept the pressure on Williamson, who did not have his best game after dominating nearly all his previous opponents. “I’m sure it will mean a lot to me the rest of my life. To be a [national] champion and be part of USGA history.”

And part of the storied history of the Country Club of Birmingham; a club that

has hosted the most Southern Amateur championships, many State Amateur championships, and now proudly hosted a national championship. Richard Anthony, Jim Gorrie, and Barney Lanier did so much to make it all such a success, along with hundreds of club member volunteers.

2018 U.S. Women’s Open to be Played at Shoal Creek Now there is another national championship to look forward to with great anticipation. And it will be five years in-between USGA visits again as it was announced in June 2014 that Shoal Creek will host the 2018 U.S. Women’s Open. It will be played May 31 thru June 3.

As well as previous majors and USGA championships, the club has also hosted the Regions Tradition, a major on the Champions Tour, from 2011 to 2015. Winners have been Tom Lehman (2011 and 2012), David Frost (2013), and

Kenny Perry (2014). In 2016 the Regions Tradition will move to nearby Greystone Golf and Country Club.

“Shoal Creek has a great track record as a championship site and the USGA is quite pleased to partner with the club for a U.S. Women’s Open,” Daniel B. Burton, USGA vice president and chairman of the Championship Committee. “We regard Shoal Creek as a wonderful test of golf and are confident it will again shine as a competitive venue for a USGA national championship.”

Also, beginning in 2018, the USGA will move the Women’s Open to before the U.S. Men’s Open. “Conducting the U.S. Women’s Open earlier in the year will allow the USGA to provide optimum playing conditions for the world’s best players across a broader variety of the country’s finest golf courses,” Burton said.

The Jack Nicklaus-designed Shoal Creek has long been a revered course. When the U.S. Women’s Open is played in three years time they will have then hosted major championships on all three major tours. No mean feat . . . †

Golfers in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame

The Alabama Sports Hall of Fame is a mecca for top sportsmen and women, all of whom have ties to the state. Located in downtown Birmingham, you can be transported to playing arenas from yesteryear and more recent days with the displays of memorabilia honoring the over three hundred inductees and close to thirty distinguished sportsmen. Established through the Alabama legislature in 1967, the main purpose of the ASHOF is to honor and preserve those who, through their achievement and/or service in sports, have proudly brought pride and fame to the state.

Golfers are well represented in the ASHOF and include such luminaries as major champions Larry Nelson, Jerry Pate, and Hubert Green. Champion blind golfer Charley Boswell was the first golfer inducted in 1972. Sam Byrd showed equal aplomb on the golf course and baseball field. Sam Perry was a dominant amateur golfer, as was Elbert Jemison Jr. Mac

McLendon had strong amateur and professional careers, as did Steve Lowery, Gardner Dickinson, and JoAnn Prentice. Virginia Derby Grimes played amateur golf to the very highest level. Conrad Rehling was a top college golf coach at Florida and Alabama, and Hank Johnson has had a career as a top teacher in the game. And Otey Crisman was a fine player and most noted putter maker.

These fifteen golfers proudly are enshrined in the ASHOF, while nine Distinguished Sportsmen with ties to golf have also been recognized. They are the late A. H. "Rick" Woodward, Hall Thompson, and Bob Hope, as well as Jack Warner, President George H. W. Bush, David Bronner, Jim Wilson Jr., Joe Gibbs, and Ronnie Bruno.

Woodward built Woodward Golf and Country Club in 1916 and started the Birmingham Barons. Thompson founded and built Shoal Creek. Hope had ties to the

state through Charley Boswell and for years his name was on a PGA Tour event held in La Quinta, California, every year. Warner built NorthRiver Yacht Club in Tuscaloosa. President Bush comes from a golfing family and it was his family who began the Walker Cup. Bronner's brainchild was the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Wilson founded Wynlakes Golf and Country



(Photo courtesy of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame)



(Photo courtesy of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame)

Club in Montgomery. Gibbs began the Golf Channel. And Bruno started the Bruno's Memorial Classic on the Senior Tour, which would become the Regions Tradition, a major on the Champions Tour.

Now let's take a brief look (as many are featured elsewhere in this book) at the golfing inductees (year they were inducted).

Charley Boswell (1972) Boswell lost his vision in World War II and took up the game, having never played before losing his sight, as part of his rehabilitation. He won an extraordinary seventeen national and eleven international golf championships. He then championed blind golfers by founding the Charley Boswell Celebrity Classic, raising over \$1 million for the Eye Foundation Hospital of Birmingham. He died in 1995.

Sam Byrd (1974) Byrd was a true two-sport star. He played baseball for the New York Yankees and Cincinnati before turning to golf and having multiple top finishes in The Masters and U.S. Open. He is deceased.



(Photo courtesy of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame)

Otey Crisman (1979) Born into the famous Crisman golfing family in Selma, golf was in Otey's blood. He played in the U.S. Open and PGA Championship many times, but is perhaps best known for the line of hickory-shafted putters he produced. He is deceased.

Elbert Jemison Jr. (1982) Jemison was a champion amateur golfer, winning multiple State Amateur and State Senior

titles. Long-time golf administrator and USGA officer, he did so much to promote the game. He passed away in 2010.

Sam Perry (1986) He won the Southern Amateur and State Amateur Championships four times each; a feat never duplicated. He is deceased.

Hubert Green (1987) A multiple State Amateur and Southern Amateur champion, Green was a very dominant player on the PGA Tour, particularly in the 1970s when he won sixteen (of his nineteen) titles. He won both the U.S. Open and the PGA Championship. On the Senior Tour he won his hometown's Bruno's Memorial Classic in 1998.

Larry Nelson (1989) The only Alabamian to have won three major championships (PGA in 1981 and 1987 and the 1983 U.S. Open), Nelson won a total of ten PGA Tour events and played on three Ryder Cup teams. He won the 1999 Bruno's Memorial Classic.

JoAnn Prentice (1991) A top amateur, she then played on the LPGA Tour for

twenty-four years, including winning the Dinah Shore (a major), plus five other titles.

Gardner Dickinson (1993) A fine amateur player from Dothan, he won eight times on the PGA Tour and on two



(Photo courtesy of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame)

Ryder Cup teams. He was involved in the formation of the Senior (Champions) Tour. He is deceased.

Jerry Pate (1994) Pate hit the ground running in his young golf career winning the U.S. Amateur in 1974 while a junior on the golf team at Alabama. Two years later he would capture the U.S. Open, with numerous other wins to follow including the Players Championship. Multiple shoulder injuries robbed him of a far more decorated playing career, but he has made his mark in golf course design, TV commentary, and other golf-related businesses.

Conrad Rehling (1999) One of the most noted college golf coaches ever, Rehling is most known for his role at Alabama. Pate was his protégé and many other fine players came under his tutelage. He worked tirelessly to teach the disabled how to play golf and the golf trophy for the Special Olympics is named after him. He passed away in 2007.

Mac McLendon (2000) A fine amateur player, McLendon won multiple State

Juniors and State Amateurs. He won the SEC title three years in a row while at LSU before moving on to the PGA Tour where he captured numerous titles.

Hank Johnson (2001) A teaching professional with an unrivaled record in the state, Johnson continues to teach the game to this day. He has received many teaching accolades, including being named National Teacher of the Year by the PGA of America in 2004.

Virginia Derby Grimes (2004) Grimes played and coached at Auburn and has been a lifelong career amateur. She won the Women's State Amateur five times, with her playing highlight winning the 1998 U.S. Mid-Amateur. She has also played on three Curtis Cup teams.

Steve Lowery (2008) Growing up in Hoover, Lowery won the State Junior and then the State Amateur and Alabama Open in the same year (1981). He played collegiately for Alabama. He turned professional in 1992 and won three times on the PGA Tour. He now plays on the Champions Tour. ↑

Appendices

Appendix I: AGA Presidents

(Regrettably a number of past presidents are unknown)

- | | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1915 | George Stuart, Montgomery/Norborne R. Clarke, Mobile | 1976 | B. R. Roberson, Florence |
| 1916 | Henry Seibels, Birmingham | 1977 | Homer "Jug" Wright, Auburn |
| 1921 | A. B. "Buck" Harris, Birmingham | 1978 | Tom O'Melia Jr., Grove Hill |
| 1925 | F. Taylor Peck, Mobile | | |
| 1926 | Martin Sullivan | | |
| 1937 | Sam Perry, Birmingham | | |
| 1938 | Sam Perry, Birmingham | | |
| 1943 | Harry Pritchett, Tuscaloosa | | |
| 1944 | Harry Pritchett, Tuscaloosa | | |
| 1945 | William McWane, Birmingham | | |
| 1949 | John Donovan, Birmingham | | |
| 1950 | Bob Gregory, Birmingham | | |
| 1966 | Philip "Buddy" Moss, Selma | | |
| 1967 | Tommy Nicol, Tuscaloosa | | |
| 1968 | Wilson Foote, Florence | | |
| 1969 | Joe H. King, Anniston | | |
| 1970 | Bobby McNeely, Mobile | | |
| 1971 | James H. Brennan Jr., Dothan | | |
| 1972 | Harold Wesley, Greenville | | |
| 1973 | Billy O'Connor, Tuscaloosa | | |
| 1974 | Walker Reynolds Jr., Anniston | | |
| 1975 | O. B. Evans, Decatur | | |



Gilbert and Harold Wesley, both storied golfers from Greenville, enjoyed strong amateur careers across the state and in the military. Harold Wesley was president of the AGA in 1972 and his son, Cody, is a long-time AGA director and will be the AGA president in 2015-16.

1979–1980 Jim Spader, Birmingham
1981–1982 Davis Haughton, Dothan
1983–1984 Albert Elmore, Montgomery
1985–1986 Richard Anthony, Birmingham
1987–1988 Bryan Bergeron, Huntsville
1989–1990 Hamp Greene, Montgomery
1991–1992 Art Gleason Jr., Selma
1993–1994 Ben Dowdey, Birmingham
1995–1996 Tim Turnham, Auburn
1997–1998 Barney Lanier, Birmingham
1999–2000 Barry Mullins, Tuscaloosa
2001–2002 Jerry Hynson, Mobile
2003–2004 Derrel Curry, Birmingham
2005–2006 Billy Wood, Birmingham
2007–2008 Tab Hudson, Jasper
2009–2010 David Pearce, Selma
2011–2012 George Walker, Mobile
2013–2014 John Miller, Birmingham

Served as president, but year(s) unknown:

C. T. Fairbairn, Birmingham
 S. L. Yerkes, Birmingham
 Preston Watson, Montgomery
 Neal Collins, Montgomery
 Bob Lowry Jr., Huntsville (two terms)
 Newton Allen, Selma (two terms)
 Donald Smith, Mobile
 Henry Perkerson, Anniston
 Elbert Jemison Jr., Birmingham (two terms)
 Johnny Thames, Montgomery
 Horace Horner Jr., Montgomery
 Crawford Rainwater, Pensacola
 Robert Graves, Gadsden
 R. R. “Red” Coats, Montgomery
 Allen Thames, Montgomery
 Abner Powell III, Andalusia
 Gordon Smith Jr., Mobile (three terms)



Albert Elmore

Appendix II: Men's State Amateur Champions

Match Play

- 1915** Jack Allison, Birmingham . . . Montgomery Country Club
1916 A. B. Harris, Birmingham . . . Roebuck Country Club
1917 Tournament pre-empted by WWI
1918 Tournament pre-empted by WWI
1919 Bob Gregory, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Birmingham
1920 Files Crenshaw, Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
1921 A. B. Harris, Birmingham . . . Roebuck Country Club
1922 Henry Seibels, Birmingham . . . Montgomery Country Club
1923 Glenn Crisman, Selma . . . Country Club of Mobile
1924 Jimmy Hillhouse, Birmingham . . . Roebuck Country Club
1925 Glenn Crisman, Selma . . . Country Club of Mobile
1926 Glenn Crisman, Selma . . . Montgomery Country Club
1927 Bob Munger, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Birmingham
1928 Harry Pritchett, Tuscaloosa . . . Country Club of Mobile
1929 Sam Perry, Birmingham . . . Roebuck Country Club
1930 W. L. Cope, Mobile . . . Montgomery Country Club
1931 Gordon Smith Jr., Mobile . . . Country Club of Mobile
1932 W. L. Cope, Mobile . . . Pensacola Country Club*
1933 Johnny Thames, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Birmingham
1934 Files Crenshaw, Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
1935 Sam Perry, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Mobile
1936 Johnny Morris, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Birmingham
1937 Duncan McDavid, Pensacola . . . Pensacola Country Club*
1938 Lewis Crisman, Selma . . . Selma Country Club

- 1939** Weldon Doe, Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
1940 Scudday Horner, Montgomery . . . Country Club of Mobile
1941 Sam Perry, Birmingham . . . Anniston Country Club
1942 Sam Perry, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Birmingham
1943 Harry Pritchett, Tuscaloosa . . . Selma Country Club
1944 Scudday Horner, Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
1945 Scudday Horner, Montgomery . . . Country Club of Mobile
1946 Jack Horner, Montgomery . . . Anniston Country Club
1947 Gordon Smith III, Mobile . . . Mountain Brook Club
1948 Gordon Smith III, Mobile . . . Pensacola Country Club*
1949 Gardner Dickinson Jr., Dothan . . . Montgomery Country Club
1950 Jimmy Ryan, Greenville . . . Gadsden Country Club
1951 M. C. Fitts, Tuscaloosa . . . Selma Country Club
1952 Pat Poyner III, Dothan . . . Dothan Country Club
1953 Marion Vickers, Mobile . . . Country Club of Mobile
1954 Billy O'Connor, Tuscaloosa . . . Anniston Country Club

In 1955, the format was changed to seventy-two holes at Stroke Play.

Stroke Play

- 1955** Frank "Sonny" Holt, Selma . . . Montgomery Country Club
1956 Nelson DeBardeleben, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Tuscaloosa
1957 Elbert Jemison Jr., Birmingham . . . Mountain Brook Club



- 1958** Elbert Jemison Jr., Birmingham . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1959** Art Gleason Jr., Selma . . . Gadsden Country Club
- 1960** Bob Woodfin Jr., Selma . . . Selma Country Club
- 1961** Jackie Cummings, Tuscaloosa . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 1962** B. R. “Mac” McLendon Jr., Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 1963** M. C. Fitts, Tuscaloosa . . . Anniston Country Club
- 1964** M. C. Fitts, Tuscaloosa . . . Huntsville Country Club
- 1965** Jackie Cummings, Tuscaloosa . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1966** B. R. “Mac” McLendon Jr., Montgomery . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 1967** Hubert Green, Birmingham . . . Dothan Country Club
- 1968** Hubert Green, Birmingham . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 1969** Charles “Bubba” Major, Birmingham . . . Selma Country Club
- 1970** Craig Clemons, Opp . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 1971** Jackie Cummings, Tuscaloosa . . . Vestavia Country Club
- 1972** Charles Krenkel, Birmingham . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 1973** Phillip Hancock, Greenville . . . Burningtree Country Club
- 1974** Buddy Gardner, Montgomery . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 1975** Buddy Gardner, Montgomery . . . Olympia Spa Country Club
- 1976** Richard Anthony, Birmingham . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 1977** Ronny Mobley, Brundidge . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1978** Steve Goldstein, Huntsville . . . Valley Hill Country Club



Talbert Griffin III enjoyed a magical time at Montgomery Country Club in 1984 as he won the Montgomery Country Club Invitational and Club Championship and the State Amateur all at that venue that summer. *(Joe Songer)*



- 1979** Jud Stockard, Florence . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 1980** Cecil Ingram III, Birmingham . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 1981** Steve Lowery, Birmingham . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 1982** John Fridge III, Mobile . . . Dothan Country Club
- 1983** Sam Farlow, Birmingham . . . Pine Tree Country Club
- 1984** Talbert Griffin III, Montgomery . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 1985** Tom Jones, Fort Payne . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 1986** Sam Farlow, Birmingham . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1987** Sam Farlow, Birmingham . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 1988** Sam Farlow Birmingham . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1989** John Wright, Gulf Shores . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 1990** Robbie Cotten, Brewton . . . Valley Hill Country Club
- 1991** Winston Walker, Huntsville . . . Willow Pont Golf and Country Club
- 1992** Stewart Cink, Florence . . . Cotton Creek
- 1993** Bob Frazer, Selma . . . Green Valley Country Club
- 1994** Eric Hamilton, Anniston . . . Burningtree Country Club
- 1995** Jason Brown, Decatur . . . Pine Tree Country Club
- 1996** John Coles III, Moody . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 1997** Richard Jeffers, Mobile . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1998** Scott Weatherly, Fort Payne . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 1999** Payton Osborn, Birmingham . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2000** Payton Osborn, Birmingham . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 2001** Tyler McKeever, Auburn . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 2002** Will Swift, Birmingham . . . Hoover Country Club
- 2003** Clark Brown, Birmingham . . . Cotton Creek Club
- 2004** Lance Goodson, Birmingham . . . Bent Brook Golf Course
- 2005** Will Swift, Birmingham . . . Limestone Springs
- 2006** Ben Moody, Tuscaloosa . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 2007** Garrett Osborn, Birmingham . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 2008** Will Wilcox, Pell City . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 2009** Hunter Hamrick, Montgomery . . . Greystone Golf and Country Club
- 2010** Hunter Hamrick, Montgomery . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2011** Smylie Kaufman, Vestavia Hills . . . FarmLinks Golf Club
- 2012** Andy McRae, Hoover . . . Kiva Dunes
- 2013** Michael Johnson, Birmingham . . . Hoover Country Club
- 2014** Will Cannon, Hoover . . . Lakewood Golf Club

* Pensacola was a part of the original formation of the Alabama Golf Association, which included western Florida. The association changed its bylaws to include only the state of Alabama in 1955.



Appendix III: Boys State Junior Champions

1946	Walter Wood	1965	Lee Harper
1947	Gilbert Wesley	1966	Ralph Smallman
1948	Bobby McNeely	1967	Mike Smith
1949	Bobby McNeely	1968	Mike Smith
1950	Milton Wigley	1969	Jimmy Ryan Jr.
1951	Milton Wigley	1970	Phillip Hancock
1952	Jackie Maness	1971	Pete Cobb
1953	Jackie Maness	1972	Bud Smith
1954	Roger Suttle	1973	Steve Brabner
1955	Robert Maness	1974	Ralph Mathews
1956	Robert Maness	1975	Allen Ritchie
1957	Frost Walker	1976	Steve Cantrell
1958	Larry Campbell	1977	Steve Lowery
1959	Hamp Greene	1978	Robert Nelson
1960	David Outland	1979	Joey Dzwonkowski
1961	B. R. McLendon	1980	Steve Strickland
1962	B. R. McLendon	1981	Greg Jones
1963	Richard Anthony	1982	Chris Gustin
1964	Lee Harper	1983	Chris Gustin

* Bobby McNeely of Mobile won back-to-back State Juniors in 1948–49 and served as AGA president in 1970.

* Lee Harper of Birmingham won back-to-back State Juniors in 1964–65. He would go on to run Frank House Municipal Golf Course in Bessemer for many years.

* Mike Smith of Selma won back-to-back State Juniors in 1967–68. He would make his way on the PGA Tour and then the Champions Tour.



As well as winning the inaugural State Junior in 1946, Birmingham's Walter Wood won multiple invitationals around the state and qualified for two U.S. Amateurs and two U.S. Opens (including in 1955 at Olympic Club when Jack Fleck beat Ben Hogan). He also won several club championships at the Country Club of Birmingham. His son, Billy Wood, himself a fine player, is a former AGA president.

Jackie Maness of Tuscaloosa won back-to-back State Juniors in 1952–53 and remarkably his brother Robert Maness would do the same in 1955–56. Jackie was also the State High School champion in 1951 and medalist in 1950 and 1952. They both played golf for the University of Alabama and became PGA club professionals. Pictured are Robert Maness (left) and his brother Jackie Maness (right) at Meadowbrook Country Club in 1955.





Ralph Mathews of Andalusia won the State Junior in 1974, the 2009 State Senior Four Ball with Greenville's David Hancock, and the 2010 State Senior. His father, Max Mathews, has won multiple age group titles in the State Senior. Ralph Mathews (above, third from right), receives the 1974 State Junior trophy.

- 1984** Jack Coker Jr. . . . Bonnie Crest Country Club
- 1985** Jimmy Green Jr. . . . Country Club of Andalusia
- 1986** Jim Strong . . . Country Club of Tuscaloosa
- 1987** Jimmy Green Jr. . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1988** Brian Gay . . . Gulf Shores
- 1989** Ryan Gump . . . Anniston Country Club
- 1990** Stewart Cink . . . Florence Country Club
- 1991** Chip Deason . . . Selma Country Club
- 1992** Chip Deason . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 1993** Scott Weatherly . . . Woodward Golf and Country Club
- 1994** Cullen Thompson . . . Vestavia Country Club
- 1995** Scott Weatherly . . . Valley Hill Country Club
- 1996** Zach Davis . . . Hoover Country Club
- 1997** Forrest Crabtree . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 1998** Neil Self . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 1999** Justin Elliott . . . Musgrove Country Club



Robert Nelson of Mobile won the 1978 State Junior, the 2009 State Mid-Amateur, and the 2014 State Senior Four Ball with Walker Grant of Montgomery. Robert Nelson (right) is pictured after he won the 1978 State Junior with Jim McDaniel (left). (Charles Nesbitt)

* Birmingham's Chris Gustin won back-to-back State Juniors in 1982-83. His father, Jon Gustin, was the much loved, long-time head pro at the Country Club of Birmingham

* Mobile's Jimmy Green Jr. won the State Junior in 1987 and 1989. He went on to play for Auburn and then made his way on what is now the Web.com Tour and then the PGA Tour for a while.

* Chip Deason of Centreville won back-to-back State Juniors in 1991-92. He went on to play for Alabama.



- 2000** Lee Williams . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 2001** Andrew Medley . . . Selma Country Club
- 2002** Andrew Medley . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
- 2003** Patton Kizzire . . . Gadsden Country Club
- 2004** Patton Kizzire . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 2005** Glenn Northcutt . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 2006** Jacob Randall . . . Ol' Colony Golf Complex
- 2007** Bobby Wyatt . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2008** Bobby Wyatt . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
- 2009** Bobby Wyatt . . . Lakewood Golf Club
- 2010** Bobby Wyatt . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 2011** Stewart Jolly . . . Valley Hill Country Club
- 2012** Forrest Gamble . . . Mountain Brook Club
- 2013** Connor Slane . . . Heron Lakes Country
- 2014** Alex Green . . . Gadsden Country Club

* Scott Weatherly of Fort Payne and then Auburn University won the State Junior in 1993 and 1995 and the State Amateur in 1998.

* Andrew Medley of Athens and then Auburn University won back-to-back State Juniors in 2001–02. He also won the State Four Ball with Joe Guthrie of Auburn in 2005.

* Patton Kizzire of Tuscaloosa and then Auburn University won back-to-back State Juniors in 2003–04. He also won the State Match Play in 2003 and 2006 and the 2004 State Four Ball with Gator Todd of Florence. He is now a member of the Web.com Tour.

* Bobby Wyatt of Mobile achieved a number of feats in the State Junior that are highly unlikely to be replicated. He won his age group seven years in a row and the overall championship four years in a row from 2007 to 2010. He shot a record-breaking 57 in the second round of the 2010 State Junior at the Country Club of Mobile. He went on to a successful career at the University of Alabama and was part of back-to-back national championship teams in 2013–14. He is now a professional golfer.



Lee Williams of Alexander City and Auburn University won the State Junior in 2000, followed by the State Match Play in 2002. He also won the Alabama Open. Many of his many other accomplishments are featured in his profile.



Stewart Cink was born in Huntsville and grew up in Florence. He won the State Junior in 1990, capturing the State Amateur two years later. After a strong amateur career at Georgia Tech, he made his way to the PGA Tour via the now Web.com Tour. He has had a fine professional career, highlighted by his triumph in the 2009 Open Championship. Cink is shown wearing his "green jacket" from his 1990 Future Masters win.



Bobby Wyatt in action at the 2014 NCAA championship, where he was part of the University of Alabama's national title-winning team.

Appendix IV: Men's State Four Ball Champions

- 1983** Benjamin C. Dowdey/Joe Frank Terrell . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 1984** Benjamin C. Dowdey/Joe Frank Terrell . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1985** Sam Farlow/Mailon Kent . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1986** Sam Farlow/Mailon Kent . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1987** Sam Farlow/Mailon Kent . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1988** Benjamin C. Dowdey/Joe Frank Terrell . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 1989** Benjamin C. Dowdey/Joe Frank Terrell . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
- 1990** Thomas Jones/Frank Vines Jr. . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
- 1991** Lynn Farquhar/Patrick Levio . . . Green Valley Country Club
- 1992** Mike Greer/John Stewart . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 1993** Tom Jungkind/David Minshew . . . CC of Birmingham (East)
- 1994** Terry Mobley/Joey Holley . . . Green Valley Country Club
- 1995** Mike Greer/Robbie Cotten . . . Old Overton Club
- 1996** Joey Dzwonkowski/Richard Jeffers III . . . Kiva Dunes
- 1997** Eric Hamilton/Patrick Cushman . . . Musgrove Country Club
- 1998** David Barnett/Matt Tanner . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 1999** Brian Wright/John Fulkerson . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 2000** Sollie Foy/Lee Williams . . . Kiva Dunes
- 2001** John Coles/Stan Sherlin . . . The Ledges
- 2002** Joey Dzwonkowski/Richard Jeffers III . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 2003** Lance Walker/Wesley Pate . . . Limestone Springs
- 2004** Patton Kizzire/Gator Todd . . . Musgrove Country Club
- 2005** Joe Guthrie/Andrew Medley . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 2006** Tom Jungkind/Mark Lindsey . . . FarmLinks Golf Club
- 2007** Alan Coshatt/Del Wood III . . . Greystone Golf and Country Club
- 2008** Adam West/Blake West . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
- 2009** Adam West/Blake West . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 2010** Alex Balog/John Hanson . . . Pine Tree Country Club
- 2011** Forrest Crabtree/Woodie Eubanks . . . Lakewood Golf Club
- 2012** Tommy Coggin/Doug Davis . . . Canebrake Club
- 2013** Hunter Bronson/Brinson Holder . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 2014** Wilson McDonald/Ty Thompson . . . Steelwood

* Dr. Ben Dowdey of Birmingham and Dr. Joe Frank Terrell of Brewton won the State Four Ball in its inaugural year in 1983 and three more times: 1984, 1988, and 1989. Dowdey was the president of the AGA in 1993–94.

Appendix V: Men's State Mid-Amateur Champions

- 1989** Emile Vaughan . . . Chace Lake Country Club
- 1990** Tab Hudson . . . Green Valley Country Club
- 1991** Allen Yeilding . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 1992** Mike Greer . . . Selma Country Club
- 1993** Mike Greer . . . Inverness Country Club

- 1994** Eric Hamilton . . . Musgrove Country Club
- 1995** Patrick Levio . . . Woodward Golf and Country Club
- 1996** Stan Sherlin . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 1997** Stan Sherlin . . . Terri Pines Country Club
- 1998** Mike Greer . . . Musgrove Country Club



Stan Sherlin of Montgomery won the State Mid-Amateur in 1996 and 1997, the State Four Ball with John Coles III in 2001, and the State Senior Four Ball in 2012 with Joey Holley.



Mike Greer of Birmingham has three State Mid-Amateur wins (1992, 1993, and 1998), along with two State Four Balls (in 1992 with John Stewart and 1995 with Robbie Cotten) and three State Senior Four Balls, all with Tom Jungkind. Mike Greer (above left) with Tom Jungkind.

- 1999** Robbie Cotten . . . Hoover Country Club
- 2000** Eric Hamilton . . . Anniston Country Club
- 2001** Scott Weaver . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 2002** Scott Weaver . . . Gadsden Country Club
- 2003** Scott Weaver . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
- 2004** Richard Jeffers III . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 2005** Robbie Cotten . . . Country Club of Brewton
- 2006** Will Swift . . . Country Club of Mobile
- 2007** Will Swift . . . Mountain Brook Club
- 2008** Woodie Eubanks . . . The Ledges
- 2009** Robert Nelson . . . FarmLinks
- 2010** Steve Hudson . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club

- 2011** Matt Johnson . . . Gadsden Country Club
- 2012** Steve Hudson . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 2013** Torrie Coghlin . . . Canebrake Club
- 2014** Vic Kyatt III . . . Montgomery Country Club

* Eric Hamilton of Anniston and then Auburn University won the 1994 and 2000 State Mid-Amateur, the 1994 State Amateur, and the 1997 State Four Ball with Patrick Cushman.

*Will Swift, once of Selma and now of Hoover, played for Central Alabama Community College in Alexander City and then Auburn University. He has won the State Mid-Amateur twice in 2006–07, the inaugural State Match Play in 2001, and the State Amateur in 2002 and 2005.



Scott Weaver of Madison and then Auburn University won the State Mid-Amateur three years in a row (2001–03) and is the only player to do such. Former Auburn men's golf coach Mike Griffin (above left) with Scott Weaver.



Robbie Cotten of Brewton has won the 2005 State Mid-Amateur, the 1999 State Amateur, and the State Four Ball with Mike Greer in 1995. (G. M. Andrews)

Appendix VI: Men's State Senior Four Ball Champions

- 1995** Tom O'Melia Jr./John Pryor . . . Cotton Creek Club
- 1996** Jackie Cummings/Art Gleason . . . Kiva Dunes
- 1997** Sam Farlow/Mailon Kent . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 1998** Art Gleason/Don Blanton . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 1999** Don Blanton/Sam Farlow . . . Mountain Brook Club
- 2000** Don Blanton/Sam Farlow . . . Musgrove Country Club
- 2001** David Stanfield/Dave Pruett . . . Kiva Dunes
- 2002** C. D. Bale/Ron Gaiser . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
- 2003** David Fry/John Pitcher . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 2004** C. D. Bale/Ron Gaiser . . . Selma Country Club
- 2005** John Stewart/Robert Straub . . . Montgomery Country Club
- 2006** Don Blanton/Sam Farlow . . . Riverchase Country Club
- 2007** Earle Bidez/Jon Golden . . . Heron Lakes Country Club
- 2008** Richard Jeffers III/Mark Miller . . . Musgrove Country Club
- 2009** Ralph Mathews/David Hancock . . . Huntsville Country Club
- 2010** Mike Greer/Tom Jungkind . . . Gadsden Country Club
- 2011** Mike Greer/Tom Jungkind . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club
- 2012** Stan Sherlin/Joey Holley . . . Vestavia Country Club
- 2013** Mike Greer/Tom Jungkind . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2014** Robert Nelson and Walker Grant . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club

Appendix VII: Men's State Net Champions

1996	Ronnie Channell . . . Leeds	2000	C. R. Gray . . . Madison
1997	Ormand Grimes . . . Gadsden	2001	Vince Cardone . . . Pelham
1998	Jeff White . . . Hoover	2002	Bill Griffin . . . Dora
1999	Ed Moore . . . Empire		

* Championship was discontinued in 2002.

Appendix VIII: Men's State Senior Champions

1998	Sam Farlow . . . Country Club of Brewton	2007	Emile Vaughan . . . Limestone Springs
1999	Joe Frank Terrell . . . Country Club of Brewton	2008	Bob Dumas . . . Riverchase Country Club
2000	Sam Farlow . . . Gadsden Country Club	2009	Don Blanton . . . Selma Country Club
2001	Sam Farlow . . . Musgrove Country Club	2010	Ralph Mathews . . . Country Club of Brewton
2002	Sam Farlow . . . Selma Country Club	2011	Steve Hudson . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
2003	Sam Farlow . . . Country Club of Mobile	2012	Tom Jungkind . . . NorthRiver Yacht Club
2004	Sam Farlow . . . Hoover Country Club	2013	Emile Vaughan . . . Wynlakes Golf and Country Club
2005	Richard Jeffers III . . . Musgrove Country Club	2014	Steve Hudson . . . Selma Country Club
2006	Frank Johnson . . . Auburn University Club		

* As noted elsewhere, Sam Farlow has won a total of seventeen state championships: four State Amateurs, six State Seniors (1998, 2000–04), three State Four Balls with Mailon Kent of Birmingham (1985–87), and four State Senior Four Balls (three with Selma's Don Blanton 1999, 2000, and 2006 and one with Kent in 1997).

* Don Blanton of Selma won the State Senior in 2009 and four State Senior Four Balls (three with Sam Farlow and one with Selma's Art Gleason Jr.)



LEFT: Richard Jeffers III grew up in Birmingham, went to Florida State, and is a long-time resident of Mobile. He has quite the collection of state titles: 1996 and 2002 State Four Ball with Mobile's Joey Dzwonkowski, 1997 State Amateur, 2004 State Mid-Amateur, 2005 State Senior, and 2008 State Senior Four Ball with Birmingham's Mark Miller. As such he is the only person with five different state titles to his name.

RIGHT: Tom Jungkind of Bessemer is another player to have had a particularly strong senior career. He won the 2012 State Senior; the State Senior Four Ball in 2010, 2011, and 2013, all with Mike Greer; and the State Four Ball in 1993 with David Minshew and 2006 with Mark Lindsey. All three of his partners hail from the greater Birmingham area.

LEFT: Emile Vaughan of Pike Road won the 1989 State Mid-Amateur and the 2007 and 2013 State Senior. He has also played in a number of USGA championships.

RIGHT: Steve Hudson grew up in Jasper, played golf for the University of Alabama, and is a long-time Birmingham resident. He has won the State Senior in 2011 and 2014 and the State Mid-Amateur in 2010 and 2012. Always a fine player, his game has really blossomed since he hit the senior ranks as he has captured some prestigious senior titles. His brother, Tab, also a fine player and fellow Crimson Tide golfer, won the State Mid-Amateur in 1990 as well as the Alabama Open. Steve Hudson (shown on the left) with long-time AGA Executive Director Buford McCarty.



Appendix IX: Men's State Match Play Champions

2001	Will Swift . . . Limestone Springs	2008	Glenn Northcutt . . . Ol' Colony Golf Complex
2002	Lee Williams . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club	2009	Scott Strohmeyer . . . Dothan Country Club
2003	Patton Kizzire . . . Hoover Country Club	2010	Michael Johnson . . . Saugahatchee Country Club
2004	Garrett Osborn . . . Saugahatchee Country Club	2011	Mclain Leberte . . . Limestone Springs
2005	Joseph Sykora . . . Steelwood Country Club	2012	Casey O'Toole . . . Lakewood Golf Club
2006	Patton Kizzire . . . Kiva Dunes	2013	Thomas Sutton . . . Moore's Mill Golf Club
2007	Joseph Sykora . . . FarmLinks	2014	Tyler Hitchner . . . Cherokee Ridge Country Club

Appendix X: Men's State Club Team Champions

2005	Hoover (Will Swift, Patrick Levio, Chris Hummel) . . . Hosted by FarmLinks
2006	Hoover (Will Swift, Patrick Levio, Max McClain) . . . Hosted by Hoover CC
2007	Hoover (Will Swift, Patrick Levio, Max McClain) . . . Hosted by Musgrove CC
2008	Hoover (Will Swift, Patrick Levio, Max McClain) . . . Hosted by Gadsden CC
2009	Greystone (Jeff Wilson, Mike Osborn, Bobby Spiller) . . . Hosted by Timberline
2010	Hoover (Will Swift, Patrick Levio, Del Wood III) . . . Hosted by Greystone

The first and only year there was a women's division was in 2010, and it was won by Hoover (Kathy Hartwiger, Alyson Mitchell).

* Championship was discontinued in 2010.

Appendix XI: Alabama Open Champions

The Alabama Open is owned and run by the Dixie Section of the PGA.

1956	Dick Metz	1976	Lee Harper	1996	Olle Nordberg
1957	Scudday Horner	1977	Frank Shikle	1997	Todd Bailey
1958	Unknown	1978	Don Shirey	1998	Bradley Long
1959	Scudday Horner	1979	Lee Harper	1999	Todd Bailey
1960	Scudday Horner	1980	Tab Hudson	2000	Wes Tuck
1961	Pat Schwab	1981	Steve Lowery	2001	Iain Steel
1962	Unknown	1982	Frank Shikle	2002	Frank Shikle
1963	Unknown	1983	Ricky Beck	2003	Todd Bailey
1964	Bob Lowry Jr.	1984	Jack Archer	2004	Michael Genovese
1965	Larry Campbell	1985	Jim Moodie	2005	Gareth Maybin
1966	Jon Gustin	1986	Gordon Saunders	2006	Jason Dillard
1967	Bob Ledbetter	1987	Mike Smith	2007	Jason Dillard
1968	Jon Gustin	1988	Wes Tuck	2008	Lee Williams
1969	Jon Gustin	1989	Ricky Smallridge	2009	Todd Bailey
1970	Bob Lowry Jr.	1990	Wes Tuck	2010	Jordon Anderton
1971	Marvin C. Fitts	1991	Ricky Smallridge	2011	Trey DelGreco
1972	Steve Lyles	1992	Spike McRoy	2012	Connor Godsey
1973	Cam Hardigree	1993	Wes Tuck	2013	Eric Williamson
1974	Bob Lowry Jr.	1994	Wes Tuck	2014	Robby Prater
1975	Rick Sirmon	1995	Todd Bailey		



Appendix XII: WAGA Presidents

1929–51 Mrs. David (Sadie) Roberts Jr., Birmingham
1952 Mrs. Julius (Ione) Hagerty, Anniston
1953 Mrs. Louie (Nell) Reese, Birmingham
1954–56 Mrs. Harry (Marty) Webb, Huntsville
1957 Mrs. W. K. (Lillian) Mayson, Mobile

1958–59 Mrs. Martin (Helen) Anderson, Birmingham
1960 Mrs. Sam (Ann) Upchurch, Birmingham
1961 Mrs. H. O. (Bess) Wolfe, Mobile
1962 Mrs. C. H. (Betty) Chichester Jr., Birmingham
1963–64 Mrs. L. L. (Sally) Shertzer Jr., Montgomery



Sadie Roberts, 1929–51 (far left); Betty Horton, 1975–76 (center); Jeannette Sell, 1971–72 (far right).



The photo features Ione Hagerty, 1952



Nell Reese, 1953 (right) with Mrs. Crawford Johnson



Marty Webb, 1954–55 (left) with Mrs. Sam Byrd (center) and Mrs. Wilmer K. Mayson (right).



Lillian Mayson, 1957



Helen Anderson, 1958–59



Ann Upchurch, 1960 (left)



Bess Wolfe, 1961 (center) with Mrs. C. M. House (left) and Alice C. Wilcox (right). (*John Spottswood, Mobile Press Register*)



Betty Chichester, 1962 (left) with Mrs. A. F. DeVan (center) and Mrs. E. T. Ebert (right). (*Birmingham News, dated April 30, 1962*)



(L-R) Ruth Bridges, 1977-78; Thelma Mattison, 1966; Carla Hammers; Sally Shertzer, 1963-64



This photo features Sue Whiting, 1967–68



Jean Gilmer, 1969–70



Ruth Bridges, 1977–78 (far left) with (L–R) Mrs. Edwin Scott, Stone Hodo, and Frances Cain. (Birmingham News, dated October 11, 1976)

- | | | | |
|----------------|--|------------------|--|
| 1965 | Mrs. S. T. (Alice) Till, Montgomery | 1987–88 | Mrs. John (Virginia) Beavers, Huntsville |
| 1966 | Mrs. (Thelma) Walker Mattison, Birmingham | 1989–90 | Mrs. D. Lawrence (Patty) Faulkner, Birmingham |
| 1967–68 | Mrs. Robert M. (Sue) Whiting, Mobile | 1991–92 | Mrs. Jesse E. (Jean) Miller, Birmingham |
| 1969–70 | Mrs. B. G. (Jean) Gilmer, Mobile | 1993–94 | Mrs. James (Judy) Taylor, Huntsville |
| 1971–72 | Mrs. Russell B. (Jeannette) Sell, Birmingham | 1995–96 | Mrs. James C. (Mary Dean) Gray Jr., Birmingham |
| 1973–74 | Mrs. James L. (Faye) Edmondson, Huntsville | 1997–98 | Mrs. John (Janie) Solomon, Dothan |
| 1975–76 | Mrs. James (Betty) Horton, Guntersville | 1999–2000 | Mrs. Kenneth (Janet) Mardick, Birmingham |
| 1977–78 | Mrs. Ruth Bridges, Huntsville | 2001–02 | Mrs. Claude (Audrey) Songy, Huntsville |
| 1979–80 | Mrs. Edwin L. (Sherry) Scott, Mobile | 2003–04 | Mrs. Randall (Janet) Haines, Birmingham |
| 1981–82 | Mrs. Roy B. (Helen) Smalley, Birmingham | 2005–06 | Mrs. J. Richard (Helen) Walker, Birmingham |
| 1983–84 | Mrs. Malcolm (Baker) Smith Jr., Birmingham | 2007–10 | Mrs. William A. (Carol) Lell, Birmingham |
| 1985–86 | Mrs. Frederick (Joanne) Haidt Jr., Mobile | | |



Baker Smith, 1983-84



Joanne Haidt, 1985-86 (second from left) with Mrs. Guy Friday (left), Mrs. Howard Gamble (second from right), and Mrs. Herman Todd (far right).



WAGA past presidents at the Mountain Brook Club in November 2005. Bottom row (L-R) are Audrey Songy, Janet Mardick, Mary Dean Gray, Helen Walker. Top row are Thelma Mattison, Janie Solomon, Patty Faulkner, Helen Smalley, Janet Haines, Judy Taylor, and Jean Miller.

Appendix XIII: Women's State Amateur Champions

1929	Mrs. H. S. Geismer	Mrs. Carl Hess	Country Club of Birmingham
1930	Mrs. Carl Hess	Mrs. Frank Barnes	Anniston Country Club
1931	Mrs. Frank Barnes	Margaret Smith	Gadsden Country Club
1932	Margaret Smith	Mrs. Frank Barnes	Beauvoir Country Club
1933	Margaret Smith	Mrs. B. Cockrell	Mountain Brook Club
1934	Mrs. Carl Liebold	Margaret Smith	Country Club of Birmingham
1935	Mrs. R. Trilck	Mrs. Taylor Peck	Country Club of Mobile
1936	Mrs. B. Cockrell	Mrs. R. Trilck	Anniston Country Club
1937	Mrs. B. Cockrell	Mrs. Carl Hess	Gadsden Country Club
1938	Mrs. Ralph Carter	Joy McCann	Mountain Brook Club
1939	Mrs. Peter Vrendenburgh	Mrs. Sam Friedman	Beauvoir Country Club
1940	Mrs. R. Trilck	Mrs. Alan Knox	Country Club of Mobile
1941	Joy McCann	Mrs. Edward J. May	Country Club of Tuscaloosa
1946	Ann Samford	Mrs. Chester Zahn	Country Club of Birmingham
1947	Mrs. Hugh Culverhouse	Bee McWane	Beauvoir Country Club
1948	Bee McWane	Mrs. F. H. Roos	Country Club of Mobile
1949	Bee McWane	Babs Blakely	Anniston Country Club
1950	Bee McWane	Babs Blakely	Mountain Brook Club
1951	Mrs. Harry Webb	Mrs. S. E. Upchurch	Gadsden Country Club
1952	Bee McWane	JoAnn Prentice	Country Club of Birmingham
1953	Bee McWane	JoAnn Prentice	Country Club of Tuscaloosa
1954	JoAnn Prentice	Bee McWane	Dothan Country Club
1955	Bee McWane	JoAnn Prentice	Country Club of Mobile
1956	Mrs. S. E. Upchurch	Mrs. Richard Metz	Montgomery Country Club
1957	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Mary McCutcheon	Vestavia Country Club
1958	Minnie Lee Ashley	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Anniston Country Club
1959	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Mary McCutcheon	Mountain Brook Club



1960	Minnie Lee Ashley	Mrs. Dolphus Pruett	Gadsden Country Club
1961	Mrs. Sam Byrd	Carolyn Smith	Country Club of Tuscaloosa
1962	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Mrs. Sam Byrd	Country Club of Mobile
1963	Mrs. S. E. Upchurch	Carolyn Smith	Country Club of Birmingham
1964	Mrs. L. A. Cone	Mary McCutcheon	Montgomery Country Club
1965	Carolyn Smith	Candy Phillips	Selma Country Club
1966	Kathy Farrer	Beth Barry	Willowbrook Country Club
1967	Joyce Ann Jackson	Beth Barry	Skyline Country Club
1968	Kathy Farrer	Beth Barry	Decatur Country Club
1969	Beth Barry	Judy Jehle	Vestavia Country Club
1970	Beth Barry	Mrs. Pete Mixon	Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
1971	Beth Barry	Mrs. Pete Mixon	Dothan Country Club
1972	Beth Barry	Martha Jones	Huntsville Country Club
1973	Martha Jones	Mrs. Pete Mixon	Country Club of Tuscaloosa
1974	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Mrs. W. L. Cunningham	Country Club of Mobile
1975	Jane Reynolds	Denise Snellman	Burningtree Country Club
1976	Jane Reynolds	Mrs. Pete Mixon	Country Club of Birmingham
1977	Jane Reynolds	Ouida Cunningham	Valley Hill Country Club
1978	Jane Reynolds	Chris Spivey	Dothan Country Club
1979	Mrs. Lester Isbell	Jane Phillips	Montgomery Country Club
1980	Chris Spivey	Shannon McAleer	Indian Hills Country Club
1981	Betty Mixon	Mrs. Lester Isbell	Anniston Country Club
1982	Claire Kyzar	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Skyline Country Club
1983	Mrs. Lester Isbell	Claire Kyzar	Grayson Valley Country Club
1984	Diane Dean	Mrs. W. K. Mayson	Gulf Shores Country Club
1985	Mrs. Lester Isbell	Chris Spivey	Riverchase Country Club
1986	Chris Spivey	Lynn Bradley	Valley Hill Country Club
1987	Claire Kyzar	Michele Drinkard	Oak Hills Country Club
1988	Laurie Burns Franks	Kim Wilcox	Olympia Spa Resort

1989	Virginia Derby	Claire Kyzar	Country Club of Birmingham
1990	Chris Spivey	Monica Hilger	Skyline Country Club
1991	Missy Tuck	Chris Spivey	Grayson Valley Country Club
1992	Missy Tuck	Kelli Sanders	Montgomery Country Club
1993	Virginia Derby	Julie Levan	Anniston Country Club
1994	Virginia Derby Grimes	Julie Levan	Dothan Country Club
1995	Virginia Derby Grimes	Chris Spivey	Greystone Country Club
1996	Chris Spivey	Mrs. Lester Isbell	Valley Hill Country Club
1997	Beth Williams	Kathy Hartwiger	Old Overton Club
1998	Virginia Derby Grimes	Kathy Hartwiger	Saugahatchee Country Club
1999	Kathy Hartwiger	Jamie Weaver	Inverness Country Club
2000	Chris Spivey	Jamie Weaver	Huntsville Country Club
2001	Beth Chandler	Tami Green	Dothan National Golf Club
2002	Kathy Hartwiger	Annie Kirkland	Riverchase Country Club
2003	Kathy Hartwiger	Annie Kirkland	Greystone Golf and Country Club
2004	Kathy Hartwiger	Cynthia Parrish	Heron Lakes Country Club
2005	Kathy Hartwiger	Mrs. James Taylor	Cypress Lakes Golf and Country Club
2006	Kathy Hartwiger	Connie Bousquet-Miller	Cypress Lakes Golf and Country Club
2007	Kathy Hartwiger	Melissa Gooden	Country Club of Birmingham
2008	Sara Grantham	Kathy Hartwiger	Timberline Golf Club
2009	Jordan Hardy	Haley Lawrence	Willow Point Golf and Country Club
2010	Kathy Hartwiger	Karlin Beck	Ol' Colony Golf Complex
2011	Kathy Hartwiger	Gabi Oubre	Heron Lake Country Club
2012	Kathy Hartwiger	Alison Hovatter	Hoover Country Club
2013	Cammie Gray	Lea Green	Lakewood Golf Club
2014	Elaine Wood	Virginia Green	NorthRiver Yacht Club



Appendix XIV: Girls State Junior Champions

- 1963** Judy Jehle
- 1964** Carol Sanderson
- 1965** Candy Phillips
- 1966** Beth Barry
- 1967** Martha Jones
- 1968** Martha Jones
- 1969** Martha Jones
- 1970** Martha Jones
- 1971** Denise Snellman
- 1972** Debbie Nelson
- 1973** Rebecca Jordan
- 1974** Kim Evans
- 1975** Leah Oldacre
- 1976** Shannon McAleer
- 1977** Karen Mayson
- 1978** Shannon McAleer
- 1979** Johndra Culp
- 1980** Virginia Derby
- 1981** Wendy Lawson
- 1982** Beck Cross
- 1983** Nikki Payne
- 1984** Lynn Bradley
- 1985** Not played
- 1986** Missy Tuck
- 1987** Missy Tuck
- 1988** Lori Sherer
- 1989** Natalie Moore



Virginia Derby Grimes of York, then Auburn, then Montgomery, won the Girls State Junior in 1980, the Women's State Amateur five times, and the Women's State Stroke Play three times (1990, 1995, and 1997).



Beth Barry of Mobile won the Girls State Junior in 1966, the Women's State Amateur four times (1969–72), and the Women's State Stroke Play twice (1991 and 1994). (L–R) Martha Jones (Lang), Jeannette Sell, and Beth Barry after Barry won the 1972 Women's State Amateur.

*Martha Jones (Lang) of Decatur won four straight Girls State Juniors from 1967 to 1970. She has also won three Women's State Seniors (2007, 2009, and 2013) and the Women's State Amateur in 1973.

*Missy Tuck (Gooden) of Trussville won the Girls State Junior in 1986 and 1987, as well as the Women's State Amateur in 1992 and 1993, the Women's State Stroke Play in 1992, and the Women's State Four Ball with Kathy Hartwiger in 2008. As such, she is the only person to win four different Women's State titles. Her brother, Wes, also a fine player, won the Alabama Open four times, including once as an amateur.



- 1990** Amy Miller
- 1991** Meg Lindsey
- 1992** Stacy Buersmeyer
- 1993** Kami Smith
- 1994** Margaret McDowell
- 1995** Kami Smith
- 1996** Mary Claire Dent
- 1997** Lacy Shelton
- 1998** Amy Middleton
- 1999** Kathy Birchall . . . Grayson Valley Country Club
- 2000** Amy Middleton . . . Decatur Country Club
- 2001** Amy Middleton . . . Azalea City Golf Club
- 2002** Laura Goodwin . . . Troy Country Club
- 2003** Alyson Mitchell . . . Enterprise Country Club
- 2004** Jordan Hardy . . . Pikeville Country Club
- 2005** Jordan Hardy . . . Greystone Country Club
- 2006** Haley Sanders . . . Burningtree Country Club
- 2007** Betsy Birchall . . . Shoal Creek
- 2008** Haley Wilson . . . Selma Country Club
- 2009** Gabi Oubré . . . The Golf Club of the Wharf
- 2010** Bailey Gray . . . Anniston Country Club
- 2011** Alex Harrell . . . Country Club of Birmingham
- 2012** Gabi Oubré . . . Troy Country Club
- 2013** Tatum Jackson . . . Pine Tree Country Club
- 2014** Virginia Green . . . TP Country Club



Amy Middleton of Citronelle won the Girls State Junior three out of four years (1998, 2000–01) and went on to play golf for the University of Alabama.



Jordan Hardy of Sylacauga won the Girls State Junior in 2004–05, the Women's State Stroke Play in 2005, and the Women's State Amateur in 2009. She would play on the golf team at Birmingham-Southern College.



Gabi Oubre of Mobile won the Girls State Junior in 2009 and 2012 and plays golf for Mississippi State.

Appendix XV: Women's State Four Ball Champions

- 2008** Kathy Hartwiger/Missy Gooden . . . Old Overton Club
- 2009** Kathy Hartwiger/Lea Green . . . Mountain Brook Club
- 2010** Kathy Hartwiger/Lea Green . . . Cypress Bend
- 2011** Linda Jeffery/Lea Green . . . Troy Country Club
- 2012** Suzanne Stanley/Heather Nail . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2013** Kathy Hartwiger/Lea Green . . . Gulf Shores Golf Club
- 2014** Kathy Hartwiger/Lea Green . . . Moore's Mill



Lea Green of McCalla has won the Women's State Four Ball four times (three times with Kathy Hartwiger in 2009, 2010, and 2014 and once with Linda Jeffery in 2011). (L-R) Lea Green, Kathy Hartwiger, and AGA official Jan Mann.

Appendix XVI: Women's State Senior Champions

- | | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| 1973 | Ceil Watkins . . . Montgomery Country Club | 1991 | Barbara Jones . . . Troy Country Club |
| 1974 | Sally Shertzer . . . Selma Country Club | 1992 | Bobbie Hallmark . . . Burningtrees Country Club |
| 1975 | Gloria Ellers . . . Gulf Shores Country Club | 1993 | Ouida Cunningham . . . Inverness Country Club |
| 1976 | Sally Shertzer . . . Huntsville Country Club | 1994 | Harriet Cauthen . . . Glenlakes Country Club |
| 1977 | Gloria Ellers . . . Willow Point Country Club | 1995 | Mary Isbell . . . Terri Pines Country Club |
| 1978 | Gloria Ellers . . . Skyline Country Club | 1996 | Mary Isbell . . . Andalusia Country Club |
| 1979 | Ruth Garrison . . . Country Club of Tuscaloosa | 1997 | Mary Isbell . . . Vestavia Country Club |
| 1980 | Carolyn Smith . . . Country Club of Mobile | 1998 | Mary Isbell . . . Arrowhead Country Club |
| 1981 | Carolyn Smith . . . Bonnie Crest Country Club | 1999 | Mary Isbell . . . Willow Point Golf and Country Club |
| 1982 | Betty Mixon . . . Dothan Country Club | 2000 | Chris Spivey . . . Country Club of Brewton |
| 1983 | Ruth Garrison . . . StillWaters Resort | | |
| 1984 | June Mayson . . . Lake Forest Yacht and Country Club | | |
| 1985 | Hazel Burns . . . Olympia Spa Resort | | |
| 1986 | Gloria Ellers . . . Grayson Valley Country Club | | |
| 1987 | June Mayson . . . Country Club of Mobile | | |
| 1988 | June Mayson . . . StillWaters Resort | | |
| 1989 | Maisie Stripling . . . Valley Hill Country Club | | |
| 1990 | Janet Fulton . . . Mountain Brook Club | | |

* Gloria Ellers won the Women's State Senior in 1975, 1977, 1978, and 1986.

* Carolyn Smith of Mobile won the Women's State Senior in 1980 and 1981 and the Women's State Amateur in 1965. Her father, Gordon Smith Jr., won the 1931 State Amateur, as did her brother, Gordon "Buddy" Smith III, who won it in 1947 and 1948.

* Mary Isbell of Oneonta has won a record eight Women's State Seniors, including five in a row from 1995 to 1999 and three more from 2001 to 2003. With three Women's State Amateurs she is second only to Kathy Hartwiger in total state titles as her eleven is seven back of Hartwiger's record haul of eighteen.



June Mayson of Mobile won the Women's State Senior in 1984, 1987, and 1988. She also won the Women's State Amateur four times. Her mother, Lillian, was WAGA president in 1957 and her daughter, Karen, was Girls State Junior champion in 1977. (L-R) Ouida Cunningham, June Mayson, and WAGA President Mrs. James Edmonson after Mayson had won the 1974 Women's State Amateur.



Chris Spivey of Pell City has claimed four Women's State Seniors, along with five Women's State Amateurs.



Tami Green, once of Hamilton and now of Fairhope, has won three Women's State Seniors (2010, 2011, and 2014).

- 2001** Mary Isbell . . . Country Club of Ozark
- 2002** Mary Isbell . . . Burningtrees Country Club
- 2003** Mary Isbell . . . Indian Hills Country Club
- 2004** Chris Spivey . . . Redstone Arsenal Golf Club
- 2005** Chris Spivey . . . Dothan Country Club
- 2006** Chris Spivey . . . Selma Country Club
- 2007** Martha Lang . . . Heron Lakes Country Club

- 2008** Harriet Cauthen . . . Cypress Bend at Cotton Creek
- 2009** Martha Lang . . . Arrowhead Country Club
- 2010** Tami Green . . . Cypress Lakes
- 2011** Tami Green . . . Prattville Country Club
- 2012** Sue Raines . . . Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club
- 2013** Martha Lang . . . Mountain Brook Club
- 2014** Tami Green . . . Rock Creek Golf Club

Appendix XVII: Women's Stroke Play Champions

- | | | | |
|-------------|---|-------------|--|
| 1990 | Virginia Derby . . . Gulf Shores Golf Club | 2003 | Annie Kirkland . . . Cypress Bend/Cotton Creek |
| 1991 | Beth Barry . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2004 | Kathy Hartwiger . . . Cotton Creek Club |
| 1992 | Missy Tuck . . . Country Club of Ozark | 2005 | Jordan Hardy . . . Cotton Creek Club |
| 1993 | Not played | 2006 | Jill Stupiansky . . . Cypress Bend |
| 1994 | Beth Barry . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2007 | Karlin Beck . . . Cypress Bend |
| 1995 | Virginia Derby Grimes . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2008 | Candace Schepperle . . . The Ledges |
| 1996 | Kathy Hartwiger . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2009 | Betsy Birchall . . . Cherokee Ridge Country Club |
| 1997 | Virginia Derby Grimes . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2010 | Maegan Rice . . . Selma Country Club |
| 1998 | Anne Hutto . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2011 | Haley Lawrence . . . Grayson Valley Country Club |
| 1999 | Anne Hutto . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2012 | Cammie Gray . . . Selma Country Club |
| 2000 | Lacy Shelton . . . Cypress Bend/Cotton Creek | 2013 | Cammie Gray . . . Cherokee Ridge Country Club |
| 2001 | Anne Hutto . . . Cotton Creek Club | 2014 | Alison Hovatter . . . Canebrake Golf Club |
| 2002 | Kathy Hartwiger . . . Cotton Creek Club | | |



Anne Hutto of Birmingham has won the Women's State Stroke Play three times in 1998, 1999, and 2001.



Cammie Gray of Northport has won the Women's State Stroke Play twice in 2012–13. She also won the 2013 Women's State Amateur.

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- * Grew up in Wimborne in Dorset in England.
- * Came to the United States in 1989 on a partial golf scholarship to Samford University and played collegiate golf for four years, obtaining an undergraduate degree in print journalism in 1993. Has lived in the Birmingham area ever since.
- * Has two children: Brittany, age twenty, and Colin, age sixteen.
- * His only sibling is his brother, Neil, who also lives in Birmingham and is the director of golf instruction at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail's Oxmoor Valley and Ross Bridge.
- * Editor of *GolfSouth Magazine*, based in Birmingham, 1994–2012, produced over one hundred magazines.
- * Golf columnist for the *Birmingham News*, 1995–2012, wrote over one thousand columns.
- * Freelanced for various national golf publications.
- * Wrote *Shoal Creek: A Pictorial History, The First 20 Years*, published in 1998.
- * Co-founder of the GolfSouth Golf Tour, 2004–ongoing.
- * Former golf coach at Samford University, including head women's coach for seven years. Coaching role ended June 2008.
- * Media relations coordinator for the Dixie Section of the PGA, 2003–05.
- * Media liaison for the Alabama Golf Association, 2009–ongoing.
- * Member of the Golf Writers Association of America for twenty years.
- * Advisory board member, Lady Legacy Scholarship Foundation.
- * Former board member, The First Tee, Birmingham Chapter.
- * Former board member, Samford University Bulldog Club.
- * Inducted into the Birmingham Golf Association Hall of Fame in May 2009.
- * Wrote *From Green Valley to Hoover Country Club, Fifty Years of Memories*, published in 2010.
- * Executive director, Birmingham Golf Association, 2011–ongoing.
- * Founder of *Thompson Tees Off*, "Alabama's golf insider" weekly e-newsletter about local golf across Birmingham and Alabama, 2012–ongoing.
- * Co-host of *Tee Time* on Alabama Tonight on Alabama's 13, Birmingham's NBC TV station, 2013–15.
- * Columnist for the *Tuscaloosa News*, writing the weekly Mr. Golf column, 2013–ongoing.



Ian Thompson (right) interviews legendary course designer Robert Trent Jones Sr. in 1998 when Jones was in Montgomery to check on the progress of Capitol Hill in Prattville, part of the Golf Trail that bears his name and spreads the length and breadth of the state.

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