

USGA Sets Crowd Limit Of 14,000 for Merion Open

By FRED BYROD

Inquirer Sports Editor

NEW YORK, Jan. 24.—The United States Golf Association is going to make its 1971 National Open championship at Merion Golf Club the most exclusive in recent history by limiting attendance to 14,000.

"At 6500 yards Merion is a short course by modern standards, and because of its compact design with limited area between fairways, it cannot accommodate the large galleries common at tournaments today," the USGA said at its annual meeting here Saturday.

The Augusta Masters tournament was the first to put a ceiling on gallery size. It has steadily refused to disclose its attendance figures, but it is believed to have stopped sale of season badges at 20,000 the last two years.

This will be the third Open at Merion, which also has been host to 12 other USGA championships and international events.

A Philadelphian became the head of golf's ruling body for the first time in more than 40 years when Philip H. Strubing was elected president, succeeding Hord W.

Hardin, of St. Louis.

"I'm extremely proud," said Strubing, "and I'm still enough of a local boy to note that I'm the first from Philadelphia to hold this office since Howard W. Perrin, in 1917."

Strubing, an attorney and a former president of both the Philadelphia Cricket Club and Sunnyside Golf Club, has been a member of the USGA's executive committee for the past 11 years and chairman of its executive committee for the last five.

"I see no crises on the golf horizon," Strubing said, "but we must guard against the push of the manufacturers to develop new materials which could make our courses obsolete. We devoted much time and money to controlling the ball situation. Now we must do the same with shafts."

Warmest note of the meeting was the presentation of the 1970 Bob Jones Award for distinguished sportsmanship in golf to Roberto DeVicenzo, who make a special trip here from his home in Argentina.

DeVicenzo was selected primarily for the grace with which he acted after another player's error in incorrectly

reporting his score, which cost him a tie for the 1968 Masters championship. He has a career total of 126 tournament victories in 30 different countries.

"I'm very nervous," Roberto said in his halting English, "but I'm happy to accept for my family, my friends and all my people back home."

While the financial report showed revenues of the association had exceeded \$1 million for the fourth consecutive year and there was a surplus of \$28,890, a dues increase for member clubs was approved. Regular membership will go up \$15 to \$65, and associate membership \$10 to \$45.

In regard to tournaments, it was decided to:

—Keep prize money for the men's Open at \$200,000 and for the women's Open at \$30,000.

—Increase the field for the men's Senior Amateur by 10 places to 130, who will play 36 holes stroke qualifying play to determine 32 places in match play.

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When Disaster Overtook Boros, Harrison in '50 Open

IN 1950 JACK NICKLAUS was a chunky 10-year-old, the only member of Jack Grout's junior golf class at Scioto CC, Columbus, who came out to practice when it rained . . . Bill Casper, already married at 19, was starting a four-year hitch in the Navy . . . Arnold Palmer, a student at Wake Forest, won the medal in the National Intercollegiate championship that year but took a thumping from Frank Stranahan in the first round of the U. S. Amateur.

All they knew about Ben Hogan's victory in the U. S. Open at Merion was what they read in the newspapers the next morning.

An entire new generation of golfers has emerged between Merion, 1950, and Merion, 1971. But if you search through the starting lineup for this year's Open, you find a few who can spin some tales from two decades ago. Because they were there, Charlie.

First, two-time Open champion Julius Boros. It was Julie's first money tournament. They had a rule then that you had to wait six months after announcing yourself a pro before you were eligible for prize money. Julie had declared himself in the summer of 1949.

The night before the opening round, they hiked the prize money from \$10,000 to \$15,000. That dazzled the imagination of Boros, a former accountant who had been married a month before.

AFTER 18 HOLES, EVERYONE was hoarse talking about Lee Mackey's record, six-under-par 64. Julie had been five under through 15, but finished bogey-par-double bogey for a 68.

The next day Boros scored 72, despite bogeys on the last three holes, and so was one of three at 140, a stroke behind front-runner E. J. (Dutch) Harrison as they teed off Saturday morning for the final 36 holes.

After 45 Boros was leading the tournament. But once again the back nine wrecked him. He three-putted 11 and 12, bounced it over the short 13th and took a five, and finished with a 77. A 74 in the afternoon gave him 291, and ninth place money.



JULIUS BOROS

"Freshman jitters?" a man asked Boros.

"Inexperience, more than anything else," Julius replied. "The next year I was fourth in the Open, and the year after that I won it."

Dutch Harrison, now 61, had everything going right for him the second day in 1950 when he breezed around the East course in 67—the second best round of the tournament. He never missed a fairway, needed only 30 putts.

As already noted, that put the Old Arkansas Traveller up front. But disaster overtook him even faster than it did Boros in the third round. Dutch started with a double bogey six, was four over at the turn.

In the final accounting, Harrison's 288 was one more than totals which forced the three-way playoff involving Hogan, George Fazio, and Lloyd Mangrum.

MASON RUDOLPH, THEN 16, was the "baby" of the field in 1950.

"My train trip to Philadelphia was my first on a sleeper," Mason recalled, "and I thought when we got to Philadelphia at 5 in the morning I had to get right off. I didn't know they held the Pullman car in the station until 8.

"I didn't know where else to go, so I took a cab to Merion and got there about 6. When they spotted me wandering around the course at that hour, they were going to throw me off. But I finally convinced them I was a player and they let me in the clubhouse."

It was just about the only thing that turned out well for Rudolph that week.

He took 85 on the first round and 84 on the second — with a 12 on the storied 11th hole.

"I sliced my drive and decided to lay up short of the creek with a 7-iron," Mason said. "Then I hit it in the water. Lifted out and hit it in again. Lifted out and hit it in the third time. On in nine and three-putted."

It was a soul-crusher for the kid from Clarksville, Tenn. then. Mason laughs about it now.

"Scored two touchdowns," he says, "Missed both extra points."

Merion Achieves First Sellout in History of the U. S. Open

What you should know if you're going to the U. S. Open golf championship this week at Merion:

Do You Have Tickets?

If not, forget it. For the first time in its history, the U. S. Open is a sellout. Meanwhile, only 400 single day tickets are available for the final practice round today, \$5.00.

Tournament Schedule

The full field of 150 (135 pros, 15 amateurs) will start from 8 A. M. to 3:26 P. M., with the same pairings both days. For the last two rounds, Saturday and Sunday, the field will be cut to the first 60 and ties, and there will be new pairings and starting times each of those days. If there is a tie there will be a playoff, 18 holes, Monday.

Parking

There will be no parking at the course. Ticket holders may park at Villanova University (off Lancaster ave., Villanova) for \$1.50 and use SEPTA Red Arrow trolleys to Ardmore, fare 35 cents (exact change only) or at Haverford College (entering off Haverford rd.) for \$2. The Haverford College lot is four-tenths of a mile from the clubhouse, the SEPTA stop is 200 yards. To avoid parking problems, spectators may use the SEPTA Red Arrow lines from all stations between 69th st., Philadelphia, and Norristown.

Gallery Control

Because of limited space available, there will be very tight gallery control. Fans will not be permitted at some parts of some holes, and it is suggested spectators study carefully the crossover points indicated on

the map above (take it with you!) to avoid needless walking. Or pick one of the vantage points (also indicated on map) where you may watch play on two or more holes with a minimum of moving.

Strictly Prohibited

Only photography permitted will be by accredited press and TV cameramen. No cameras, radios, or signs will be permitted on the course even on practice days.

For Convenience of Fans

There are numerous comfort stations and public telephones on the course. Location of concession stands, main scoreboard, and leader boards are shown on map above.

Ardmore Ave. Closed

Spectators and residents of the Ardmore-Haverford area are reminded that Ardmore ave. between Haverford and Darby rds. will be closed to all vehicular travel June 16-20, inclusive, from 6 A. M. to after conclusion of play each day. In addition, barriers will be erected on Golf View rd.

Prize Money

Total prize money is approximately \$200,000. First prize is \$30,000, last (60th) is \$800. Also, any professional who starts but does not return score for 72 holes will receive \$500. Any amateur returning score for 72 holes will receive gold medal.

For Stay-at-Home Fans

There will be live telecasts by ABC, Channel 6 in the Philadelphia area, 4-5:30 P. M. Saturday, and 4-6 P. M. Sunday EDT. Taped highlights of play Friday will be shown Friday, at 10:30-11 P. M.