

Tom Cade: Hello, this is Pod for the Course, and I'm Tom Cade, the director of communications for Washington Golf. Last year, 2022, was the centennial of the Washington State Golf Association, which is now known as Washington Golf. And we began a series of podcasts with Mike Riste, who is the lead volunteer historian for the BC Golf Museum, which is housed at BC Golf House in Vancouver, British Columbia. He's also the official historian for the Pacific Northwest Golf Association, and we started a series of podcasts with him. Actually, we didn't know it was going to become a series. We started with one, and more subjects kept popping up because the more we got into the history of golf in the region, the more we wanted to talk about it. And today we have again joining with us, Mike Riste, to talk about another episode. This is now the sixth in a series of podcasts with Mike. Mike, thanks again for coming on with us today.

Mike Riste: Oh, my pleasure. Bon Stein is, I guess you could say the overlooked champion.

Tom Cade: Today we are going to talk about Bon Stein. And Bon won the inaugural Washington State Men's Amateur Championship in 1922. He won actually four of the first five of those championships. And as Mike just said, the more he got into the history of Bon Stein, the more he realized that he is a bit of an overlooked champion. But during his heyday, he was the man on the golf course. Is that right, Mike?

Mike Riste: Oh, yeah, definitely. He had a very short career, mainly because of the crash in the stock market in 1929. And so his career basically was 1920 to '28, '29. It was a very, very short career and we'll probably talk about that. And I had things that I don't quite understand why he was put in such a very poor financial condition after the crash in '29. Why A.S. Kerry or one of these people didn't step up and made sure he had a job? Totally confused.

Tom Cade: So Bon Stein, his first name is actually Bronson, but his nickname was Bon. He was born in Seattle in 1899. His parents were of German descent and they arrived in Seattle in 1888. And according to your records here that I'm looking at, that you put together about him, his father was probably a painter or a decorator of some kind. Is that right?

Mike Riste: When you look at the census, when people or painters, paper hangers basically worked on the interior decorating of a house, they had all kinds of terms. And it seemed like every census they changed it, but it was basically the same. He probably decorated with wallpaper and paint and plaster. And until he died, that was his main profession.

Tom Cade: So I guess in looking at that background, Bon did not come from wealth. His parents were very much working class, and I think Bon got his start in golf, looks like as a caddie. That's how he got into it.

Mike Riste: Yeah, he caddied at a golf club. And he ran into a little problem, which I find very interesting. Most people listening, I'm sure weren't aware that basically up until the early 1920s, if a youngster caddied at a golf club, once he turned 16, he had to quit caddying if he wanted to play amateur golf. And Stein ran into that problem when he turned 16 because he continued to caddie. I assume the family needed the money, and the USGA took his amateur status away. That got increased to age 18, 19, and you could

caddie until you reached your 19th birthday. And that lasted well into the 1930s. Stan Leonard, he ran into a problem in 1932 at the BC Amateur when he won. And before they gave him the trophy, his mother had to produce his birth certificate to prove he was only 18 because as he was still caddying. So Stein ran into the same problem. So he had to quit caddying and working in Johnstone's pro shop.

Tom Cade: So that's Robert Johnstone's pro shop there at Seattle Golf Club. So Bon Stein was a caddie at Seattle Golf Club?

Mike Riste: Yes. He started there and then as soon as he turned 17, 18, it appears that he went and joined Jefferson Park GC and became part of the Big Four.

Tom Cade: And the Big Four, they were four young men, very good golfers, but all four of them were public players. Bon Stein was one, Clare Griswold, Lee Stiel and Clark Spiers. Is that correct?

Mike Riste: Right. Yes. They actually dominated, even though they belonged to Jefferson, a public golf course, they dominated the area in Seattle, extremely good players. And they won the Davis Cup in 1919, which was a four-man team competition, 18 holes gross score. And that trophy had been donated by the Davis family to the PPGA to create this team competition. And it was held the first 18 holes of the qualifying for the PPGA Men's Amateur, much like the Willingdon Cup matches. Yeah.

Tom Cade: And the Davis Cup consisted mostly of private club players, is that right?

Mike Riste: Absolutely. All through the early years before Jefferson and before this team of Big Four. And I think when I looked up the winners, I think this was the only time, in fact, I'm sure that a public golf course team won, and the tournament ended in 1929. There were a lot of problems in the late 1920s with regard to Calcuttas. They were betting on players. So the Davis Cup competition ended.

Tom Cade: Yeah, so it was kind of a leading question just because as I understand it, when those four public players won that Davis Cup match, the Seattle Golf Club, they made them honorary members of Seattle Golf Club. Even though they were just caddies basically, and public players. But they made them honorary members of Seattle Golf Club. So they essentially became private club players from then on, is that right?

Mike Riste: Yeah, except for Griswold, he was the first one to break up the group. In 1920, he moved to Spokane. So that was the end of the Big Four at Jefferson. And yes, all became members of Seattle Golf Club. Stein and Lee Stiel, they dominated Seattle Men's Club championships. And I think somewhere in my notes, for about 30, they either finished as a finalist or won it. And I found it kind of interesting that in the 1930s there was another "Big Four" composed of Harry Givan, Scotty Campbell, Johnny Shields, and Lee Stiel. He was the only surviving from the original Big Four.

Tom Cade: So, Bon Stein, he gets his amateur status taken away from him when he was 16 years old, that was probably 1914, 1915. Does he get his amateur status back? How did that happen? Is there any record of that?

Mike Riste: The news clipping said that within six months he had got it back. And I assume Bob Johnstone, because he was probably the most influential, or maybe A.S. Kerry. He had quit a pro shop, he quit caddying. So I would imagine one of them spoke up to the USGA and said, "Look, he's quit everything." So they gave it back, but then he ran into another problem in the early 1920s.

Tom Cade: What's that?

Mike Riste: With his amateur status.

Tom Cade: What was that? What happened with that?

Mike Riste: Well, all the major players had a big problem. Even Francis Ouimet, Chandler Egan. The USGA came up with the idea in 1918 that anyone working in the golf industry was going to be declared a pro. For example, if you were an architect, then you were going to lose your amateur status. At this time, from 1917 through '21 or '22, Stein was working for AG Spalding selling golf clubs. So, they had to take his amateur status away again.

I believe A.V. Macan didn't go on the 1921 Kerry's Raiders team east because there was a question about his amateur status. He was an architect. So George Von Elm, in 1922, he won the PNGA Men's Amateur at Colwood. He was called the "Gentleman Business Golfer." And he took the USGA to court and he won, and that was the end of that, they didn't go anywhere. And I don't know whether Ouimet or anybody actually lost their status, but the USGA was threatening them. And so Stein quit AG Spalding, and the city directories in Seattle said that he worked as a clerk in a department store until about 1925, '26. And then he's listed as a salesman selling bonds. But at the USGA, they were pretty strict about this amateur status.

Tom Cade: Very strict. So Stein gets his amateur status back again, even after that second situation with him being a golf club salesman. And he does play in the... like I say, he wins the 1922 Washington State Amateur. He wins it again in '23. He's the finalist in 1924. Then he wins it again in '25 and again in '26 and excuse me, also the Seattle City amateur champion, one, two, three, four, five, six times in the early 1920s.

Mike Riste: Yeah, six times in seven years.

Tom Cade: Yeah.

Mike Riste: He dominated Seattle golf. And somewhere I listed the years he was ranked No. 1, 2 and 3, a couple of times two and three on the coast, 1922, '23. And basically through all the early 1920s when Alex Rose published, he was the No. 1 player in Seattle.

Tom Cade: He does go up into BC though it looks like, he does play in the BC Men's Amateur Championship. He's medalist one, two, three, four, five, six times in the 1920s. He does win it in 1925 and was a finalist in 1928. So he did cross the border and did well up there in BC as well.

Mike Riste: Yeah, I think one way to describe his career, and also I found a little note, I always try and figure out with these really good players who influenced them, to influence their golf game. And Bon credited A.V. Macan who was one of the best players up until 1921, '22 in the Northwest. And that might have been one reason why he was always a participant for a decade in the BC Men's Amateur. He was a very loyal supporter from Seattle. Chuck Hunter was a good supporter, but not as much as Bon Stein. And I think when looking at Stein's career, he definitely was an incredible medal player. I'm not sure if he was a great match player because he shot some incredible rounds in these medal rounds. There's instances where he wins by 16 strokes, 15 strokes. He was apt to shoot 66 in the Northwest in a tournament. A few professionals had already done it, but he definitely posted some very, very low scores. And looking at where he won these championships, these medals, Seattle Amateur, he definitely was pretty unbeatable at Seattle Golf Club.

Tom Cade: That's interesting that you compare his medal play against his match play. Look, that would bear out in these statistics that you put together in the BC Men's Amateur. He was medalist, like I said, six times. He only won it once. And in the PNGA Men's Amateur, he was medalist three times but never won it.

Mike Riste: It's characteristic. There's quite a few players who could shoot really incredible low medal rounds, but for some reason or another they weren't the greatest at match play. He was second in Northwest Open to Phil Taylor. He lost by one stroke. And Taylor, I forget, I think he was 10 under par and Stein was nine under, and the next players were like four or five strokes back. So he was certainly capable and he was a low amateur in a lot of the Northwest Opens and Washington State Opens. I just didn't bother, once it was more than three or four below, I didn't keep track. Even though sometimes in the 10th spot he was the low amateur in the tournament.

Tom Cade: In the Western Amateur, I know that, again, you mentioned something about Kerry's Raiders, which is a team of players that A.S. Kerry put together to try to establish the quality of players in the Northwest on a national level. And part of that was to challenge the players from over in the east coast area. And the Western Amateur at the time, it was easily on par with the U.S. Amateur as far as prominence. And I know that Stein, looks like he was the finalist in the Western Amateur in 1926 and then won it in 1927 when it was held at Seattle Golf Club.

Mike Riste: And in the research, it's very interesting, I'm always looking for one thing. And there was a lot of competition between the Western Golf Association and the United States Golf Association. And Kerry sat on both executive committees. And Kerry always advocated when he was wearing his Western Golf Association cap that the Western Amateur was equivalent to the U.S. Amateur. Therefore, both of those players should be on the Walker Cup – and they weren't. When Stein was runner-up in 1926, in '27 he won. He

was considered (for the team), but he was only considered out of 10 players for the final three spots. And Kerry was pretty upset that he wasn't on the Walker Cup.

They even went so far as had in different interpretations of the Stymie rule. Western Golf would omit it, USGA would keep it in effect. They were always arguing over when to introduce steel shafted golf clubs. So sometimes in Western tournaments you could play with steel, but you couldn't in USGA tournaments. There was always a conflict between those two organizations. And it's too bad because Stein should have been on the Walker Cup in 1928 after he'd won the Western Amateur in 1927.

Tom Cade: And really throughout the whole 1920s, again, I'm looking at the bio that you put together about him. He was just a dominant force in the 1920s, not only in Seattle, but looks like across the region. And again, winning the Western Amateur in 1927, that's a national championship really is what it was.

Mike Riste: Oh, absolutely. He defeated Helm in the final, and Helm was the U.S. Amateur champion, one of the best players in the United States, and he beat him on his Stymie on the 35th hole. Stein was, oh God, 40 feet away, there was no way he was going to sink it. And he laid his Stymie on Helm, and Helm picked up his ball. I love it when those happen.

Tom Cade: So the Stymie rule, let's talk about that for just a second. When did that go away? And first of all, just explain what it is to people out there who don't know what this Stymie rule used to be. And then what year did it go away?

Mike Riste: Okay, so the Stymie rule is only in match play, and Macan was an expert at it, he practiced it. So you and I are playing a match and I'm on the green, 40 feet from the hole, and you're three feet from the hole. Well, it's highly unlikely I'm going to sink that putt, but I can leave my ball between your ball and the cup and I don't have to mark it. So now how are you going to jump over me into the hole to win? And usually it was for a tie, or in some instances the guy who laid the Stymie actually won the hole when it was impossible. So it was a real strategy playing match play to lay these Stymies.

And so the rule was that... and all the scorecards were six inches and it had a little ruler on one side saying six inches. So here's the rule, if I lay my ball within six inches from the edge of the hole closest to my ball, I have to mark it. Or if I lay my Stymie within six inches of your ball, I have to mark it. Anywhere else in between, it's a Stymie. And these guys had to practice using a Niblick, a Mashie to jump their ball over the Stymies and put it in the hole. And some of them got very good at it. And there was actually a Stymie putter, flat on one side and you turn the head, so it was about a 45 degree loft. And we actually have one in the museum, and I go out to putting green quite often and take it and I can make the ball jump over and put it in the hole. It's actually quite easy.

So anyway, in 1951, the USGA and the R&A, they had several rules that were different. One was center-shafted putters. The R&A would not allow you in any of their competitions to use a center-shafted putter, and the USGA allowed it. The Stymie rule, by then the USGA had pretty well eliminated before the war. So they met, they each had

a committee, they met to standardize the rules of golf, standardize the weight and diameter of the golf ball, what kind of clubs, the Stymie rule. And they finalized it, and it came into effect on January 1st, 1953. Well, that's the day the Stymie rule was eliminated forever. And Macan, I have his correspondence, he wrote letter after letter to the USGA to the R&A telling them they had done the worst thing in the world when they eliminated the Stymie. They took away all the element of strategy and match play. He was livid about them eliminating the Stymie rule, but it never came back.

Tom Cade: So on in 1927 at the Western Amateur, Stein won the Western Amateur on Stymie, on the 35th hole of the match. Is that right?

Mike Riste: Oh yeah. He was 1-up and it appeared that he would lose the hole. He had played it quite badly actually. And by laying the Stymie, Helm just picked up his ball and basically conceded the match. There was no way, I guess, he felt that he could pop it over and put it in the hole. So it ended on a Stymie. At the 1950 Canadian Amateur, Bill Mawhinney laid seven Stymies in the final on his opponent and he won the Canadian Amateur. But it was a real strategy. When I worked at Capilano as a caddie and worked in the shop, we used to play Stymies on the putting green for quarters all the time. It was lots of fun. And you got really good at taking a wedge and just chipping it over and putting it in the hole.

Tom Cade: So was there a penalty if you hit the other person's ball?

Mike Riste: Oh yeah. Yep, definitely.

Tom Cade: So that was the effect of the Stymie. So in other words, you couldn't putt it and then hit the other ball out of the way because if you hit the ball, it's a penalty stroke. Yeah?

Mike Riste: Yeah. You couldn't hit a billiard shot. You had to jump right over. And most instances you had to put it in the hole to save at least a tie. In some instances, if they tried it and they chipped it, they may have ended up further away than the Stymie ball, and then they lost the hole. So just depended on the lay of the green. But it was a real strategy, these Stymies in the history of golf in 1850s, '60s, '70s. You read these great stories about Willie Park and Tom Morris having to overcome these Stymies because everything was match play.

Tom Cade: Speaking of match play and medal play, when did, and *why* did, medal play become more of the norm in competition? I know that many of the amateur championships are still held in match play. U.S Amateur is match play, British Amateur is match play, things like that. But most of the... in fact, I think all of the professional events are stroke play now, medal play. What is the difference and why?

Mike Riste: Well, it's mainly time. In 1960 when television came, they couldn't have these matches going on for 40, 50 holes. They could only have the golf for a finite amount of time, so therefore they could predict when this tournament would end. You may have a one or two hole playoff, and then in the majors you had an 18 the next day. So that was one reason. The other reason was that these golf clubs were not in favor of giving up their

golf course for 10 days to hold these matches. Because usually in the U.S. Amateur, Canadian Amateur, they had all these flights. PPGA, Men's Amateur, Women's Amateur, you lost in the first round, then you went into the first flight. You lost in that flight, you went to the even-number flight. These golf courses were tied up with the practice rounds, the qualifying rounds for a week.

And the golf clubs just refused to do it. They wanted a very finite five, six, usually five days tournament, and then it's over, the course goes back to the members. And these tournaments, also in the Western Amateur, I was shocked. I think there were like 300 people trying to qualify for that event. Oh God, they must have gone off in the middle of the night, in the morning and finished in the dark at night. How did they get them all off on one golf course? And then another thing that confused me, and I don't know the answer, but even a Washington State Amateur on these nine-hole golf courses, how did they get 140, 130 players playing on a nine-hole golf course?

Tom Cade: Yeah.

Mike Riste: Basically it just doesn't make sense.

Tom Cade: In fact, like you said earlier in a previous podcast, the Washington State Amateur was held specifically on nine-hole courses for the first several years.

Mike Riste: Oh, absolutely. That's why the Washington State Amateur was formed, because these nine-hole golf courses, they needed to make money. And the PPGA Amateur, wow, golf courses, they would do anything to host the PPGA because you were going to have 300, 400 people attend this event. So can you imagine the hotel business, the restaurant business, the booze, and there may have only been 150 players, but it was a gathering. So Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, and the PPGA got down to it, only limited it to a very small number of golf courses that were allowed to host it. And that's one reason why the Washington State Amateur, Yakima, Earlington, Longview, Grays Harbor, they wanted in on the action. So they would hold the Washington State Amateur and they knew they were going to have spectators, maybe 200 people there. Well, for these little towns, that was a gold mine. So that was one really, really major factor why this Washington State Golf Association was really formed.

Tom Cade: And again, those courses that you just mentioned, at the time, they were nine-hole courses, and the hope was that they could generate some income and revenue and publicity to be able to expand to 18 holes.

Mike Riste: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. And they wanted the revenue. And then later, of course, in the 1950s, I think most courses, I forget the very last nine-hole golf course that hosted the Washington State Amateur. But if I was going to make a guess, it was probably in the early 1930s, after that, 18. But these, I don't like to call them secondary courses, but not as prominent as Seattle Golf Club, Inglewood, Rainier, Spokane, they were then 18-hole golf courses and they hosted the Washington State Amateur.

Tom Cade: So let's talk about the 1922 Washington State Amateur with Bon Stein winning that. Earlier that year, that summer, he was the finalist at the PPGA Men's Amateur Championship and A.S. Kerry, at the time, he was president of the PPGA. And he also was one of the people who was involved with forming and organizing the first Washington State Amateur there in 1922 at Yakima Country Club. And he was instrumental in getting some of the PPGA players to play in the Washington State Amateur, which is why Bon Stein was there. Is that right?

Mike Riste: Yes. Kerry wrote the constitution for the Washington State Golf Association. He was a big proponent in getting these nine-hole golf courses involved. He was a really forward thinker. I don't know what would've happened in this Northwest if Kerry hadn't been active in the 1900s and the '20s. They needed somebody who could organize and take the reins and start this thing. And I don't know who else it would've been. So his contribution is unbelievable. So he starts the Washington State Amateur, and because of his influence at Seattle Golf Club style, all of the players played, I'm sure all he would've had to say is, "Look, we need players." There was one little fact that I had never seen before: Kerry donated the first trophy to the Washington State Amateur.

Tom Cade: It's called the Kerry Cup. Yeah.

Mike Riste: Exactly. So here's the story, which I had no idea and I almost missed it. It was not an individual trophy, it was a club trophy. So here's what happened. Here was one of the prerequisites when he donated the trophy: if a member of a golf club won it three times, the trophy was retired. So Bon Stein, being a member of the Seattle Golf Club, he won it three times, '22, '23, and '25. In 1925, that trophy became the property of the Seattle Golf Club. The trophy also become the property of the Seattle Golf, even if Stein, Steil or somebody else had won it. The rule was you just had to belong to the same club for three times and the club got to keep the trophy. Back then, the rule was that you must engrave the trophy with the names of the members of the club who won it. Well, Stein's name appears on it. And that trophy is in the clubhouse in the locker room at the Seattle Golf Club.

Tom Cade: It's still there?

Mike Riste: Up until... I looked in my notes, because once I saw that, then I remembered I found the Kerry Cup at Seattle, but I also found the Davis Cup at Seattle Golf Club, and I never put the story together. So the trophy we saw at Tacoma was this, and the one that appears in the WA Golf centennial book, and I think the one that appears in your book is the one at the Tacoma Country and Golf Club.

Tom Cade: Yes, that's correct.

Mike Riste: Okay. So here's the story. Nobody replaced the Kerry Cup and the Washington State Golf Association then followed what the PPGA did. The PPGA, for every year until 1947, for their championships produced a set of trophies for all their events. So let's take for example, 1922 at Royal Colwood. All those trophies had the insignia of Royal Colwood. So every year there was a separate set of trophies.

Tom Cade: So there were no perpetual trophies? They had individual trophies every year?

Mike Riste: That's right. There was no such thing as a perpetual trophy until 1947. And I'll tell you what happened in '47. So your picture in your Washington centennial book says this, "1928, Grays Harbor," but it doesn't have the name of the winner who won it. I know who it was, it was Chuck Hunter. He was a member of the Tacoma Country and Golf Club. So from then on the Washington State Golf Association followed the same practice as the PNGA. Every trophy was marked where the tournament was held, the year of the winner and the place to engrave the name of the winner. So what happened in 1947? Vernon Macan was the secretary of the PNGA and he donates his 1913 trophy that he won in 1913 at Butte, Montana.

Tom Cade: When he won the PNGA Men's Amateur in 1913 there.

Mike Riste: And he also said, "I will donate my trophy on one condition. That you engrave winners of every PNGA Men's Amateur from now on." And that became the first perpetual trophy, I think, for the PNGA. We already know the Bostock Cup was always a perpetual trophy for the BC Men's Amateur. I'm not sure about the Oregon Men's Amateur, but for the PNGA, that was the first perpetual trophy. From then on, they just gave little keepers crystal or whatever every year, and engraved their name on the Macan Cup.

Tom Cade: You're right. It's now called the Macan Cup for the PNGA Men's Amateur. And yeah, the winner each year gets their own individual keeper trophy, it's usually a crystal, and their name goes on the perpetual Macan Cup trophy. You're right.

Mike Riste: But the reason it's got the Butte Country Club insignia on it is because all the trophies for any particular PNGA tournament all have the insignia of the host club. And when I interviewed Mrs. Herron McDougal, downstairs, she had a wall, 20 feet long, eight feet high and shelves every three feet. And every PNGA trophy had the insignia of the club that hosted the tournament.

Tom Cade: Wow.

Mike Riste: Yeah. And you couldn't get another trophy on the shelves.

Tom Cade: They were full.

Mike Riste: So that's the story of the Kerry Cup, the original Kerry Cup, according to my notes. And next time I go to the Seattle Golf Club, I'm going to make sure that that original Kerry Cup is in the Seattle Golf Club where it should be, and the Davis Trophy. The Davis Trophy is incredible. Two foot, I think, 16 inch deep solid silver punch bowl.

Tom Cade: Wow.

Mike Riste: It's absolutely incredible. I've never seen anything like that. Yeah.

Tom Cade: Well, I know that the Seattle Golf Club, they're coming up on their 125th year anniversary in 2025. And I have an idea they're going to be putting some information together for that year. So it would be very interesting to find out if they do have those two trophies on hand still. Because I would think that you'd be correct that they would still have that somewhere, both of those trophies.

Mike Riste: Oh, yeah. I'd be shocked if they didn't. Mr. Esvelt (Seattle Golf Club general manager), he accumulated trophies. I found some Seattle Golf Club trophies for them, and he bought them up in a minute. He accumulated a lot of memorabilia. I don't know the new manager, I've never met him, or whether that policy is still in effect, but Esvelt definitely had a blank check to buy any Seattle Golf Club memorabilia.

Tom Cade: Wow. Yeah, they do have a new general manager there at Seattle Golf Club, so it would be interesting to see if they have kept up with that desire to maintain all the memorabilia.

Mike Riste: Yeah.

Tom Cade: You have a question here about does the Washington State Amateur have its own perpetual trophy? And it does, it's the same thing now as the PPGA Men's Amateur, the Washington State Men's Amateur. They do have a large perpetual trophy, it's actually called the John M. Bodenhamer Trophy, named after Mr. Bodenhamer who was the executive director for 21 years. And it's now at the UGSA staff. And it's the same thing that each winner each year gets their own keeper trophy, a crystal trophy of some kind, and then their name goes on the perpetual trophy, which is kept in the office of Washington Golf.

Mike Riste: And did they put every name back to '22 on the trophy?

Tom Cade: They did. It goes back, it starts in 1922 now. Yeah.

Mike Riste: Perfect. Fantastic.

Tom Cade: Yeah. And what year they started that, a perpetual trophy for that championship, I'm not sure of that though. I don't know when they started that.

Mike Riste: It must be recent if it's named after John.

Tom Cade: And I don't know who donated it. I don't know who. That would be something to find out though.

Mike Riste: An interesting question. I'll have to research that.

Tom Cade: Yeah.

Mike Riste: I'll try and find the most recent photo of the winner holding a trophy and then we can compare it to one you have.

Tom Cade: Yeah.

Mike Riste: Because that was a fairly common photo that appeared in the newspapers.

Tom Cade: So let's go back to Bon Stein for just a minute. In 1925, he won the Washington State Amateur again, and he shot 66 in the morning round of the final match. A 66. That was the lowest score by an amateur ever posted in a Northwest championship. And in 1925, what kind of clubs were they using, Mike?

Mike Riste: Hickories, good old hickory, unmatched. And there's a story that we definitely have to tell before the end, in 1936. I have read the clipping over and over, and I can just imagine him appearing at this Michigan State Publinx Tournament in Detroit. But he had this mishmash of clubs in 1925, '26 he would've had Walter Hagan's bag that Walter Hagan used in the 1924 British Open, that he won. He played an exhibition match in Seattle, and for some reason or another, he gave the bag to Bon Stein. And Stein, obviously, according to the 1936 story, kept it all these years. And to me, when I came across the '36 story, I couldn't believe it. So we'll definitely have to fit it in.

Tom Cade: We definitely will. So let's go forward a little bit with Bon Stein. Throughout the 1920s, he was just a shooting star on the golf scene. And you mentioned that he was working, in the late '20s anyway, as a bond salesman on the stock market, as a stockbroker. And in 1929, when the stock market crashed, he lost everything. Is that right?

Mike Riste: Yep, that's right. Yep. In 1930 census, he's listed as unemployed. When I saw that, I thought, "Oh my God, he's a member at Seattle Golf Club, he's put that golf club on the map for a decade. He shot some incredible rounds. A.S. Kerry is building all these champions. What happened? Why didn't Kerry, or C.F. Smith, why didn't somebody at that golf club give him a cushy job? They all owned companies." And then in 1934, he appears unemployed looking for work in Detroit, Michigan, and gets this job on the assembly line at the Ford Motor Company. What happened?

Tom Cade: Again, how would he go to Detroit? Did he know somebody? Did he have family there? He wasn't married at the time.

Mike Riste: All his family, his four sisters and his older brother, they all lived in Seattle their entire life. They all died in Seattle, in King County. His older brother, Wilhelm, brought Bon's body back when he died. He's buried in the cemetery. He was, for three months, in the Navy in 1918, October to November. And he's buried in the naval cemetery in north Seattle. I forget which one it is. But I have no idea why he ended up in Detroit. That's why I'm trying to track down a nephew to the youngest sister. She died in 2002 in Seattle. Haven't found her obit yet, so I don't know the names of her children, but I'll track her down. There's got to be one of the children alive in Seattle. Maybe one of them will be able to answer the mystery. What happened in Seattle?

Tom Cade: Yeah, yeah. And really, all his ties were there. He was born there, his history was there, all his successes were there. And suddenly he shows up in an Ann Arbor, Michigan working on the assembly line of the Ford Motor Company.

- Mike Riste: Yeah. In 1950s working in Ford Motor Company on shipping and receiving. Minor jobs. Minimal pay. It totally confuses me. Yeah. I feel sorry for him. What happened? I can't believe Kerry wouldn't have bailed him out. It didn't make sense. Something definitely happened.
- Tom Cade: So he's in Michigan, and you mentioned, in 1936, he shows up at the Michigan Public Links Championship on the first tee with a set of hickory-shafted clubs. What's that about?
- Mike Riste: Well, the article is incredible. This guy, and I can just imagine he was a very dapper dresser. He always had beautiful plus-fours, beautiful colors, immaculately dressed, with his hickory, he always carried them. So I can just imagine him sauntering in argyle socks with this mishmash of clubs from the 1920s. Everybody's wondering, "Who the heck is this?" They don't know how old he is. He looks like he's in his mid-30s, which he was. And he goes out and shoots 67 in the first round, and he doesn't show up for the second round.
- Tom Cade: He what? He doesn't show up for the next round?
- Mike Riste: No, he shoots the 67, goes home and never plays again. I did a word search on Detroit News through his entire lifetime that he lived there. He never, as far as I can tell, ever played another round of golf. He doesn't show up at any club events. He doesn't show up in the newspaper except when he died. So the reporter for Detroit News, about a week later, he writes this story, "Who was Bon Stein?" Big headline. So I guess the reporter had found out from somebody that he was from Seattle. So he phoned the Seattle Times and finds out who he was and writes this incredible article. 1927 Western Amateur Champion. And basically the whole record that we show all the medalist rounds, and this incredible player with this mishmash of hickories, never played the golf course before, goes out and pulls a 67 and never comes back.
- Tom Cade: This is a bit of a mystery to... just, first of all, why did he go to Michigan at all? And he just kind of gave up the game and kind of a bit of a mystery man anyway, and shows up there and shoots 67 and then disappears again.
- Mike Riste: Well, he did give an interview in 1930 to Alex Rose. Rose wanted to know why he wasn't playing in the city amateur, why he had kind of gone off the golf scene. And he told Rose that his business, selling bonds, he was devoting all his efforts to it and he didn't have time to practice, didn't have time to play. And I buy it. And that's why you see around 1929 he was a medalist in the BC Men's Amateur and medalist and the PNGA. And then in 1930 he doesn't play in anything. The question is, did he do it because of his job?
- He basically, according to the census, didn't have a job, told Alex Rose, that he just didn't have time to... was he embarrassed about his financial position? And is that why he left Seattle, hoping that in one of these big auto plants in Michigan, he would find a job? That's the only reasoning I can come up with. He didn't win the Seattle Golf Club 1930 Men's Club Championship. Basically, if you do a word search on The Seattle Times,

his name does not appear in any Seattle Times newspaper article in the Sports page in 1930. He just basically dropped out. He didn't play in the city or PNGA or BC Amateur.

Tom Cade: So in Michigan, he does get married, but then he retires from Ford Motor Company in 1955 due to illness, and I'm assuming that's because of his weak heart. And then he passes away in 1966.

Mike Riste: Yes, in Ann Arbor, and he's married, they have no children and it appears his wife, even though she was divorced, I believe she had no children appear or anything. So the big question is, which is always my question: his 1926 medalist trophy for the BC Men's Amateur at Jericho did appear for sale in an auction in Florida about a decade ago. I got to \$750 and I couldn't justify paying any more money. So I dropped out and then I said, "Why the heck? This trophy wasn't even sterling silver, what on earth attracted the people to bid on it?" And of course, I don't know who got it, but the biggest question is every one of these medalists, he got a medal. Look at all the memorabilia he must have accumulated, and none of it has shown up except for this 1926 medalist trophy. So where is it?

Tom Cade: And so I wonder about his sisters and his brother, they're probably not living any longer, I would assume. It's a long time ago.

Mike Riste: I have all their death certificates and his brother died at 76 in 1990s, his three sisters died and his youngest sister, she died in 2002. They all died in King County, they're all buried in King County. So the key right now is to go find all the obits, find all the names of the nieces and nephews associated with these families. I think one sister never married, I think the second oldest sister. And contact them, see if somebody has a whole pile of memorabilia.

Tom Cade: Okay. Mike Riste, we've been talking today about the meteoric playing career of Bon Stein in the Seattle region and beyond. He had quite a record throughout the 1920s, including four Washington State Men's Amateur Championships, numerous club championships, 1927 Western Amateur title. He was just a shooting star for a decade throughout the region, and then he disappeared. Moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, works on the assembly line at Ford Motor Company and just plays a little bit from then on, but that's it. His career was really about a 10 or 12 year span, looks like, in the early part of the 20th century.

Mike Riste: Yeah. And I'll always refer to him now as the overlooked champion. He's not in any hall of fame, basically I would guess that anybody listening to this broadcast will be shocked who this guy was, this incredible record. And hopefully when the Pacific Northwest Golf Hall of Fame selection meeting reconvenes, or whenever they meet again, his record will come up. And hopefully, even though it's long, long, long overdue, hopefully we can get him into the PNGA Hall of Fame.

Tom Cade: Well, I think he seems to be certainly worth at least being nominated for that. Yeah.

Mike Riste: Oh, absolutely. And the record is here, so I'm leaving the little task to you to Tom, to give a record to whoever's in charge now and hopefully can rectify this somewhere down the road and hopefully by then find a relative.

Tom Cade: Again, we've been talking today with Mike Riste, the official historian for the Pacific Northwest Golf Association. And also the volunteer lead curator at the BC Golf Museum, which is housed in the BC Golf House in Vancouver, British Columbia. This is been the sixth, so far, in a series of podcasts that we've been doing on the history of golf in the region, spurred on by the centennial history of Washington State Golf Association, now called Washington Golf. Mike, thanks so much for coming on again today, and I'm sure that we'll come up with some other topics to keep this series going.

Mike Riste: Yes. And I've been thinking of one, well, of course, we should probably do one on Harry Givan because he won the next most championships in the Washington State Amateur. Also, a lot of these golf clubs in Washington, and more so in Washington, I think, than Oregon, definitely none in BC, they financed their operations through slot machines in the 1930s, and I wonder if that wouldn't be a really interesting story.

Tom Cade: Well, I know that several clubs had slot machines in their clubhouse as well.

Mike Riste: That's right. They all did, I think. And the pro at Allenmore, Don Mojean, I think he actually has in his collection, two of them. And that's how the club raised money to keep in business in the 1930s. I think his came from, oh, if I remember, Allenmore and Grays Harbor, I think. And they were used for years, even into the 1970s. Well, let's see, in the '70s, when I went to Scotland, played lots of golf in Scotland, you could go into any clubhouse and play a slot machine, which I found incredible. And the prize was usually golf balls. You put a... it wasn't a shilling, the coin below a shilling, you put it in, pulled the lever, you got three fruit or something, and you got a golf ball. So in Scotland, they were used even into the 1970s and '80s. So I thought the other night, I'm going to type in, "Slot machines," into some of these newspapers that I have access to, and maybe we can create a story.

Tom Cade: Yeah, there we go. We'll look forward to that one.

Mike Riste: Yeah.

Tom Cade: Thanks again, Mike, for coming on with us today, and we will talk again soon, to talk more about the history of golf in Washington and throughout the Pacific Northwest.