

BYU graduates making their mark

It would be easy to miss them on the PGA Tour. They are not flashy; all of them are low-key. And though none of them has yet won a tournament, they are all making it in the pressure-cooker world of professional golf.

They all went to the same school — Brigham Young University. That in itself is not mind-boggling; a few schools — Florida, Houston and Wake Forest, for example — have at least that number represented on the tour. What is amazing is that for two years Mike Brannan, John Fought, Pat McGowan, Vancouver native Jim Nelford and Mike Reid all played on the same Cougar squad under Coach Karl Tucker.

Reid was the first of the quintet to join the tour, graduating from the 1976 Fall Qualifying School at Brownsville, Tex. Nelford and McGowan came out next, earning their cards at the 1977 fall school at Pinehurst. One year later, Fought and Brannan came through the school at Waterwood National near Huntsville, Tex.

Lanny heads CPGA field

The National Golf Club in Woodbridge, Ontario will be the site of some exciting golf on an international scale this summer. That's the location of this year's Labatt's International Golf Classic for the Canadian Professional Golf Association Championship.

Defending champion Lanny Wadkins, Gary Player, and Lee Trevino will tee off Aug. 27 — Sept. 2 against Canada's finest professional golfers including George Knudson, Dave Barr and Dan Hallderson.

The list does not stop there; joining the above golf greats in the battle for the \$100,000 total prize money will be P.G.A. Champions from 20 countries around the world such as Argentina's Roberto DeVincenzo, England's Nich Faldo, Spain's Manuel Pinero, Korea's Han Chang Sang and Arnold Palmer of the U.S.A.

In the words of Gary Player the National is one of the great golf courses in the world. Designed in 1973 by world famous golf course architects George and Tom Fazio the mammoth 6,975 yard par 71 course features eight natural water hazards and no less than 60 bunkers.

Ticket prices range from \$8 for daily admission (\$5 during practice rounds) right up to the \$250 executive package.

The National Golf Club is located on Pine Valley Drive, R.R. No. 3, Woodbridge, Ontario. To get there take Hwy. 400 to the Hwy. 7 exit. Travel west on Hwy. 7 two miles until you reach Pine Valley Drive. The clubhouse is located one and a half miles north of Hwy. 7 on Pine Valley Drive.

Only Fought, the most acclaimed of the five as an amateur, failed to qualify for the tour on his first try. For the 1977 U.S. Amateur champion, the third time was the charm.

With the exception of Fought, the oldest of the Brigham Young youngsters at 25, all have come close to victory on the tour. Reid lost to Mac McLendon in a playoff in last year's Pensacola Open. McGowan came up one stroke short in the 1978 Canadian Open, finishing alone in second behind Bruce Lietzke on the demanding Glen Abbey course. In last year's Tallahassee Open, a bogey on the 72nd hole

kept Jim Nelford from joining Lietzke and eventual winner Barry Jaeckel in the playoff.

More recently it was the 23-year-old Brannan enjoying a shot at his first PGA Tour win. With rounds of 68-66-66-70 at the Woodlands Country Club, Mike grabbed second place in the Houston Open, finishing two strokes behind Wayne Levi and earning a tidy \$34,200. And to prove his performance wasn't a fluke, the Tempe, Ariz., resident went out the following week and tied for fifth in the Byron Nelson Classic. The \$10,538 he earned for that showing gave him \$50,644 midway through

his rookie season and put him 28th on the PGA Tour money list.

The most celebrated golfer to come out of Brigham Young is, of course, Johnny Miller. A teammate of Miller's in the late 1960's also did pretty well for himself: Brian "Buddy" Allin won five times on the Tour before leaving to take a club job in California last year.

Of course, playing golf at Brigham Young does not necessarily guarantee professional success. A number of BYU players qualified to play the Tour, but never had much success on the pro circuit. This list includes Ray

Leach, Joey Dills (the Spring 1975 Q-School medalist) and Lance Suzuki (who also played with the aforementioned fivesome).

But a goodly percentage of Cougar golfers have moved easily from college to "the majors". And there seems to be a connection.

Karl Tucker, the golf coach at Brigham Young since 1961, describes himself as a "people person". His special qualities, according to his former players, are mostly evident off the golf course and practice tee. Although he has a solid grasp of the fundamentals and always has time to help his

players with a swing problem, his attitudes toward golf and life more strongly affect his charges.

"He taught me to be a positive thinker, to never give up," says Brannan. "He's such an inspiring man because of his outlook on life, and it just rubbed off on us."

Reid feels that the 53-year-old Tucker also prepares his players for success on the Tour by the way he runs his program. The keys are competition and preparation.

"We played a good tournament schedule," says Reid, "but the biggest factor was that we always played against each other rather than hitting

balls in a field for four years."

Tucker holds a 144-hole intra-squad competition twice a year — in the fall and spring — to determine a six-man traveling team. Then, in between tournaments, he will routinely schedule 36-hole or 54-hole intra-squad qualifiers.

"You never had a chance to let up," Reid says. "You really had to play pretty well. When I was a freshman, shooting 74 or 75 would qualify you for the team, but by the time I was senior, you had to shoot around par. I got used to a goal-setting process."



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