

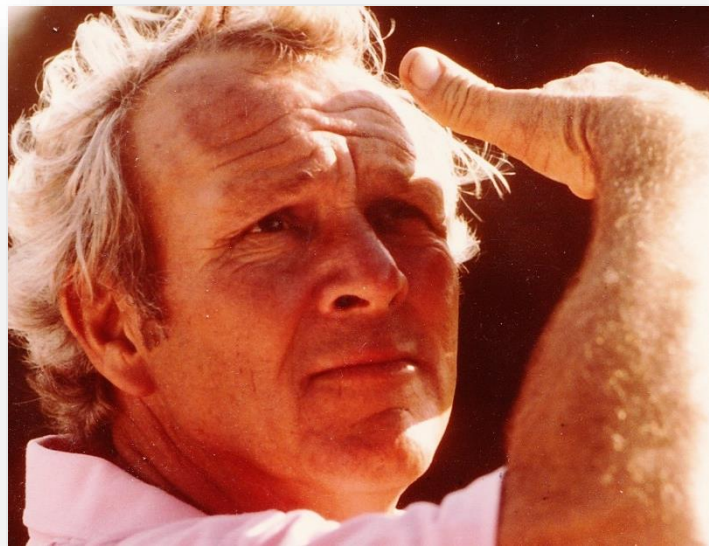
The Golf Chronicles

The story of golf at Reading Country Club and in Berks County

Byron Nelson
RCC Pro
1937-39



Number 48 • October 4, 2016



Long Live the King A Salute to Arnie

A member of *The Golf Chronicles* editorial staff met **Arnold Palmer** on December 3, 1980. The occasion was the Senior PGA Championship played at Turnberry Isle Country Club in North Miami. The staffer was at the time employed by Colonial Penn Insurance Company, which sponsored that year's championship.

The 1980 tournament was Arnie's coming out party on what would become the Senior, now the Champions, Tour. The win in 1980 propelled Arnie to four more Senior major wins: U.S Senior Open, 1981; Senior PGA, 1984; and Senior Players Championship, 1984 and 1985 (by 11 strokes). Arnie won 10 times on the Senior Tour. He ranks 179th in Senior career winnings with \$1.7 million, nearly identical to his career PGA Tour winnings.

First-Time a Winner

Arnold Palmer won the 1980 Senior PGA Championship, the first time he was eligible for the event. The scoring summary is from the *St. Petersburg Times*, December 8, 1980.

PGA Seniors		
AT TURNBERRY ISLE, MIAMI		
SUNDAY'S RESULTS		
Final round		
*Arnold Palmer 130,000	72-69-73-75=289	
Paul Harney 13,000	68-76-75-71=284	
Don January 12,500	73-76-73-70=292	
Art Wall Jr. 5,128	74-73-68-76=291	
Charles Sifford 5,128	71-73-71-76=291	
Walker Inman Jr. 5,128	70-75-71-75=291	
Bob Erickson 5,128	72-73-75-71=291	
Bob Goody 5,128	74-73-76-69=291	
Julius Boros 5,128	75-71-74-71=291	
Fred Wampler 5,128	70-73-76-72=291	
Joe Jimenez 1,833	73-75-76-71=293	
Dow Finsterwald 1,833	73-76-72-73=293	
Doug Ford 1,833	74-70-75-72=293	
Mac Mah 1,410	73-75-73-74=294	
Howie Johnson 1,410	73-76-73-72=294	
Tom Meaports 1,410	74-73-74-74=294	
Ted Kroll 1,410	73-73-76-73=294	
Bill Collins 1,410	73-74-71-76=294	
George Thomas 1,410	70-73-76-76=294	
Freddie Haas 1,410	74-74-75-71=294	
John Langford 1,138	75-75-73-73=293	
Don Sikes 1,150	78-73-70-74=295	
Emory Lee 1,150	71-75-74-75=295	
Dean Lind 1,025	73-73-75-75=296	
Jerry Barber 1,025	74-73-77-72=296	
Nicholas Patchik 980	71-76-73-77=297	
Gardner Dickinson 980	73-74-74-73=297	
Bob Toal 900	73-74-73-73=297	
Murry Jacobs 888	74-77-75-75=298	
Henry Ransom 725	74-77-75-73=299	
Mike Souchak 725	75-74-73-77=299	
George Bayer 725	75-77-74-73=299	
J.C. Goosie 650	73-79-71-78=300	
Bob Duden 650	73-74-73-81=300	
Jimmy Russell 642	78-73-70-77=300	
Stan Thirk 642	74-76-76-73=301	
Jack Martin 642	75-72-76-78=301	
John Kalra 642	74-75-73-77=301	
Eric Monti 642	74-75-77-75=301	
Vernon Thwaites 490	73-78-78-73=302	
Billy Capps 490	77-73-78-75=302	
Fred Hawkins 490	76-72-79-73=302	
Bebe Lichardus 460	70-79-76-78=303	
Alton Marvick 460	76-73-76-74=303	
Sam Penecole 460	71-76-80-75=303	
Marty Furgol 425	73-75-76-80=304	
Lionel Hebert 425	75-76-76-77=304	
Al Mangeri 425	73-78-83-73=304	
Joe Conrad 425	73-75-76-80=304	
Everett Vincent 348	74-76-81-73=305	
Herman Schanau 348	79-73-78-76=305	
Bill Kozak 348	73-78-77-77=305	
George Kalish Jr. 348	76-73-79-77=305	
Bill Bickert 348	79-74-75-78=305	
Ed Kroll 348	73-76-81=305	
Bob Kay 325	75-77-76-76=306	
Ed Furgol 325	79-76-75-78=306	
Al Fuchs 275	74-72-78-83=308	
Hamp Auld 275	75-78-77-78=308	
Joe Cheves 275	74-76-76-80=308	
Joe Lopez Sr. 275	76-75-73-84=308	
Jackson Bradley 348	73-78-84-74=309	
Hank Marrall 348	76-75-79-80=310	
Travis Hudson 348	77-73-76-82=310	
John Zontek 348	75-74-83-78=312	
Bob Keller 345	75-79-79-81=313	
Gus Bernardoni 348	74-75-86-83=313	
Don Fairfield	77-75=WD	
Tommy Bolt	76-76=WD	
*Palmer won playoff on first extra hole		

According to an article by Marino Parascenzo, posted to the PGA.com web site, the Arnie impact was profound. The tournament drew the largest galleries ever to the Senior PGA Championship, which was first played in 1937 at Augusta National Golf Club. Some 5,500 fans came out for the final round, which was about twice as many as the year before at the same course. The 1980 Senior PGA Championship also had its largest press corps by far, almost 50, and it was carried on television for the first time, on a delayed basis. Senior golf had turned a corner and Arnie was driving the bus.

He opened with a par 72, three behind Paul Harney's 69. Playing in whipping winds to tough pins, only four players shot in the 60s, and none more than once. Just 21 broke par for any round (and only two twice), and the cut came in at 9-over 153.

Palmer took the lead after the second round, shooting a five-birdie, two-bogey 69 for a 141 total and a one-stroke lead on George Thomas. He surrendered the lead briefly in the third round to Art Wall, Jr., but closed in typical Arnie style, birdie-birdie, to retake the lead from Wall, who shot the tournament's best round, a four-under 68.

The Army. Arnie's Army showed up in force for the final round to cheer their hero to victory. Walker Inman Jr. and Wall took themselves out of contention, shooting 75 and 76, respectively. Paul Harney's steady 71 left him tied with Arnie, who closed with a three-over 75. Don January, the defender, shot 70 to miss the playoff by a stroke.

The playoff started at the par-3 15th, and ended there. Harney, putting from 60 feet, missed the birdie. Palmer knocked in a 7-footer for only his second birdie of the day to win. Harney's previous playoff was 17 years earlier, at the 1963 Thunderbird Classic, and Palmer beat him that day, too.

As important as the victory was for Arnie, it was more important for the over-50 golf professionals. Just as he did in the 1950s and '60s, Arnie once again launched a golf tour, this time for seniors. Arnie's presence brought the fans and, most important, the sponsors, to senior golf. Before Arnie, the few senior professional golf tournaments attracted little attention outside of the players' friends and families. Arnie changed that just by showing up, his personal imprimatur. From Hale Irwin (\$27 million) to Jesper Parnevik (\$1 million), 218 golfers have won more than \$1 million playing the Champions Tour. Thank you, Arnie.

What was special about Arnie? It was all in the name. Arnie. That's all you had to say. Everybody knew who you meant and everybody knew what you meant. Nobody ever asked, "Arnie who?"

Getting personal. The photos on the following pages are from the 1980 Senior PGA Championship and are in *The Golf Chronicles* editor's personal collection. He didn't take them, but he was smart enough, or just plain lucky enough, to have saved them.



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Hold Nothing Back

Fans loved Arnie for his intensity, captured perfectly in this photo.



Leaning In

There was nothing more exciting than Arnie with the driver. The lash, the thwack, the lean, the ball launched like a rocket, disappearing, only to reappear miles down the fairway. Or so it seemed.



Star Power

Everybody wanted to see the King. This is tennis great Jimmy Connors, who lived at Turnberry. He broke away from his training to meet Arnie.

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Teeing Off

Arnie's final-round group included fellow Pennsylvanian Art Wall, Jr. and Walker Inman, Jr. Inman is on the left in the pink shirt.



Putting Problems

Arnie rolls a putt on one of Turnberry's tricky greens. He won despite a 20-putt effort on the final nine holes. This was on the heels of a 35-putt third round.



Having a Blast

Arnie plays from the sand.

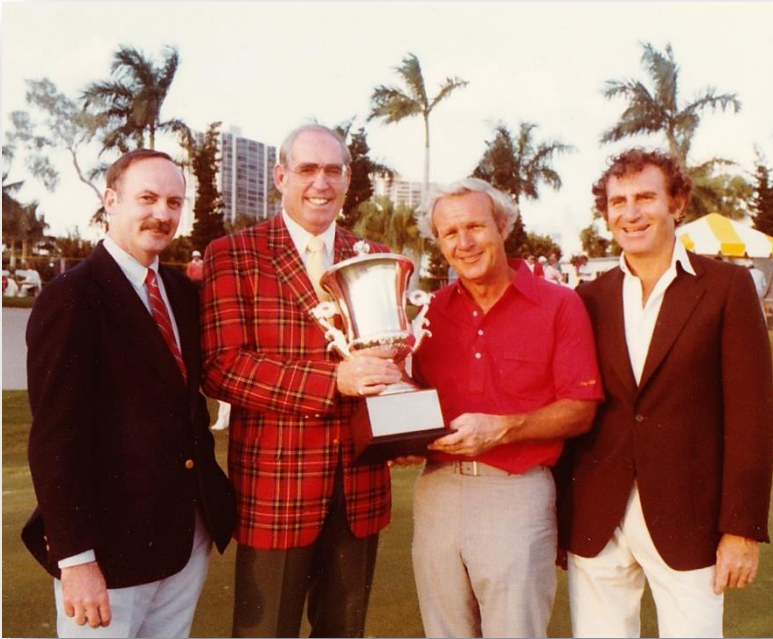


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The Hardware King

Arnie accepts the winner's trophy from PGA officials and a sponsor's representative.



TV Power

Bob Toski interviewed Arnie after the playoff. The tournament was shown on television for the first time, albeit by tape delay on the fledgling ESPN. Toski finished at nine-over 297, tied 26th with Gardner Dickinson and Mike Fetchik.



Enjoying the View

Arnie and Walker Inman, Jr., follow play during the final round. Inman's closing 75 for a 291 total placed him tied fourth with Art Wall, Jr., Julius Boros, the host pro, Charles Sifford, Bob Erickson, Fred Wampler, and Bob Goalby.

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An Unexpected Gift

Arnie never played RCC. But this golf ball emblazoned with the logo of his Bay Hill Club in Orlando popped up a range basket, where the editor of The Golf Chronicles rescued it on Sunday, October 2, 2016. As befits a king, the ball is a Titleist 4, Pro V1x. The ball has nary a scuff, like it has never been hit, a jewel nestled in the rubble of balls cut and cracked from years of abuse. That this ball would turn up amongst a bucket of humble range balls epitomizes the life of a modest man who grew up to become a king.

Maybe its presence is a message from Arnie. Maybe it's mere coincidence. Decide for yourself.