

Sun Jan 30

I had to be there for the same starting time as Saturday but I slept in and didn't arrive until Bill had started practising so I paid the man who was collecting for him. I didn't need to.

After practice we got going and he started with 3 bogies in a row and did the same on the back 9 for a 75. I have never seen such awful putting.

He congratulated me on my clubbing knowledge and asks my advice on nearly every shot now.... Pity I can't do it for my own golf!

After we finished he didn't practise and I went to my digs and collected my wet clothes to put in the Menzies dryer.

I caught a bus to within 2 miles and Judy collected me.

The rest of the family still weren't back. Judy had arranged a week ago to stay the night with friends and her girl friend arrived to collect her about an hour after I arrived. I loved the way they talked and perhaps in the same way they are fascinated by a British accent.

The family arrived fairly soon after Judy left and so did Melinda after her ski trip. I chatted about my trip and showed photos. I had not really had a chance to talk to them before. They are a marvellous family.

I had an enormous meal. I hadn't really eaten much for 2 days. I was asked to stay Monday night but I'm not sure when I will go to Palm Springs.

Bed. I have to be up at 6am tomorrow as we tee off about 8am.

Mon Jan 31

I made it at 6am and walked a mile and a half to catch a bus. I reached the club at 7.45 and Bill had just arrived.

Today's round went much better, a 71 but not good enough. He won't qualify for the Bob Hope so I am out of a job for this at the moment.

I had intended to stay the night with the Menzies again but now I will have to get on the Greyhound tonight.

Bill paid me \$70 so I have made \$90 this week and this was despite not being able to sell the golf bag.

I tried to get a lift down to Palm Springs and asked Doc Giffin but his car was full. I left the course in not a very good mood and got on the downtown bus with the chatty driver again. The one who told me to write to him...as if I haven't got enough to do.

I packed my bag and put it on the Palm Springs bus. I've decided to catch the 7.30pm bus to Indio where all the caddies stay; about 10 miles from the courses.

I found my way back to the Menzies by bus and only Mrs M was there. (2.30pm) I wrote my Harding Park article and packed my small bag.

Judy arrived back from design school at 4pm. Mr and Mrs went out at 5.30 and I said goodbye to them and invited the whole family to stay with us when they come to Scotland this summer. What do you say mum?

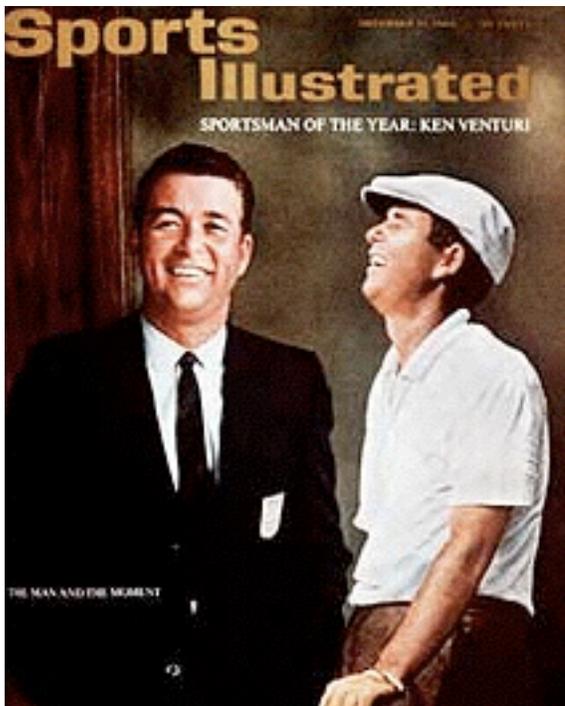
Judy cooked me supper and I left at 6.15. I have never been more sorry to leave a place in the whole of my trip. I am easily influenced by such attraction. However I managed to tear myself away and we will see each other in London. I hope.

ps. Judy and I did meet in London a few months later and to make it a level playing field when holding hands...I walked on the pavement and she walked on the street!

I was on my way to Palm Springs with no job and no place to stay. However I was instructed by the Menzies to ring their amateur friend when I arrived. He might get me a job.

I caught the bus on time and was joined by one of my caddy pals who had been out celebrating with his old friend Ken Venturi, the Lucky winner. He soon produced a bottle of whisky to make us sleep and I had one or two neat shots and I must admit I relaxed and felt much better..... What do you think of that dad?

I slept most of the trip and Ray the caddy told me all about Palm Springs.... I was too tired to listen.



Ken Venturi



Judy Menzies



The Lucky International Open Harding Park San Francisco

by Andrew Haddow

The Lucky Lager \$70,000 Tournament was a far cry from the "star studded Bing-orama" of the Crosby at Pebble Beach last week but nevertheless it lived up to its name. Some "struck it" and others didnt. Even the weather hung in the balance and the 3rd round on Saturday was a carbon copy of the Senior Service at Dalmahoy last year. It was a wash out! But I think only last year's winner, George Archer was not Lucky! He was 3 under par at the time it was cancelled.

There was such a downpour that when Arnold Palmer asked his "army" of supporters to move back someone shouted "aye aye Sir" as if Arnie had swapped his general's demeanour for that of a sea captain. Every thing seemed to go wrong that day and one poor caddy certainly thought so for in a frantic effort to remove the pin he pulled the whole cup out...his pro's putt penalised for hitting the attached turf.

Our own Neil Coles arrived by sea to play in his first tournament on the American circuit this year but caddy troubles and the recent 3000 mile car drive across the States (he does not like flying) meant he was ill prepared and with a 76 and 70 he missed the cut by a shot. Never mind he now has more time to practise for the Bob Hope Classic down at Palm Springs next week. He has finished as high as 5th in this particular event.

26 year old Frank Beard led the Lucky after Sunday's reconvened 3rd round with scores of 66-67-70 and going into the final day on Monday he led Mike Souchak by a shot, Senior Service rookie Ray Floyd by 2 shots, local boy Ken Venturi by 3 and Arnold Palmer by 4.

Palmer was the pre Tournament favourite but a 73 in the 1st round due to poor putting meant his succeeding rounds of 66 and 68 were not as dangerous as they might have been. Yet a "charge" and he could easily win his 2nd tournament of the year. However, as Palmer himself was the first to admit, any one of the first six were capable of a purple patch to catch Beard in the final round. The question was, who?

Beard, Palmer and Venturi all turned the first nine in 33 and the excitement mounted. The pace was so hot Venturi almost didnt need his gloves and hand warmers that are now a vital part of his equipment thanks to a frustrating circulatory ailment. His father who runs the pro shop at Harding Park saw his son's progress on TV but many of his family and a gallery almost as large as Palmer's came out to watch him.... He snatched victory from Beard in the last 2 holes.

Ken Venturi's final 66 won him the first prize of \$8500 by a shot. He is the happiest man alive after recovering from a lean 1965 in which he won only \$2000 and nearly lost his ability to grip the club. 1966, as it may for Palmer, might also herald a big comeback for the 1964 US Open winner, and certainly the local crowds crossed the lake that surrounds Harding Park with happy hearts.

Tues Feb 1

The Bob Hope Desert Classic

After only 3 stops dawn broke about 6.30 when we were in desert country. Sand everywhere.

We were below sea level and surrounded by snow capped mountains. Splendid scenery and the rising sun was at one time like a red ball.

I took a photo through the top window of the Greyhound.



Bermuda Dunes CC



Reached Indio around 7.15 and I tried to find somewhere to stay. But no luck until noon when people check out.

I rang Mr Collier, the Menzies friend and he already had a caddy but told me to mention his name to the caddie master at Eldorado CC.

I met an old caddy and left my small bag in his motel room for safety?? Both of us then tried to hitch a ride out to Eldorado and in the process I was stopped by a cop. He thought I was a young vagrant and asked for identification. I only had my driving licence. He was very nice about the whole thing and I quickly cleared up the situation.

Eventually I got a ride out and was told this area supplied more dates than anywhere else in the world. It also grows cotton and grapefruit.

The temp. in the summer reaches 120deg. It is a winter resort and the temp at the moment is around 75 deg.

Eldorado CC....the course where each blade of grass is worth its weight in gold.

The lakes and water bunkers are virtual swimming pools watered by fountains. Over a 1000 sprinklers water the fairways at night. The whole place was once a desert. Every house has a swimming pool. I counted over a 100 up the 18th fairway. Eisenhower, Bob Hope and Crosby live here. The starter has a closed circuit tv to see who is on the tee.

Stock Exchange results flicker by on screen in the changing rooms.

The caddy house puts most clubhouses in UK to shame.

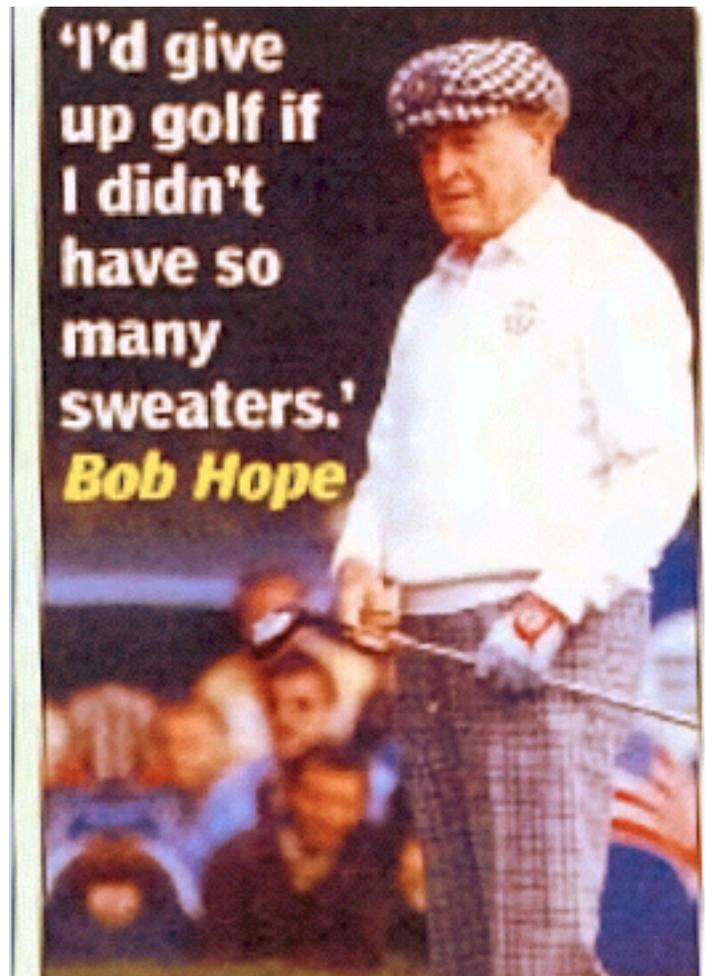
The temp is now 80 deg yet I can see snow on the hills.

After arriving I mentioned Mr Collier's name to the starter and he sent me down to the caddiemaster at the tournament HQ at the Indian Wells CC. The hotel there is owned by Lucille Ball's ex husband. I discovered there that Bill Ezinicki had qualified but I couldn't get the caddiemaster to assign me to him... some other guy had spun a line and put his name down and he was given the cap and badge given to every caddy.

I hung around exhausted and hungry in the sun for 4 hrs waiting for Bill to arrive and check in. He came around 1pm and I told him the news. He sorted things out but I still haven't got my cap!

We drove round to Eldorado where we play tomorrow and he practised. I didn't even have to collect the balls. They have to use the driving range! I spoke to Arnie and Winnie who were there.

When Bill had finished we played a round on our own. I picked oranges and grapefruit from the fairway gardens at random. Absolutely amazing. Bill played well and we finished about 5pm. I have never seen such luxury. Every house has floodlighting, fountains and lawn sprays.



After that he drove me back to the Plaza Hotel and they now had a room for me so I am quite content now. I had an enormous meal. My first in 24 hrs and went to bed after writing letters and finishing my Lucky Tournament report.

Wed Feb 2 Eldorado CC

1st day of the Tournament. I got a lift out with the same student and waited at the club for Bill to arrive. The caddymaster introduced me to an English cockney club repairer who comes over here every winter, makes his mint and goes back home for the summer.

In the Hope, each pro plays with 3 different amateurs each day and they have to pay the pro's caddy fee. \$15. The caddies of some amateurs just carry the putter if their man takes the cart. I soon got chatting with the 3 amateurs and they were very interested in my trip. We played a very enjoyable round on a beautiful hot day.



Bermuda Dunes CC



Palm Springs

Bill finished another bad putting round and they paid me \$22. Perhaps it was my Scots accent? I then waited around while Bill practised putting. I met a man I played with in Baltimore who was here on holiday. I bought something to eat. I hadn't eaten since last night.

Bill left and I caught a lift into Palm Springs with a millionaire whose Lincoln Continental had its own phone which you could use to phone anywhere. We passed a private golf course built by some crank who couldn't be bothered with the slow play at the country clubs. He is the only one who uses it....

I got a close look at the desert. Amazing how water can change it all. I bought some stationery in Palm Springs and collected my bag. I had to wait an hour for a bus back so I rang Mrs Collier. I hope to meet them tomorrow when I go to Palm Springs to ride the famous cable car to the top of the mountain where one experiences a 40 deg temp change in 30 mins. I got the bus back and paid for another night, \$3 and a meal. Wrote to mum and dad and bed.

Thurs Feb 3

Round 2. I got up at 6.45 with a bit of a sore throat and reached the Holiday Inn at 7.30 where I was picked up by Bill. He practised on the Bermuda Dunes range so I wandered around taking in the scenery. I met one of our yesterday's amateur team. Joe Megdell, a Michigan chain store magnet who sponsors the biggest tournament for lady pros. He told me about this.

Bill drove off at 9.30 and the day was really warming up now. Apparently 75 deg is cold for this time of year. In short Bill still couldn't make any putts but he did make his 1st birdie in 36 holes. He finished 2 over par. However his amateur partners finished 18 under par! So I think we are leading in the ProAm team event, although Bill hasn't done much towards it.

We finished by 2.30 (5hrs) and I got a lift into Palm Springs and the Holiday Inn where I had to take a taxi up to the cable car. This cost me \$2.95 and the "tram" fare was the same but it was worth it.



Palm Springs Cable Car

The cable tram takes 20 min to do the 2.5 mile trip climbing some 8000 ft. Its hard to imagine snow 10 mins out of Palm Springs where the temp is now in the 80s. The whole set up is Swiss designed, took 26 months to build and was the 30 year dream of one man. All the construction materials were transported by helicopter.

Unbelievable view of the valley from the top. Temp there was 30 deg. I saw a film of how the affair was constructed. Apparently its the longest cable system in the world. There is a hotel at the top which acts as a base for skiers. I ate a buffet dinner there looking out over the valley. I also rang the Colliers from there. No opportunity of meeting them yet.

I stayed up for about 2hrs and then came down in the dark; an unforgettable experience. Palm Springs lit up 2 miles below.

I got a lift to the bus station and returned to Indio. At the hotel I wrote to the Menzies and post cards to the Thomsons and Fred Corcoran. Tomorrow La Quinta CC.

ps. This morning I met Paul Runyan (1934 USPGA Champ) and he chatted about his Edinburgh trip with a party of American golfers.

Fri Feb 4

La Quinta CC... Possibly the toughest of the 4 courses we play. I walked 2 miles to meet Bill and we got a lift to the course with Jerry Barber, ex US Ryder Cup capt. Very interesting man. His 1st round score was recorded as 109 because he put his 9 hole total of 38 as his score for the 18th hole!

Bill, I discovered, was leading the ProAm by 3 shots. 1st prize is a car and \$2,750, I think. He and his team got off to a good start with a birdie but Bill scored an 8 at the 2nd. His team however were 3 under par for the first 3 holes and things were warming. Marvellous course and wonderful views. Lakes watered by waterfalls. I managed to take a few pics on route.

Bill played quite well to finish one over par but will have to play well tomorrow to make the cut for the final 5th round. I'm not worried. His team had chances of being much better but finished 10 under par. We are still well up there although I dont know our exact position.

I met Bob Simpson and Joe Megdell when I finished. (2 of the amateurs we partnered on Wednesday) and Mr Simpson offered to put me up at the Masters in a house he takes with American Richard Davies, the 1962 British Amateur Champ. I hope to take him up. Mr Megdell pressed \$5 into my hand and I just couldnt make him take it back. They really are wonderful people here.

I saw Rick Nelson the pop singer on the course and I met Neil Coles again and he is playing a little better. He repeated his offer of a lift when my Greyhound voucher ends. I might caddy for him at Tucson. I was paid \$20 by the amateurs again today. I got a lift back with Bill and walked the 2 miles back to the Plaza hotel.

I was quite tired after that 5 hr round in the relative heat. I had only had a hot dog since last night so I ate a large steak almost immediately.

I had a long chat in the diner with Bobby Nichols 1964 USPGA champ. and I might caddy for him at Tucson. He seems a nice guy. Bill also came here to eat and he said he might be over in GB for the Carling at Birkdale. The top 50 in the US are invited, all expenses paid. His wife is a McPherson. I'll give him our address.

After all this I slept for a bit and then wrote a letter to Judy and to the Kearns in North Carolina. Tomorrow is the final round before the cut at Indian Wells.

I still havent seen Bob Hope yet. He is playing.

Sat Feb 5

Indian Wells...the "fun" club of the Palm Springs Resort. Here tepee shaped spectator lavatories and tee boxes decorate the course. Artificial lakes are watered by beautiful cascading fountains. The largest lake outside the clubhouse is called Lake Bing-Phil in honour of Crosby and Harris.

We had breakfast on the way there and read that we were joint leaders of the ProAm so far. I met Paul Runyan again and he offered me a lift after today's round to San Diego. That's too early, unfortunately.

We kicked off and \$2,750 hung in the hands of 3 weekend amateurs? Bill played well and finished 1 under par (71) and could have been 4 shots better. One amateur played brilliantly round the greens. I think he must have a lot of money on his weekend games to have such a tight short game.

A couple of slips and we lost the ProAm by 2 shots to the pro we had shared the lead with. We were 12 under par. But Bill still won \$1800 but it wasn't very self satisfying. We hung around to see if he had made the pro cut but he missed that by a shot. I was quite happy as I wanted to make San Diego tomorrow.

I said goodbye to Mr Megdell and I hope we meet later. He said if ever I was in a spot for a job to see him. He's a multiple store owner and a very nice person.

I got a lift back to the Plaza with friends of Bill and he gave me some balls and only \$20...hardly my 5% but I didn't complain. He was a nice guy and needed the money more than I do. The amateurs paid me \$25 so I have made \$115 this week. Money for jam. I got the Hope program magazine from Bill for my collection and said goodbye. I'll see him at Tucson.

Back at the hotel I had dinner and packed my bag for tomorrow. I met Bobby Nichols dining again and I am caddying for him at Tucson if the organisers will allow it. Travelling caddies aren't allowed there apparently.

I had an argument with a number of caddies who said Bill should have paid me my 10%, \$180. I am not going to scrounge. He's a nice enough guy and deserves all he wins. I didn't even pace off the courses.

I took my luggage round to the Greyhound station and rang the Patricks. They were out at a dance but I left a message. Steve is still there. I tried to start my Bob Hope article but wasn't in the mood. I'm getting a bit of a cold.

ps. One of the millionaire amateurs today had cancer of the throat and his larynx had subsequently been removed. He used a thing like a small telephone which he shoved against his throat and sounds erupted so that words could be deciphered. It sounded exactly like a darlek and from a distance like a frog. Most unfortunate and shows money isn't everything...

Sun Feb 6

I couldn't sleep, perhaps I wasn't tired. I finally got up at 6.30 and caught the 7.20 am bus after a cup of coffee. I saw Salton Sea which was created by flooding, last century, and salted by the nearby mines and is now a holiday resort. The day was overcast.

I had to change bus at El Centro and wait an hour for the connection. The bus climbed very slowly over the steep boulder strewn San Diego hills and it started to rain in torrents.

I reached San Diego at 1.30 pm and handed over a \$5 note for my local bus 30 cent ticket to Chula Vista and was told it was unsuitable. I was almost accused of rolling my own. Luckily I had 30 c in change but I didn't have time to phone the Patricks as the bus was leaving.

It was still pouring when I reached Chula and I sheltered in the phone booth. I discovered the phone was out of order after I had lost 10c. I now had to use my \$5 and the garage accepted it. I rang from there and the Patrick's phone was out too. Must be the rain.

I now took the 3rd taxi of my life. All 3 have been in the last 3 weeks and this one cost me \$3.70. However it was pouring. I hadn't eaten since last night and my voice was hoarse so I wasn't going to count the coppers.

I arrived and met the English RAF friend of Mr P's, Tony Gadd who is here on holiday. Mr and Mrs P had stayed in Coronado after a dance and hadn't returned yet.

I attempted to read my 3 weeks worth of mail. Dad had included all my articles that had been printed. They are now using my name. I was really excited. All my photos had been developed. Disneyland etc.

Mum and dad had apparently tried to phone me just after I left because I hadn't written. I can't think why they hadn't heard because I have written each week....I seem to have been in The Scotsman paper a lot over the last 3 weeks. They are printing my writings verbatim and when they cut anything they do so without altering anything else. I am quite pleased.

Mr and Mrs P returned and I was glad to see them again. I discussed my 3 weeks. They are thinking of going to San Francisco this week which makes me feel worse. (cue...song "I left my heart in San Francisco")

I can't ride the range yet as it's so wet but I hope to. I heard on tv that Doug Sanders had beaten Palmer in a play off. I'll write the story tomorrow.

My photos are rather good again but it's getting damned expensive. I still haven't heard from the Balcombes. Dad liked the wallet and my photo with Palmer. He said he remembered there was a road toll at Monterey. How I don't know. There is though.

Back to the champagne again.

Mon Feb 7

I was up early to read the golf result in the local paper so I would be clued up for my article. I took most of the morning to write it so Tijuana was out for today. Tony Gadd brought out the champers at 11.30am and I wasn't objecting.

After lunch he and I went into San Diego. I got my article copied, bought some stationery and turned my 6 films in for development. Damned expensive all of it but it's worth it. The reason I'm taking so many photos, I think, is because I'm seeing all these things by myself and because I can't discuss what I see with anyone and I can later with my pictures.

After that we returned and a hail storm started. Weather's not so much at the moment. We stopped at a California wine tasting house but I wasn't allowed any, being under 21. Tony gave me a taste though so I didn't miss out. It was rather interesting.

I have never laughed so much at his English accent which is so typical it isn't true. Shows you how accustomed I am to American accents now. He is making the same mistakes I made earlier.

Bed early. Tomorrow Tijuana.



The Bob Hope Desert Classic

by Andrew Haddow

Hope Springs Eternal - But Not For Palmer

Imagine the Sahara Desert surrounded by the Canadian Rockies set in the middle of sunny California. That, roughly, was Palm Springs 12 years ago. Then with a speed only an American fervour can create one man's brain-child cast aside the Arabian veil for ever and created a mirage of golf courses that have made Palm Springs America's most exotic and certainly the wealthiest winter resort.

In 1965 The Palm Springs Golf Classic became the Bob Hope Desert Classic. Perhaps Arnold Palmer said something to Hope when they made "Call Me B'wana" together. It is primarily a 90 hole, 5-day tournament for professionals and was played this year on the Bermuda Dunes, Eldorado, Indian Wells and La Quinta country club courses.

Played concurrently with this event during its first 72 holes is a Pro-Am, in which each pro plays with a different team of 3 amateurs and on a different course each day, 4 ball better ball. The amateur trio which scores the most points with their 4 pros over the four days

win the team prize. And the pro with the most points from his 4 teams wins \$2,750 and he and each of his 12 contributing amateurs win the use of a new car for a year.

The \$100,000 Bob Hope Desert Classic is not only the biggest charity occasion in sport but it is the biggest golf tournament anywhere. 128 of the world's leading pros and 384 amateurs are invited. The first pro prize in the 5 day main event is \$15000 and a \$7000 car.

Hope is himself competing and such inane remarks by an innocent press as "how is your golf?" might prompt his reply "full of Hope".

What happens to the many touring pros not invited? A \$10,000 event called the "Hope of Tomorrow" or as some joked the "Little Hope" is provided.

Jerry Barber, the diminutive ex US Ryder Cup captain did indeed have little hope for after completing his first round of the main event he did what most of us have done...he put his final 9 hole score of 38 down as his figure for the 18th hole so that his card totalled 109!... and it had to stand.

This week the unshakeably static 80 deg Palm Springs "winter" weather brought everybody who was anybody to the golf. Hollywood is but an hour away and the film stars who werent competing commuted freely between the studios and the links.

Dress resembled Ascot goes after a little too much champagne.

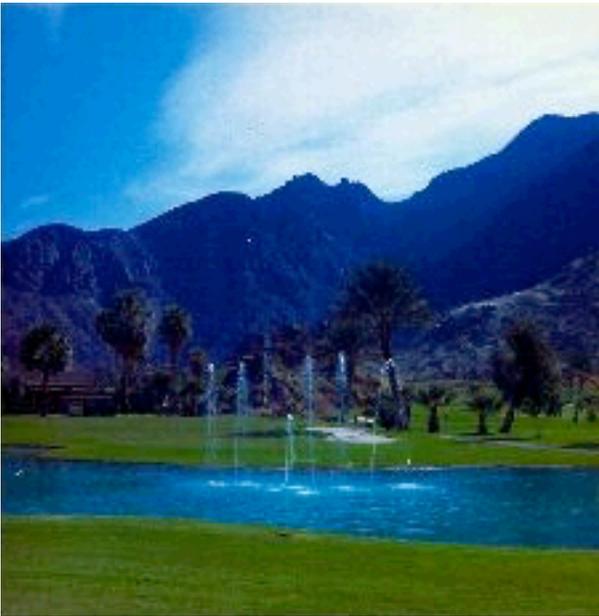
Money was no object and in fact I envied the staff litter lancers for with many pockets filled to overflowing who knows how much they were picking up!

At Eldorado, the most luxurious club, if one can possibly value the four, I counted over 100 swimming pools belonging to the private homes on the 18th fairway alone! In fact they were so close together that some owners jump into their neighbours' pools by mistake.

One member of Eldorado (\$25,000 to join) was so annoyed at having to book a starting time every day he built his own course for himself and his guests. His \$1,700,000 house serves as the clubhouse. The next time you have to wait to tee off...just think!

With film starlets strutting provocatively around the orange and grapefruit lined courses and film stars attacking golf balls as vigorously as a tribe of Indians, the starter, seated in his colourful wigwam style hut, sent the Classic on its way for 1966. And a young unknown Harold Kneece fired 68,68,69 and 72 to lead the field by two shots from Billy Casper and Canadian, Al Besselink.

Every blade of grass is worth its weight in gold; water has to be piped in everywhere for it rains a few days a year. Man made course lakes that might be mistaken for swimming pools are fed by fountains. The one in front of the Indian Wells clubhouse is named "Lake Bing-Phil" in honour of Bing Crosby and band leader Phil Harris. Why a water filled hazard should be dedicated to Harris I dont know? He drinks everything neat! But it might serve to remind us that he spills more than Dean Martin drinks...



Lake "Bing - Phil"

Indian Wells CC

On Sunday all congregated at Indian Wells for the 5th and final round and all the fickleness of a "medicine man" was present. The question was who would don the victory war paint. Arnie with one scalp and 2 close shaves already this year was well in the hunt. Casper who himself has been hunting for elk and bison to supplement his new diet was in the best position to rob Kneece.

After 9 holes Massengale, the Crosby winner, led the field only to fade. Then it was Phil Rodgers turn and he came to the easy par five 18th needing a birdie to win. Alas he won and lost. As he did in our own British Open, he "blew" it and took a bogie 6 for a 350 total.

Now Arnie made his bid and a birdie at the last left him in the lead on 149. However someone else had more claim to this happy hunting ground than anyone.

Dashing Doug Sanders, full time playboy and in most peoples' eyes, part time pro, anxious to afford his two alimonies and vast wardrobe, birdied 12, eagled 14 and finished with birdies at 15, 16 and 18 for a dazzling 66 to tie Palmer.....but even before the playoff Arnie was given the victory nod by the gallery for he relishes just such a challenge.

Yet Sanders clad in an outfit inspired apparently by his blue eyes, placed a blue tee in the ground and never succumbed. His short swing (some say he learnt in a telephone booth) had left him remarkably fresh and urged on by some glamorous support he sank a 14 ft putt to birdie the opening hole and walk away with the \$15,000 and the auto. Arnie had to be satisfied with \$8,000.

All that remained now was the presentation and this was carried out before Doug could even remove his blue shoes let alone change into yet another set of clothes.

One of the locals, General Eisenhower, presented the trophy and the Classic thus ended in the same celebrious vein in which it began. However Sanders had the final say when he declared "there's Hope for you all next year!"



Doug at the top of his backswing

Tues Feb 8

Lovely day and Tony and I drove to Tijuana 11.30 am. We left the car on the American side of the border because it has no Mexican insurance. We were advised to have our passports checked before we went across in case anything in it was incorrect and we couldn't get back. This done we walked across and I was struck by the extreme poverty. The difference a few yards beyond the border is monumental. Reminded me of Calcutta. (ps. my birthplace and home until 9 years ago) Tony couldn't stand the filth and was ready to leave. I persuaded him to hang on.

After walking through the many streets riddled with dust and beggars... they wash their clothes in the river just as in India, we found the market. And I was ready to spend hours again just as in Juarez. (El Paso)

I am fascinated by leather goods. Tony was happy to fiddle around so I went off about my business. I saw lots of leather golf bags and eventually found the one I wanted. Beautiful Moroccan leather and selling for \$50. I thought I could bring it down a lot but no such luck. \$42. It was worth it and I am very pleased with it. Its worth about £35. Judy had showed me her collection of rings so I bought her one of Mexican silver and jade to add to this. I even bought myself a plain silver one for luck. The price for both was \$5.

After I dragged my purchases back and Tony was waiting, we drove back and I put Mr P's clubs in my new bag and went down to their country club where I practised for a bit. I've learnt a lot from the pros and played well considering I haven't played in two months. Preoccupied, I left it rather late before I remembered we were supposed to be going to a concert with Mary and Pat.

We had dinner in town at a marvellous restaurant. The Patrick's are gourmets. The head waiter was a Scotsman from Dalkeith (Edinburgh) who had left 10 years ago. He trained in the George and Caledonian Hotels. We had a long chat. He had almost lost his accent. Marvellous concert. The first real one I think I have been to and I think I have been missing a lot. Beautiful auditorium and the place was packed.

We returned 11pm and surprise, surprise, Mum and Dad phoned. It was a real surprise and it was wonderful to hear them. The main object was to persuade me not to hitch hike. I have no intention of doing so anyway. Mum chatted with Mrs P and the call finally ended in a flurry of pips.... Wonderful.

I was awake now and Mr and Mrs P, Steve, Tony and I chatted till after 12pm. A twenty year old English girl recovering from a car accident is apparently arriving on Friday. Quite an English Speaking Union. Tomorrow golf again.

Wed Feb 9

Mr P went off on a trip aboard a ship that he had to oversee and will be away until tomorrow.

I went down to the club in my yellow trousers (Uncle Mick's) and practised for 45 mins. Lovely day. I eventually got a game with Mr Bill Sample. I thoroughly enjoyed it and was hitting the ball well although with my new change of grip (courtesy of C Person, Pinehurst) I was cutting my shots a little. My chipping and putting is much improved after watching the pros. We started at the 10th and joined another 2 elderly businessmen after their front nine. I was really hitting my drives and gripping the club much better now.

Altogether I played 3x9 holes and didnt get back to the ranch until 5.45 when I discovered I should have been ready to go out to dinner aboard ship at that time. However I changed into my suit (its 5th outing since Oct) and on our way, Tony (we were going on behalf of Mr and Mrs P) told me we were to meet our 2 dates at the Yacht Club where the dinner and speech would be held. I had met his date Betty at New Year but she was bringing some high school girl I had never seen before. They were a bit late so Tony had a drink and I had my eternal coke and lime.

They arrived and Betty's little blond friend was rather sweet but a typically American teenager although on the quiet side. We enjoyed ourselves though and I was very interested in what one of the surgeon's aboard the USS Hope had to say about their good will visits to heal the sick etc in Guinea.

All this ended at 10pm and after an evening revealing American humour...Tony and I couldnt stop laughing....we drove back via the Coronado Ferry and went into the "Mexican Village", a pub. I was still stuck with a coke and lime. After that they left. Celia (White) had to be at school 8am tomorrow.

Tony and I drove back and the inmates of del Otay chatted again until 12.30.

I went to bed exhausted.