

Tom: Hello, this is Pod for the Course, and I'm Tom Cade, the director of communications for Washington Golf. This year, 2022, is the Centennial year for Washington Golf. It was founded in 1922 when the first Washington State Amateur was held at Yakima Country Club. We have with us today, Mike Riste, the curator for the BC Golf Museum, which is housed in BC Golf House in Vancouver, British Columbia. And actually it is housed inside the old clubhouse where University Golf Club is there in Vancouver.

Mike was one of the founding people who started the golf museum in 1989. He is also the official historian for the Pacific Northwest Golf Association. An author as well, Mike has written books such as the biography of Arthur Vernon McCann, "Just Called Me Mac." And Mike also provided the foundational research for the Centennial book for Washington Golf that was published this year called "Washington Golf 100 Years of Growing the Game." This is a third in a series of podcasts we've done with Mike this year just because there's so much history in our state and also throughout the Northwest. Mike Riste, thanks so much for joining us again today.

Mike: Oh my pleasure. This has been a fun project. I've really liked researching it, finding out new things and I always need an excuse to do some research.

Tom: I'm sure that work is never done. Even now as we speak, you are sitting inside the BC Golf House there in Vancouver, yeah?

Mike: Yes. I come here every day and I'm working on updating the Macan book, actually. I've had so many requests for a new edition and a copy of the old one. I only did 500 copies of the original so my project this winter is to update that book. It was done oh, 10, 15 years ago now and because of my access to all the newspapers in the Northwest, I have a lot of new material.

Tom: You're going to come out with a new edition?

Mike: Yes.

Tom: Years ago, I was in Ireland and I played the golf course, Portmarnock outside of Dublin a little bit. And as I understand it, that was the home course of A.V. Macan before he went to Canada, is that correct?

Mike: Yeah. There was a tournament that was held in the Dublin area. It was a match tournament and there were 10 players from each club and it's still held today actually. And Macan got free memberships at quite a few of the golf clubs but yes, Portmarnock, the Island, Royal Dublin and Greystones were essentially his four main golf courses. And he is listed in all the British Amateurs he participated in as a member at Portmarnock.

Tom: In our first podcast we talked about the founding of Washington Golf, which was then called the Washington State Golf Association, and also the British Columbia Golf Association, which was founded the same year in 1922. And the second podcast we focused on some of the larger events and tournaments that were held in the Northwest in the 1930s and 1940s. And today I thought we'd chat about a few things that you had

some great ideas to talk about. And one of them right off the bat here is you mentioned in 1947, some standardized handicapping came to the Northwest and was established. Is that correct?

Mike: Yes. In the research for your podcast, actually, I always knew that Ernie Jonson was involved in the GHIN system and I knew that it had been given to them by the PNGA and the USGA but I didn't really know the roots. And in the research for your podcast, I found the roots and it actually started in the Seattle Men's Golf Association. And if I'm correct, please help me find if that association is still in existence today.

Tom: That is something I would have to look into. I know that there's a public golf association for the men in Seattle area. I don't know what it's technically called now but that's probably what that is.

Mike: I agree. But you're absolutely right I should have said it's now for the public golf courses. But here's another project that I haven't totally completed yet. I wouldn't be surprised that the Seattle Men's Golf Association, which included all the clubs, Seattle Golf Club, Inglewood, Rainier, public golf courses, I think it might actually predate Washington State Golf Association. I think it started in 1920 but I have no proof.

Tom: Okay.

Mike: After WWII there was a movement in North America, Canada, U.S. to try and standardize people's handicaps, particularly for national championships. Every area had some system but there was no uniformity. Ernie Jonson, Carl Erickson, and Don McDonald formed a committee at the Seattle Men's Golf Association to do a survey, to see what was being used and then come up with some handicap system that they would apply to all the members of the Seattle Men's Golf Association.

Talking about all the clubs like Maplewood, Foster, Olympic View, every club that was in this association, and I wouldn't be surprised it could be in the neighborhood of 30 or 40 golf clubs, including private, public, semi-private. They came up with a system, very simple system, five lowest scores from the previous 10 rounds and take the average and then apply it to the course par and you came up with the handicap. But they went a few steps further, they started even a very simple rating system, like was par for this course 72 and what were the subtle differences? Because they weren't equal. The articles don't talk about how they figured it out but it was the prelude to the Slope Rating system.

Tom: Mike, did they start doing this on their own or were they in touch with the USGA at the time, or did they just figure this out on their own?

Mike: There is no indication that they were going to the Washington State Golf Association or the PNGA or anybody. They were just going to unify it for their tournaments inside their own group, quite large. And it probably had a lot of players, like if you're talking 30 or 40 clubs and I don't know how many members Maplewood would have had or Foster Golf Club. They could be 100 each. They had a lot at West Seattle and a lot at Jefferson or

yeah, Jefferson and the other public golf courses so they may have had a lot of players involved here.

Then it evolves into probably a little later in the 1950s, mid-50s. Ernie's an accountant and basically Washington State Golf Association is run through Ernie, the PNGA is run through Ernie and he figures out a way of standardizing and having a central body for keeping track of all these handicaps and it's done in his office. This is the very basis of a central body, namely Ernie's office, keeping track of all these handicaps at all these golf clubs throughout the Seattle Golf Association. Well, he's head of the PNGA so therefore he'll expand it to all the member clubs of the PNGA.

Tom: Oh yeah, sure.

Mike: And then it goes to USGA.

Tom: This was in the late 1940s and early '50s?

Mike: By now we're talking mid-50s.

Tom: Yeah. Okay.

Mike: I think it was around the late 1950s, early 60s that this system was given to the United States Golf Association.

Tom: Okay. Interesting.

Mike: A really, really cool story I think.

Tom: Yeah.

Mike: How it started with just this little Seattle Men's Golf Association.

Tom: And they essentially just did it among themselves because they wanted to create fairness of play just in their own groups and their own men's clubs, is that right?

Mike: Yeah. It was a real problem in the 1930s and '40s, even in the national championships with these handicaps. I know in British Columbia, the handicaps were totally different than Ontario. When you were at the Canadian Amateur, BC players said they had no chance in any net competitions in the east, forget it because they always felt their handicaps were a whole lot lower than in the east. There was a movement after the war that they had to start controlling these handicaps. And I would imagine they probably had the same problem in the Seattle Men's Golf Association.

Tom: Sure. Yep.

Mike: It was becoming a real problem. And that's why this committee was formed in February 1947 to come up with a system where at least in their group, they believed that everybody's pretty well on an equal basis.

Tom: And you mentioned some rating system as well, and sounds like some prelude to the Slope and Course Handicap system, correct?

Mike: Absolutely. Because the first problem they had, they had a meeting and they said, well, we figured out how we're going to figure out the handicaps but we're going to use the average. You take the five scores, you had them together, you average it and let's assume the player had 79. And his par for his course was 72. Well, this handicap was seven but par at 72, and I think the example they used was Olympic View, the course at the north end of Seattle. And Seattle Golf Club was par 72 also, well a 70 handicap at Olympic View you couldn't shoot your handicap at Seattle Golf Club, it was too difficult but they had the same par. Now they had to figure out some way of trying to equalize these two golf courses and adjust the par and they talk about going out and figuring out, well, there were no trees, for example, at Olympic View, it was wide open. They talk about trying to equalize these two golf courses that fits the handicap accordingly.

Tom: Yeah. Interesting.

Mike: Yeah, really fascinating. It was strictly by accident. Well here was the title of the first article I found: "Uniform handicap system proposed." And in the article, Ernie Jonson talks about what they did and the committee he had and he talks briefly about the plan is the player's handicap shall be based on the average of the five lowest cards of the last 10 scores. And he lists a whole bunch of things that they wanted to do, very, very forward thinking. And I still find it amazing that in Seattle, it actually created this GHIN as well, that's the main system that basically started in this little Seattle Men's Golf Association. And now I'm fascinated with this association so I am going to find the roots. How many clubs did they actually have and how it evolved? And I'm pretty sure it's the Seattle Public Golf Association.

Tom: And I know that at some point the PNGA started taking over the handicapping system or in charge of handicap in Washington anyway, at some point, is that right?

Mike: Yeah, it did. This system evolved from Ernie's because Ernie basically ran the Washington State Golf Association and Pacific Northwest Golf Association. And he was pretty active in this Seattle Men's Golf Association, they were all run out of his office. It was natural for this Seattle system to evolve into the PNGA. They had a central bank of how to do it for Seattle and I'm sure even though they didn't have any computers or anything, that it was pretty easy to expand this central system. Now, when you talk about the PNGA with the handicap, there was no indication it went to Oregon or went to British Columbia, it was based for Washington.

Tom: That's what I thought. And that, not to get off topic here, was one of the things that led to the realignment in the early 1990s between the PNGA and the WSGA was the

handing over of the handicapping responsibilities and course rating responsibilities, is that right?

Mike: Yeah. I'll never forget the meetings. It was in the 1990s in Washington. They wanted to activate it and make it a really active body for golf clubs in Washington but they had no money so the PNGA said, "Well, we'll give you the handicap system and that way you can raise money." And I'll never forget Oregon and British Columbia, I don't think Idaho and Montana were involved. It was a really heated meeting because people in Oregon were not happy that all this was going to start going to Washington State Golf Association.

Tom: Yeah, sure.

Mike: And that's why the Washington State Golf Association had the money to buy the golf course.

Tom: And that was in 2007. This is very interesting to learn that the nucleus of this began in the Seattle area for this uniform handicap system.

Mike: Well, I was stunned when I saw the article and then I did quite a bit of research. See, when I do my research in these newspaper databases, I've got to have a word or two words max put them in quotation and then search all the newspapers for those two words. I typed in "handicap system" and found a lot of information on this system. Not all of it I'm sure, but enough to have a pretty good feeling of what was going on.

Tom: And it's my understanding that a little bit after Ernie Jonson got this going, Charles Draper Sr. took it a little bit further with the WSGA part of it. He started using computers to try to come up with an even more uniform system of figuring out a handicap. And I heard stories of him taking it to the University of Washington to use their computers to try to get this figured out.

Mike: Yeah. I haven't researched that but I've also heard that. I haven't seen exactly when it took place but Draper was a really interesting fellow and one day I'm going to do a word search on just his name because he was really, really influential in golf in Pacific Northwest, particularly Washington state.

Tom: Yes, for the listeners out there, Charles Draper Sr. was involved with the WSGA for at least three decades. He served just about every role that there could be served, all the way up to president and also executive director. And it was also interesting that he never took a salary for anything that he ever did for doing that but yeah, very influential. And I remember when we were doing research for the history book, the Centennial History Book, we went to his son, Charles Draper Jr. and he handed us over five huge boxes of folders and files and records from his dad. And it was just an eye-opening treasure trove of stuff that he had been involved with.

Mike: Wow. Where are they today?

Tom: They're in our office still so we still have them.

Mike: Oh really?

Tom: If you ever want to have a look at them, just let us know.

Mike: I'll do some preliminary research on him and then yeah, I'd love to look at those files.

Tom: Yeah, sure. Okay.

Mike: Ernie Jonson did all this work in his office. He never charged any of these associations any money.

Tom: Yeah. Ran it out of his own office. That's right. Ernie Jonson basically kept the PNGA and the WSGA, kept them afloat, kept them going.

Mike: Absolutely. And then his brother, Carl, he did all the legal work.

Tom: Yeah.

Mike: On one hand, Ernie did the accounting for all these golf clubs and Carl, he did all the legal work because there were some major issues with regard to taxation.

Tom: I'll bet.

Mike: In the 1950s and '60s, Ernie and Carl handled all the work.

Tom: Pretty amazing combination. And both of them are in the Pacific Northwest Golf Hall Of Fame and deservedly so.

Mike: A really good player.

Tom: Carl Jonson. Well they both were, yeah.

Mike: Ernie shows up a bit more than Carl and Ernie was on the winning U.S. Amateur Publiclinks team from Seattle.

Tom: That's right. I can't remember what year that was but I believe in the 1940s or so?

Mike: Yeah. 1947, '48, '49. I'd have to look it up. I better not give it here. But it might have actually been... No, it wasn't 1953, that was one of the tournaments that was dominated by California for over a decade so it definitely was 1953 at West Seattle Golf Course.

Tom: Mike, I want to pivot here to the next topic of discussion. And that is the caddie scholarship scenario in Washington state, and in Northwest too, but in Washington state in particular. I know that in the early 1990s, in fact 1992, the WSGA started the Evans

Cup fundraiser, which was a charity fundraiser to raise money for the Evans Caddie Scholarship Program. And before that I know that the WSGA had been supporting the Evans Scholarship Program anyway, but now they were actively raising funds for that program. But as you alluded to earlier, this caddie program started way before the early 1990s and it was also called something else, not the Evans Caddie Scholarship Program, at least not in our area, is that right?

Mike: That's right. This is another example of doing this research for your podcast. I came across this article, Alex Rose Caddie Scholarship Fund. I'd heard about it but I'd never researched it at all. I knew in the 1960s there had been a caddie scholarship fund before the Western Golf Association ones really started in 1960 or '61 but I didn't know anything about it.

Then I did some research and it's quite a neat story actually. And it's something, because I've interviewed Harry Givan, I was a bit shocked about actually. Rose was a really interesting character. He was a sports editor for the *Seattle Times* but he was best known from 1926 to 1942 for a golf magazine. He started *The Northwest Golfer* in 1926, a monthly publication of basically what was happening in golf, British Columbia, Washington and Oregon, a bit about Montana, a bit about Idaho. And he traveled to every tournament and he put this magazine together, and then around 1932 or '33 he was having financial difficulties with the magazine so he extended it to call it the *Pacific Coast Golfer*. And then he moved the headquarters to LA and now it came mainly a California publication with about a third of its content from the Northwest and it ended in 1942. And then he came back and became the sports editor for *Seattle Times*.

But I didn't realize his deep connection to Harry Givan. I knew he liked Harry, I could tell in his articles that every shot Harry ever hit, I think he recorded it in an article somewhere but there was a deep, deep relationship between these two. When Alex died in the spring of 1948, Harry Givan, which I was totally surprised at, because I didn't think it was his personality, he wanted to do something to memorialize Alex Rose. He went to the Washington Athletic Association, the people in downtown Seattle, and put this idea to them that he wanted to create a caddie scholarship, the Alex Rose Memorial Caddie Scholarship. Would they help? And they agreed immediately. Everybody knew Alex and they thought it was a fantastic idea. They immediately held a Pro Am to raise money.

The following year, in 1949, the PPGA wants to get involved. They more or less take over the operation and they hold the money for the fund. They hold a Pro Am but then Mr. Hudson again, he gets involved. He wants to help put money in this fund. We've already talked about the Hudson Cup matches. Well, they charged a fee for the spectators to see these matches and Hudson says, "Well, all that money that we collect from the spectators, I will match it and it'll go in the fund." And then the PGA pros, the Northwest Section say, "Well, we want to get involved in this scholarship so we are going to donate all the proceeds from the Washington State Open from the spectators to this fund." It starts to grow and then to see how to operate, how to give out these scholarships, they approach the Western Golf Association. And so they basically follow



the same format, little bit different, the three qualifications were you had... And I don't exactly know what this means but you had to have an aptitude for golf.

I don't know whether, obviously you didn't have to be a good player but I guess you had to understand the game. It doesn't say you had to be a caddie. And then number two, you had to be a good student, and three, you had to show financial need. And in 1949, they give a scholarship to Jimmy Hynes to attend the University of Washington. Now there's no indication it's four years but I think it is. And he was a pretty good golfer actually. And he was on the University of Washington golf team. The second year in 1950, they give away two, one to Bob Peabody and Ned Cunningham. In 1951 they gave only one away to a fellow by the name of Bud Stavely. But I haven't been able to track all through the 1950s until around 1960, when the Alex Rose Caddie Scholarship becomes the PPGA scholarship, which is now run by the Western Golf Association.

Tom: When they approached the Western Golf Association, which runs the Evans Caddie Scholarship Program, they had been doing that for a while too though, so in other words, they just all joined forces together through the Western Golf Association?

Mike: Joined forces, the money never went to Western Golf Association. It was always held in this fund called the Alex Rose Caddie Scholarship Fund, all the money that they were raising and they also sold bag tags because that was the chief way the Western Golf Association raised their money. They had a number of ways of raising money but that money was always kept in trust of PPGA, it never went to Western. I have no idea if the fundraising tapered off in the late 1950s and they started needing money and that's how Western Golf took over the fund. I'm not sure I'll have to do some more research but I do know from personal experience that in 1960, the Western Golf Association was running the scholarship fund in the Pacific Northwest because I got one of them.

Tom: Yes you did. And so what year was that when you received your scholarship, Mike?

Mike: 1965 and it was still quite informal then. There were no selection meetings. Basically what you did, you filled out the application. You had to show financial need and you had to get your principal of the school and you needed letters or recommendation. But they all went to the PPGA office and they had a committee that gave out the scholarships. It wasn't until about 1968 they started holding the selection meetings.

Tom: Do you recall, Mike, in 1965 when you got your scholarship, were there others in the area or were you the only one that year or do you happen to know that?

Mike: There were quite a few kids in school actually, at Washington, there were about 20, 24, 25. Six were given out the year I got mine and in Oregon there was about the same number. The only problem we had was, and the whole time I went through school, four years at Washington, we never had any interaction between the scholars. Some in houses and periodically somebody would say to me, oh, in one of my class, "Oh, I'm an Evans Scholar too because I recognized your name. You're an Evans Scholar." Otherwise I would never have known. There was no supervisor, there was no connections, we never got together, which was quite disappointing. The only time we might get



together, if the PNGA annual meeting was held at Broadmoor or Seattle Golf Club, they might invite the local Evans Scholars to the meeting, but four years I was at Washington that only happened twice, I think.

Tom: You were working at Capilano Golf and Country Club at the time, when you got the scholarship?

Mike: Right.

Tom: How did you find out about the scholarship? Was that through your school or through the golf course or how did that happen, do you remember?

Mike: By accident. I started caddying there in 1959. And in 1962, the PNGA Women's Amateur was at Capilano first three rounds and then they moved to Vancouver Golf Club for the semifinals and finals. And I actually caddied for Mrs. Ernie Jonson. We didn't get to the semis. She lost at Capilano and I think it was the third round, one of the flights. And she said to me, "Oh, what are you going to do?" And I said, "Oh, I'm going to go to university, I'm saving my money to go to university." And she said, "Oh really? And are you aware of a scholarship?" And I had no idea. I'd never heard of it. She gave me all the details and then when she went home, Ernie sent me all the details and then I was on track to get involved in the Evans.

We had inter-clubs every year with Inglewood, Broadmoor and Seattle Golf Club. Every year I was introduced and I caddied for one of the people who was involved in the PNGA at one of these clubs. Everybody knew me, everybody knew what I wanted to do and so I was pretty well being groomed to get a scholarship so that's how I found out. And then once I got mine, we got a lot of publicity. Shaughnessy, they started having the Evans program, Victoria Golf Club, Royal Colwood. For about oh five years after me, we had, I think there were about 15 scholarships issued in British Columbia and then it died.

Tom: Interesting. What did you study at the University of Washington, Mike?

Mike: Computers.

Tom: Okay.

Mike: I also went to graduate school after finishing at the UW. I was at Santa Barbara and then I finished at Berkeley.

Tom: It's quite a journey for the scholarship program here. I know it's still running in the area, there's still up every year. There's an Evans Cup of Washington fundraiser and there's also an Evans Cup of Oregon fundraiser. They raise quite a bit of money. This last year I was told they the Evans Cup of Washington raised over \$400,000 just at that one fundraiser so it's quite a significant program. And now they have scholarship Chapter Houses; there's one at the University of Washington, there's one at the University of Oregon. You had mentioned that you didn't have any connection with the other Evans

Scholars when you were in school. Well, they do now, they all live together in the same house like a fraternity, sorority situation so they're growing and evolving, that's for sure.

Mike: And it's a great scholarship. Four years for a guy like me that I don't think I had even been to the states before I got my scholarship. And I was at UW when there were very turbulent times in America. The Vietnam War was full bore. And so at the UW, even today, I think of people that I heard. I saw Muhammad Ali give a speech, Martin Luther King. I stood about three feet away from Robert F. Kennedy the day he got shot because he stopped at the U, gave a speech on his way to give the speech that night at California when he got killed. Many people, and I studied under professors because I took a minor in physics and didn't know anything about nuclear or anything. Well, he was actually a guest lecturer so I took a class from him and the experience was just unbelievable. Today I always think of things that happened and now when I go to the UW I always go to a class, one of those big lecture halls and sit in on a class. And yeah, it was probably the highlight of my life, really, to attend the UW and graduate school in California.

Tom: Yeah. Very nice journey.

Mike: Yeah.

Tom: Mike, now for the third part of our conversation here. You had brought up this idea and it sounds very interesting. You say that in 1953, at that time, most of the amateur championships in the area, such as the U.S. amateur, the Western Amateur, PPGA Men's Amateur Championship, they were all held as match play. And in 1953, the Stymie rule was eliminated and this had a significant impact on the strategy of match play and also other aspects of the game and competition, is that correct?

Mike: Yeah. There was a movement after WWII, right after the war, of the major golf associations in the world, the Australian Golf Association, the Canadian, Royal Canadian Golf Association, USGA, R&A they wanted to standardize the Rules of Golf so they began meeting in 1949 and by 1952 they had come up with a standardized set of rules, maybe a couple of items they couldn't agree on. And just as a sidelight, I was really lucky. I became friends with a gentleman named Mr. England. He was a really, really prominent Canadian lawyer and expert on the Rules of Golf. And he sat on this committee to standardize these rules. Well in his will, I guess I'd made an impression on him, he gave me all the minutes of these meetings.

Tom: Wow. That's a treasure right there.

Mike: Oh yeah. And I periodically look at these. And they argued over one word and one phrase for months back and forth, and you have to realize there were no computers, no emails. These were all letters from basically all lawyers who were sitting on this committee. Well, anyway, they did agree on eliminating the Stymie rule. For those who are not aware of the Stymie rule, this is it.

You and I are playing a match, and let's assume I'm not a very good golfer but you're a very good golfer. Well, this Stymie rule equalized us because once we got on the putting

green, I didn't have to mark my ball and they did have a rule, a six inch rule that if my ball lay within six inches of your ball, I had to mark. Or if my ball lay within six inches of the nearest part of the cup I had to mark it. Everybody had a six inch ruler, all the scorecards were six inches. And today in the collecting world, they're called the Stymie card. If you come across a scorecard and you measure it and it's six inches, probably it was pre-January 1st, 1953. So, you and I are on the putting green and we're on the green in even number of strokes or maybe you might even be one stroke better than me and I'm putting and I've got about a 15, 20 foot putt and there's no way I'm going to make it.

Well, what I'm going to do is leave my ball two or three feet away from the hole on your line, and you're dead. I don't care how good you are at jumping over my ball with a wedge, you're not going to get it in the hole. Well, you've basically lost the hole because you are going to putt. If you hit my ball, I win the hole and now you're going to have to putt away from the hole. I'm going to sink it and I've won the hole. So Vernon Macan, he was an expert at stymies. He carried a low handicap well through most of his life, actually a six or eight handicap and he loved laying these stymies on his opponents. Well, when they eliminated this Stymie rule January 1st, he wrote letters to everybody, the R&A, Joe Dey, the USGA, golf magazines, telling them that they had eliminated one of the subtleties of the golf game.

This Stymie rule equalized really good players and 7, 8, 9, 10 handicap players. And one of the characteristics of golf because basically all club events up until 1953 were all match play. There was very, very few stroke play competition. The only time, once a month, you had a medal competition and that established your handicap. But all the tournaments that you and I played, or we played in matches our club against you, they were all match play tournaments, it was all match since day one, really. And so this elimination of this Stymie rule really changed a lot of the tournaments. Very rarely after 1953 do you see situations where a plus-handicap is losing a match to a five-handicap, that's not going to happen, so this a really, really major change to the Rules of Golf.

Tom: What was the reasoning to eliminate this rule, other than just to trying to regulate the Rules of Golf all over the world, or was that the reason?

Mike: Well, there had been a movement and actually it had been eliminated periodically in the Western Golf Association who operated under basically different sets of rules than the USGA, they operated the Western Amateur, the Western Open. They were the first to introduce steel-shafted golf clubs as early as 1926, whereas the USGA didn't and RCGA and R&A didn't allow them until 1930. They eliminated the Stymie rule. As I think it was like 1928, but then they brought it back. There had been this movement, but even the reporters in the newspapers didn't like it. When the medalist in the U.S. Amateur lost in the first round to a guy there was no way he could beat normally, but he was good at stymies. He laid three stymies on this medalist. And so they wanted to eliminate this 5, 6, 10 handicapper knocking off these really good players in the first, second or third rounds of these tournaments so that was the basic reason for it.

Tom: Did this elimination of this rule, did it lead to other things? You mentioned something about changing the style of equipment as well.

Mike: Well, there were lots of major changes to the rules and I'm not a rules expert but the out of bounds was changed. Up until then, don't quote me, but where your ball went out of bounds you could drop your own ball and add one stroke there. And all the associations were not the same. Australia was different and even the PPGA was not the same. And one of the classic examples is I think it was the 1930 PPGA Women's Amateur at Shaughnessy. Vera Hutchings and her opponent agreed because in Canada, the Stymie rule for a short period had been eliminated. Well, they both got disqualified from the tournament when the PPGA realized they weren't playing the Stymie rule because they were playing USGA rules. There were lots of discrepancies around the world in these Rules of Golf and the R&A and the USGA they wanted to come to some standardization.

Well, one of really curious things is equipment. In 1904, Walter Travis won the British Amateur playing with a putter called "Disconnected E Putter" and he had been putting terrible up until this tournament. And a guy gave him this center-shafted putter, aluminum head putter. Well, he putted lights out and the British were livid so they immediately passed a rule, "We are not allowing any center-shafted putters in Britain. The putter shaft has to be attached at one end of the putter head or the other, not anywhere along the head." This center-shafted putter, you couldn't use them in Britain so when the Walker Cup team went over there, the Ryder Cup, they had to all of a sudden practice with these putters that were conformed to the rules. That rule was eliminated in 1953. They couldn't go on the diameter of the golf ball.

The British ball was still the ball of the rules in Britain so when the Walker Cup team went over, when the Ryder Cup team was playing, they had to play the small British ball. It wasn't until Arnold Palmer started going to the British Open, and I think his first British Open, don't quote me, but I think it was 1959. He had to play this small British ball and he didn't like it and he told them, "If you want me to come back here, I'm playing the American ball." And TV was now coming. In 1960, that was really the first year for TV really taking over golf and the Brits see that right away. "Oh, we got a problem here." And so they said, "Well, you can use either ball." The Americans all started using the American ball, and Palmer did.

Tom: I remember, even in the early 1970s, I don't know how but I came across a small British golf ball and it was a keepsake or something but it certainly wasn't being used regularly, but I had one in my possession and I remembered it was noticeably different. It was a different ball but it sounds like the transformation from, to the standardized ball happened in the early 1960s, is that correct?

Mike: Yeah. With the television. And Arnold Palmer, he laid it on the line. He wouldn't play in Britain unless he could use the American ball. Well, he had his army and he was starting to influence golf so the Brits came around. But I can remember my first trip to Scotland, 1974, playing at golf clubs and playing with members and everything. And they actually had, most local clubs had a local rule that you could change on the tee in the round and

I couldn't quite figure this out. Guys were carrying these, a big ball in a little ball. And I figured out very quickly, "Hey Mike, when the wind is behind you pull out the big ball." When I went to Scotland to play golf, I always had two balls in my pocket and even clubs allowed you to change balls during a hole.

Tom: Even during the round, that's amazing.

Mike: Those little balls on the putting green. But the big ball definitely flew longer. And the little ball after a while, I figured out, that if playing into the wind you had to keep it low. And so the small British ball, it worked perfectly. You got out a two iron, one iron, tee it up, basically hit a low liner hook and the ball ran forever. That was strategy, but that was even particular to many of the golf clubs. You could change your ball whenever you really felt like it.

Tom: Interesting. I wonder if, going way back when they had the gutta percha balls and the rubber core balls way back then, even the featheries, were they small as well, you think?

Mike: They varied in size. There was no restriction. This standardized ball came in, I would guess in the 1930s. But if we have collections of Bramble balls, mesh balls pre-1930 and it depended on the company. They are all kinds of sizes. And even the feather balls varied in size and weight. And some of the most collectible feather balls will say "Morris" and it'll have a number on it. And that's the size and the weight, it'll have two numbers and those are really super collectible. One is giving you the size and one is giving you the weight. Yeah, there was no standardization.

Tom: Interesting.

Mike: Just depended on what the player wanted to use. And Macan's biggest arguments, all the articles that he wrote for magazines during the 1920s, his favorite saying was, "If these golf associations don't standardize this golf ball and make it only go a certain distance, I will be renovating golf courses my entire life." And if you go to a Macan golf course that hasn't really been renovated a lot he had a little trick. Whenever you come off a green, you walk sideways or forward to the next tee because he always left land behind the present tee as undeveloped land, where that golf course, when these golf balls started going further and further and further, wouldn't have to change his fairway bunkers, they had land to move the tee back.

Tom: He was very forward thinking about that.

Mike: Oh yeah.

Tom: Yeah, he was very forward thinking in that. We're talking with Mike Riste again today. Mike is the curator for the BC Golf Museum, which is housed in the BC Golf House in Vancouver, British Columbia. And Mike, this is the third installment of our podcast for this year. This is the Centennial year for Washington Golf and also for the British Columbia Golf Association as well. We've had three topics today that we've discussed. One is the handicapping formalization and launching in the Seattle area. There was just

a collection of a group of clubs who got together and wanted to standardize their handicapping and founded by Ernie Jonson and his group. And they wanted to eventually bring it over to the USGA.

The second subject was the caddie scholarship. First, it was the Alex Rose Caddie Scholarship, which was started in 1948, and it eventually became the Evans Caddie Scholarship, which is still in existence today.

And also, which I thought was very interesting, the elimination of the Stymie rule on 1953 and all of its ramifications. These has been very interesting subjects, Mike, and thanks again for joining us today. And Mike, if you have other ideas, we can have a fourth installment as well because there's so much history in this area, as you know.

Mike: We will definitely have four or five or six because, first of all, I don't have a lot of research projects for the winter and there's so many intriguing little stories. We should start off with one of my favorite stories, because it's dealing with a Canadian pro, the first USGA Senior Open was played in Spokane. I think it was at Manito, and sponsored by the Athletic Round Table, they supplied the money. Gene Sarazen was the favorite. Everybody thought he would win. But Fred Wood, the pro at Shaughnessy Golf Club, tied him. And because Sarazen was so influential in golf at that time, he said, "Well, we'll just have a sudden death playoff." Well Wood beat him in the sudden death playoff. And that's one of the favorite stories I like to tell about Freddy Wood. He loved telling that story.

Tom: What year was that, Mike?

Mike: 1958. That was Senior USGA Open. I think Sarazen lost again in Portland the next year too. I have to check on that. But yeah, there's so many stories, and because Washington state is celebrating its anniversary, I'll do some research. There must be some really cool stories with regard to Washington State Golf Association that we can come up with and talk about. I know I did learn, which I didn't realize, a Canadian actually won the 1957 Washington State Amateur. Gordon McKenzie, he was a really good junior. He finished second in two Canadian juniors. Didn't realize he had gone to Seattle University and while there he actually won the Washington State Amateur. Yeah, Steve Berry, I don't know if he still holds the course record for the lowest round ever in the Washington State Amateur but I know he did until a few years ago. He shot 62, I believe at Kitsap.

Tom: Wow.

Mike: Proud of that. There's lots of stories but I think the next podcast we'll deal with Washington State Golf Association. We'll come up with some stories.

Tom: Mike Riste again, thanks so much for joining us today. And again, Mike is the curator of the BC Golf Museum and also the official historian for the Pacific Northwest Golf Association. Thanks again, Mike. And I'm sure we'll be in touch again soon.

Speaker 2: Good, good. Have a great day.