

Excerpts from Fred Schwender article "The 18<sup>th</sup> Fairway", as told to Don Duncan

Fred lives in Olympia, 2014



Perhaps my love of golf was inevitable. My parents, Fred and Ethel Schwender met at Seattle's Jefferson Park Golf Club, where my father was caddy master.

After a year in Seattle's north end, my mother and I returned to our Beacon Hill home in Seattle's south end, much to my father's delight, and I resumed golfing at the nearby Jefferson golf course. I also began testing my skills against boys my age in junior golf tournaments.

As a 14-year-old freshman at Cleveland High School, I made the golf team. By the time I graduated in 1944 I had earned a letter all four years and long been the team's No. 1 golfer. I was also fortunate enough to be named every year to the all-City High School Golf Team.

In 1943, as a 17-year-old high-school junior, I entered the King County Match Play Tournament's qualifying round at Maplewood golf course, qualified and moved on to the main tournament at West Seattle golf course. In the quarter-finals, I defeated heavily favored Moreno "Maud" Caso, who had won numerous local tournaments.

In the 36-hole final at West Seattle, I lost to Bob Tindall, who was later a pro at the private and very exclusive Broadmoor Golf Club. Tindall also coached the University of Washington golf team. Things seemed to come easy back then. I've kept a newspaper clipping from a 1943 sportspage that was headlined, "Schwender Wins Golf."

It starts like this: "Fred Schwender, high school golf star, led a field of 49 professionals and amateurs With a subpar score of 69 to take low-gross scoring honors in yesterday's January monthly inter-city open sweepstakes at his home course, Jefferson Park." It goes on to say, "The youngster's card of 69-4— landed him the first award in the first amateur division. Gordon Richards of Broadmoor (headpro) topped the professional group with a score of 72." Only other amateur managed to break 80.

I also shot a 69 in a Jefferson Park "sweeps" competition, while partnered with Charles E. Sullivan, a prominent Seattle florist and a member of the Broadmoor Golf Club. Mr. Sullivan was impressed enough with my play that day to offer to pay for lessons from Gordon Richards, the top pro at Broadmoor. I took just one lesson and quit. Truth is, I was embarrassed to drive my clunky Model A Ford through Broadmoor's guarded gate and along streets lined with fine homes. , I did, however, take a few lessons from a neighbor, Jimmy Robinson, for whom I worked briefly when he was an assistant pro at the Jefferson golf course.