

By Martin D. Emeno, Jr.

O. Gordon Brewer, Jr.

Gordon Brewer, the man, casts a long shadow on Gordon Brewer, the player, and that is a feat in itself.

One of two 2011 Hall of Fame inductees, O. Gordon Brewer, Jr.'s been a playing force in Golf Association of Philadelphia and United States Golf Association championships since the late 1960s. He is a two-time GAP Amateur winner, twice national Senior Amateur champion and five-time victor of the prestigious Crump Cup Invitational at Pine Valley Golf Club, a place he has since become synonymous with.

To understand Brewer's true touch on the game, however, is to understand the light in which Brewer, the man, is revered. He is a beacon, if you will, a moral compass, for all that is right with the game of golf. At age 74, he is the sport's grandfather – a man of honor and high character.

"To me the integrity and sportsmanship of golf is what sets golf apart from other sports," said Brewer in his soft spoken, slight North Carolina accent. "I

"It doesn't get any better than being identified with the man who set the standard, a man of the highest integrity."

– Brewer on winning Bobby Jones Award

think that is something all of us involved in the game have to work hard to preserve and uphold. To me, it would not be fulfilling to win any other way than the right way. I can't tell you anything that makes me feel more gratified or fulfilled than to have that kind of image and reputation, and hopefully influence."

The United State Golf Association, North America's golfing body, recognized Brewer's presence and stature within the game's community in 2009 with the Bob Jones Award. The organization's highest honor, the Bob Jones Award, is given in recognition of sportsmanship in golf.

"It was an incredible experience to receive that call. I was stunned. To see the winners of that award, it's something that knocks my socks off," said Brewer. Francis Ouimet, Bill Campbell and Tom Watson, amongst others, have been honored.

"It doesn't get any better than being identified with the man who set the standard, a man of the highest integrity."

Don't mistake Brewer's high character as a sign of competitive weakness. He is a fiery force whose résumé bears that fact out.

He emerged on the scene a little late in golfing terms, at age 30, winning his first Major tournament, the 1967 GAP Amateur, 2-up, over Harvey Smith of Atlantic City CC. I say late because Brewer didn't pick up a club until he was 19 years old. He added his first of five Crump Cups in 1973, and then captured a second Amateur title in 1976, 1-up, over Duke Delcher of Sandy Run CC.



Working as an executive for Alco Standard, Corp., and family priorities tempered golf from being Brewer's lone focus, though. He wasn't able to compete in every GAP Championship because of time constraints, but Brewer did keep a keen eye on USGA Championships. Despite not making a national tournament debut until the 1968 U.S. Amateur, at age 31, Brewer has recorded an astounding 42 total appearances. He's played in 17 U.S. Amateurs, 10 U.S. Senior Amateurs, nine U.S. Mid-Ams and six U.S. Senior Opens. Brewer is a twice National Champion, he took the 1994 and 1996 U.S. Senior Amateur, was the runner-up in the 1985 U.S. Middle-Amateur Championship, ironically falling to friend and fellow GAP Hall of Famer Jay Sigel, and a four-time national semifinalist (two in the U.S. Senior and two in the U.S. Mid-Am.).

"It was very, very rewarding to win my first USGA Championship," said Brewer. "The second one was fantastic. It gives you a feeling of validation. Of all events I've had the great privilege of winning, those USGA events stand at the top."

In addition to the aforementioned 1973 Crump Cup win, Brewer captured Pine Valley's prestigious invitational in 1977, 1980, 1982 and 1989. He became a Pine Valley member in 1971 and later served as club president from 1998-2010. His residence is parallel to the second fairway.

Brewer's also been prominent in Golf Association of Philadelphia Senior tournaments. He took the 1997 Senior Amateur Championship as well as that year's Senior Player of the Year. In 2008, he added the next generation title, winning the Super-Senior Amateur Championship. In fact, he has won every significant Super-Senior Division title at least once.

In 2009, the Association created and named a Senior match play event, the Brewer Cup, in his honor. Of course, he won the Super-Senior bracket that year.

"Gordon is one of the finest examples of what golf competition is all about," said Dan Burton, a current USGA Executive Committee member, former Golf Association of Philadelphia President and friend of Brewer's. "He respects the game and respects his opponents but he's a fierce competitor. I think he's the best pure competitor I've ever seen. At the same time, he does it at the highest level in terms of dignity, respect and character. Gordon represents what golf really is about."

Brewer noted he is forever grateful to Old York Road CC and its membership for allowing a young man just starting out to call its course home. When Old



Brewer, with wife Gail, after winning the 1994 U.S. Senior Amateur.

York Road moved from Jenkintown to its present day location, however, Brewer wanted to stay in that general area and joined player-rich Huntingdon Valley CC in 1963. A place where he befriended fellow Hall members William Hyndman, III and Warrington B. McCullough, Jr. He served as Club President from 1983-85.

"I am surprised and really humbled by a tremendous honor like [the Hall of Fame]," said Brewer. "This is certainly not something I would have expected."

Brewer has given back to the game in a number of other ways as well. He served on the board of the Association's charitable arm, the J. Wood Platt Caddie Scholarship, from 1981-93 and sat as its Chairman from 1988-92. He was the Pennsylvania Golf Association President in 1975, a member of the USGA's Executive Committee from 1996-2001 and served on the PGA of America Board of Directors from 2001-03.

During this interview, the reserved Brewer mentioned his wife of 52 years, Gail, frequently, thanking her for the endless love and support. The Brewers have two children, Chip and Nancy, and seven grandchildren. Chip is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Adams Golf.

"I've been a passionate golfer since the day I began to play," said Gordon Brewer, who played basketball at Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C., "and I love competition. If you enjoy competition you want to win. You want to do it the right way. You work hard. I think one of the attributes I have is a willingness to work hard. And without Gail, who has been exceedingly supportive, all of this would have been impossible."

The 2011 Hall of Fame inductions will take place at the Player's Dinner on Oct. 11 at Huntingdon Valley CC.

William P. Smith

BY MARTIN D. EMENO, JR.

William P. Smith of Huntingdon Valley Country Club was perhaps the city's top golfer when the Golf Association of Philadelphia formed in 1897. The financial manager for the enormous Cramp Shipbuilding Company won six Major titles in the organization's first 12 years of existence. He is the fourth Huntingdon Valley Country Club member to be enshrined in the Golf Association of Philadelphia's Hall of Fame, joining rival Harold McFarland, William Hyndman, III and Warrington B. McCullough, Jr.

William Poultney Smith is a pioneer in Golf Association of Philadelphia championships. A moderately built, right-hander from Huntingdon Valley Country Club, Smith was the first dominant player of the 20th century, capturing six Major titles in the Association's first 12 years. He won both the Philadelphia Individual Championship (now called the Amateur) which started in 1897, and Patterson Cup, which began in 1900, three times each.

Smith secured his first Individual title in 1898, the second year of the organization's existence, before becoming the tournament's first back-to-back winner with victories in 1901 and 1902. Talented golfers ran in the Smith family. His brother, Abner, a Philadelphia Cricket Club member, won the Association's first Individual title in 1897.

William P. then collected Patterson Cup trophies in 1904, 1906 and 1908. In 1906, he needed an 18-hole playoff with fellow HVCC member Father Simon Carr to earn the win. He carded a 74 at Philadelphia CC, his other home course.

Smith's consistency in high-level championships in the Association's infancy was groundbreaking.

In addition to winning the six aforementioned titles, he also finished as Amateur runner-up five times, 1899, 1903-04, 1910 and 1913.

The talented Smith repeatedly represented Team Philadelphia in the prestigious Lesley Cup in 1905-06 and 1908, and then Team Pennsylvania in 1910-12 and 1916. The Lesley Cup was a contentious and viral tri-state match between New York, Philadelphia and Boston.

Around 1911, and after many years of consternation with Philadelphians struggling in both the Lesley Cup and U.S. Amateur, the respected Smith was asked to pen a letter offering his critique of the existing turmoil. It was that letter, in addition to one written a month earlier by A.W. Tillinghast that eventually led to the formation of Pine Valley Golf Club, amongst other area course gems.

Stated Thomas MacWood in a 2005 article on George Crump, "... [Smith] began by confessing he probably didn't have the space to do the subject justice, but hopefully this self-evaluation would stimulate 'a serious discussion as to a means of overcoming the unfortunate conditions.'"

Continued MacWood on Smith, "He identified four primary reasons for their poor showing, they included arrangement of too few serious matches and far too many casual 'ballsomes'; a local golf association



(L to R): William P. Smith, A.W. Tillinghast and George Crump.

focused on politics and not on developing good golfers; the best players were businessmen; and last but not least, the fact that Philadelphia lacked any true championship tests," as in golf courses.

MacWood completed his thoughts with, "This was the state of mind that inspired and motivated George Crump and his friends, resulting in Pine Valley."

Smith was part of Crump's small inner circle and is listed on Pine Valley's first board of directors.

Smith in some way is also at least partly responsible for the term "birdie."

There are many stories, and many theories. One of the most plausible comes from Tillinghast's version, published in the April, 1933 issue of *Golf Illustrated*, 30 years after the event occurred. Tillinghast recalled that they were playing winter golf, probably on a Saturday, when his group of regulars from the 'Quaker' City (of Philadelphia) arrived at the Shore by train. The year was 1903.

"It came to pass that we were playing the long 12th hole (in the order at the time), with a keen following wind. The hole usually played as a three-shotter, but on this occasion someone got away two screamers and got home in two. As the second shot hit the green either Bill Smith or his brother Ab exclaimed: 'That's a bird!'"

"Immediately the other remarked that such an effort that resulted in cutting par by a stroke should be rewarded doubly, and there on the spot it was agreed that thereafter this should be done. And so it was, the exclamation of Smith, giving the name, Bird, which gradually was to become a term of the game, used wherever it is played today."

The Smiths were from an old colonial Pennsylvania family. William P. graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1887 with a mechanical engineering degree. He worked as a naval engineer and architect before heading to Cramp Shipbuilding Company. Smith died in 1936.