

The Month in Sports: The 1928 Open

By CARROLL D. ALCOTT



The 1929 open golf championship of the Philippines should see a Filipino finish at the top if the cards turned in by a quartet of Manila caddies at the end of the 1928 tournament played last month at Caloocan are to be considered as fair criterions.

Larry Montes, "Toy-Toy" Gonzales, I. Musca and C. Andres are

the four caddies whom the field will be forced to watch next year. They were the only four Filipinos who qualified in this season's event and with the exception of Montes they were playing in their first tournament.

Larry was the only one of the quartet who didn't finish. He made the sad mistake of holing out on the eighth green of his second round with his opponent's ball, and was immediately disqualified. W. Douglas, his opponent, was likewise ejected from the competition for committing the same grave error.

Douglas was the first to make the mistake. He played Larry's ball on his second shot off the tee. Larry followed suit and they had both holed out before discovering the error. Under the circumstances there was only one thing to do and the rules committee did it.

Larry continued playing and finished the prescribed 72 holes with a card of 287, six strokes under the score made by the winner, Captain J. C. Moore, of Fort McKinley. True enough, the strain had been removed from his shoulders, but that margin of six indicates very plainly what would have likely happened had he remained in. He might not have won, but he was almost a cinch to finish among the first three or four.

Gonzales, the Wack Wack hope, rallied after a bad start, to finish in third place, right behind Ben Few, the runnerup. "Toy-Toy" took a 72 and a 73 on his last two rounds to pull him up and he went the distance in 302 strokes.

Next year Gonzales can be counted upon to improve and he will unquestionably be a formidable threat. He has a lot to learn, but a year's time can work wonders. "Toy-Toy" plays a whale of a game with the wood. He can drive with the best, but his iron play is still in need of training. It is his short game that he must necessarily devote a great deal of his time to during the next few months.

Musca took a 307 while Andres played the distance in 311. Both played good golf and there is no doubt but what they will improve before 1929 rolls around. They should be able to tee off next season able to clip from five to ten strokes off their cards of last month.

On the whole this year's tournament produced better golf than the open of 1927. There were more entrants for one thing and a number of the veterans were forced to extend themselves to enter the championship flight.

Captain J. C. Moore, the new champion; Captain Kendall J. Fielder and Hal Joyce were among those who were playing in the first Philippines open. Fielder and Joyce were among the favorites, but both failed to get away to anything like a good start and were unable to come back.

Little was known of Captain Moore. He was the only real darkhorse of the tournament and he wasn't conceded much of a chance to finish near the top, not even by many of his friends. He is not a veteran golfer and took up the game only a few years ago. But he has certainly made great progress with it, judging from his excellent work in the open.

Moore played the qualifying round in 150, 10 strokes above Captain Fielder's low medal of 140. He started clipping down his score

from that moment on. He was the favorite at the end of the second round.

Fielder teed off with Ben Few on his first round, the favorite, and went completely off his game. He took 78 strokes after encountering a great deal of trouble on the first nine.

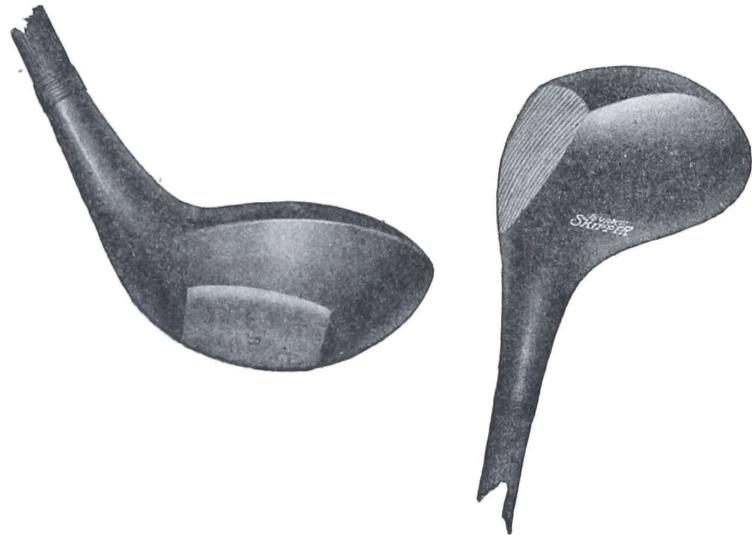
Fielder was given a chance to recover after his bad start. He bears a reputation of being able to rally in the face of heavy odds, but this time, he did not comeback while Moore, who made a 73 on the first round, continued playing steady golf. At the end of the third, the latter had cinched the title. He took it easy on the last round, to turn in a 78.

A great deal of Fielder's trouble was on the greens. He took too little time with his putting with the result that his direction was bad and misses frequent. He was badly off the game that he played when he won the army championship three months ago.

Moore is a worthy champion and his victory places the army in the Philippines at the top of the local golf world.

Hal Joyce, playing for the first time in the open, found the breaks against him. He was the only pro entered, unless Wack Wackers still considered Larry Montes a professional, and he was given a good chance on paper to finish among the first four.

If I had been picking the finishers before the field teed off at the start of the first round, Fielder, Montes, Joyce and Few would have been my choice in the order named. How badly my selection would have been off is attested in the order they finished—Moore, Few, Gonzales and Nell. Few alone played true to



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expectations. Ben went the limit with his customary game. He was seldom in trouble and his putting was invariably good. Ben is a good tournament player and always a contender.

E. J. "Eddie" Nell was the star performer on the first day of the tournament. He copped the headlines by turning in low score of the initial 18, a 72, in spite of the fact that he got off to a poor start.

J. R. H. "Bob" Mason, 1927 champion, was off his game. He picked up his ball on the 11th hole of the last round and quit. "Bob's" poor golf can be attributed to the fact that he entered the tournament a sick man. He was unable to take a full swing without hurting himself and consequently his driving was bad. There are plenty of trees on the Caloocan course and Mason hit most of them.

In addition to the open golf championship, two other links events of importance have been completed. Lieutenant L. C. Wilder, of the geodetic coast survey, won the municipal course title when he defeated K. Watanabe, 1 up, in the final 36 hole match played Sunday, March 4. Wilder was 7 up at the end of the first round, but his Japanese opponent staged one of the most sensational rallies recorded in local golf annals this year by coming back in the last round to trim his opponent's score down to 1 up.

Mrs. H. P. Butler, runnerup in the women's open, staged a comeback in the women's championship tournament of the ladies' branch of the Manila Golf Club, beating Mrs. A. W. Atkins, 7 and 6, in the finals.

The tournaments of last month indicated that the sport of Saint Andrews is increasing in popularity in Manila. The courses were more crowded than they were at the same time last year and the game is holding greater interest for the Filipino youth. The stars of the future in this city will unquestionably come from the ranks of the caddies and the day is not far distant when Manila can send a Filipino abroad with the assurance that he will stand a chance of finishing near the top in any competition he might enter.

With the appearance of Larry Montes a year ago in the tournament class, Manila has paid some attention to its caddies and not without reason. There are more good golfers among the youngsters who lug your golf clubs on Philippine links than one finds on United States courses. They take to golf like a duck does to water and they are ambitious. The big problem is checking their ambition enough to keep them on the job.

Returning to the growing popularity of the game in this city, there is to be found on the municipal links every Monday, a Filipino woman, slightly bent, wrinkled and usually bare-footed, dragging three or four clubs after her and playing the course with a group of caddies. She seems to be tireless and has played as many as 36 holes in a day. At noon she takes her lunch with the caddies. She is the mother of two of them. The brand of golf this woman plays is above average. As a rule she turns in around 83 and 85, and she is steadily improving. She is the mother of Larry Montes. The caddy has taken his talents home and now the entire family is following the call of the greens.

Baseball

February saw the close of the first half of the Philippine Baseball League schedule. Meralco won the pennant with a record of 21 games won, nine lost and two tied. The Carmen played stellar baseball throughout the schedule and they are at present the best balanced club in the league.

Cavite, conceded the best chance of winning at the start of the season, failed to come through with the necessary punch and finished with 18 victories, 14 losses and one tie. The Scouts and Eagles started too late to get in the race.

The second half of the schedule promises to furnish some of the best baseball that has been witnessed in the islands for many years. The Eagles, Cavite and Meralco are now staging a nip and tuck race for first place and there seems to be little prospects of any one of the three breaking long enough to drop out.

The Eagles are playing a bit better baseball than they did a month or two ago, although

their game Sunday afternoon, March 4, with Meralco, would prove to the stranger viewing them in action for the first time that they can do anything else but play ball. The Carmen won, 10 to 6. Tin medals have been struck for all concerned with the exception of "Bobby" Robinson. The Eagle manager has been voted one made of putty. He bungled enough to make Peckinpough look like a piker. Meralco

learned of the game in United States rings, by not counting Moro out and then conducting an examination.

Moro didn't act like a man who had been fouled. He was merely stretched out on the floor and didn't manifest any of the agony of a man who has been dealt a low blow. The ringsiders, able to see the fight, agreed nine out of ten that Sarmiento had scored a knockout. But



Philippines Golf Stars of 1928
 From left to right: Ben Few, 1928 open runnerup; Captain Kendall J. Fielder, army champion; Captain J. C. Moore, 1928 open champion; E. J. Nell and Larry Montes.
 Inset: "Sam" Rowley, manager of the Manila Golf Club.

was not above making errors either, three costly ones were checked up on their side of the score sheet.

In spite of the bungling the March 4 game was of the sort that the fans like to see. There were plenty of hits and plenty of runs. It was vastly more interesting and entertaining to watch than the closing game played on the same day in which Cavite blanked the Scouts, 5 to 0. The latter contest provided better baseball after the second inning, but the spirit of competition was dead compared to the frantic efforts of the Eagles in attempting to regain their lost ground.

With the two Harkins brothers back on the team and a new hitting acquisition in Burke, the Eagles have an even chance of finishing at the top of the loop to meet Meralco in the series. They have the best hitting club in the league and a strong pitching staff. The fielding is good as a rule, but in this department they have room for improvement.

Meralco has the best pitching staff in the league with Bernales and Santos working more frequently. Birtulfo, who entered a slump at the start of the second half, has recovered sufficiently to beat Cavite three games in a row, and it is to be presumed that he will continue hurling good baseball.

Cavite is strong and must be regarded as a contender. In the field, the navy men are the best lot of ball players in the league. Casanova is the mainstay of the pitching staff while Gage, Charles Platon and Cruz are the best with the stick. None of three are hitting exceptionally well at present although they still have plenty of time to recover.

The Scouts have shown little improvement and are resting at the bottom of the league. Interest in the games is greater than it was last year, a fact attested by the large crowds at the weekend doubleheaders. Even the Saturday games are better attended.

Boxing

The least said of last month's boxing, the better. Little Moro won from Pete Sarmiento, according to Referee Bob Smith, on a foul. The fact of the matter is that Moro was knocked cold with a body punch to the solar plexus and the crowd, unable to appreciate body blows, clamored for Sarmiento's scalp. Smith lost his mental equilibrium and whatever knowledge he must have

the ringsiders at the Stadium do not control the mind of the referee. The obrero section makes the most noise and cries of foul arose from that quarter.

Little Moro will again get a chance to prove his worth when he meets Sarmiento in a return match, March 17.

The only other card worth mention was the Garcia-Logan fight of February 18. Logan lost his welter championship. The lanky Spaniard ran into a man much lighter than he, but possessed with enough skill to win. Garcia made Luis look like an ape and sufficiently out-classed the champion as to leave no doubts in the minds of the fans as to who was the master.

Boxing this month holds a great deal of promise. Kid Johnson and Kid Moro fight for the featherweight title on March 10. March 17 will see Moro and Sarmiento in action again, while March 24 has Logan and Garcia fighting a return match.

The Montañez-Alexander battle of March 3 was a Madison Square Garden attraction. Montañez won the fight but was given a draw. The referee, Bebeng Gutierrez, sustained a lapse of memory and held up both fighters' hands. Montañez won by virtue of a terrific body attack, but again the referee failed to comprehend the meaning of a body punch.

The biggest upset on the March 3 card was the defeat of Little Pancho, the late Pancho Villa's brother. Kid Balagtas, a 100 pound midget, gave Pancho a boxing lesson. It was the best fistic treat Manilans have had the opportunity of watching in months.

Yachting

Yachting took a turn for the better during February and some of the best races ever conducted by the Manila Yacht Club were staged. The Philippines Star fleet of the International Star Racing Association got into action and two races were sailed. Both were close, thanks to heavy winds. Rockwell copped honors on each occasion and he is now leading the standings.

Polo

Polo had a good month and the Leonard Wood and Langhorne cup tournaments were completed. Both events were productive of the best polo that has been witnessed in the islands for a number of years. The Manila Polo Club entrants won both events.