



Johnny Dawson

December 20, 1902 - January 6, 1986

Dawson was born in Chicago, Illinois. Although he was a lifelong amateur golfer, his amateur status was rescinded by the United States Golf Association (USGA) for a time due to his employment with the Spalding sporting goods company. His amateur status was eventually restored and he competed in several USGA events. He was runner-up (at the age of 44) to Skee Riegel in 1947 U.S. Amateur. He played on the winning 1949 U.S. Walker Cup team.[4] He was also runner-up in 1958 U.S. Senior Amateur

As a developer, he designed and built Marrakesh Country Club, the Seven Lakes, Thunderbird, El Dorado, and La Quinta Country Clubs; he lived in Palm Springs.

Dawson won the Southern California Golf Association (SCGA) amateur championship four times between 1942 and 1952, and was inducted into the SCGA Hall of Fame in 2007.

1935 Iowa Open

1936 Trans-Mississippi Amateur

1942 California State Amateur, Southern California Amateur

1942 California State Open

1942 Bing Crosby Pro-Am

1944 Southern California Amateur

1945 Southern California Amateur

1952 Southern California Amateur

Golfer and Course Builder Johnny Dawson Dies

While record crowds were attending Bob Hope's tournament and thousands more were playing on one of the Palm Springs area's 60 courses last week, the man who started the desert golfing boom died quietly at his home in the desert.

Johnny Dawson, 83, perhaps the finest amateur golfer in California history before he turned to building golf courses, died after a year's struggle against Parkinson's disease.

O'Donnell, a nine-hole course in the heart of Palm Springs, was the only course in the desert when Dawson moved there in 1949. He had just purchased the Thunderbird Dude Ranch, which had a clubhouse, swimming pool and dining room, and was deep in debt.

Dawson, who had earlier built the Mission Valley, now Stardust, Country Club course in San Diego, envisioned having a course at Thunderbird with its fairways lined with homes.

Thunderbird, which was one of the original courses for the old Palm Springs Desert Classic before Hope became involved and the desert event took his name, was such a success that golf courses began to mushroom in Coachella Valley.

Dawson also built desert courses at Eldorado, which was former President Dwight Eisenhower's home club; Seven Lakes; Marrakesh, and Desert Horizons.

Other courses designed by Dawson include Pauma Valley near Fallbrook, Silverado in the Napa Valley wine country, and Marin Country Club in Novato.

Dawson's playing career spanned nearly 40 years, but for 18 years at the height of his competitive ability, he was barred by the U.S. Golf Assn. because he worked for a sporting goods company. Dawson, Bobby Jones and Chick Evans were the favorites when Dawson was banned on the eve of the 1929 U.S. Amateur at Pebble Beach.

He had just broken the course record in practice when he was informed that his status was under investigation. Dawson withdrew and did not play again in USGA events for 18 years, until after he had quit the sporting goods business and gone into real estate.

During that stretch, Jones called him the best amateur golfer in the country, and he was often referred to by others as the uncrowned king of golf.

At 45, Dawson was reinstated by the USGA and reached the final of the 1947 U.S. Amateur before losing to Skee Riegel, 2 and 1. Coincidentally, that was also at Pebble Beach.

In 1949, Dawson was named to the Walker Cup team, along with Bruce McCormick, a fellow Lakeside Golf Club member. It was the first time a club had two players on a Walker Cup team. Dawson and McCormick won a team match, 8 and 7, and Dawson defeated British champion Joseph Carr, 5 and 3, in singles as the United States won, 10-2.

Dawson is the only four-time winner of the Southern California amateur championship, having won in 1942, 1944, 1945 and 1952, the last time when

he was 50. He also won the California Amateur and California Open in 1942.

In 1948, he was Ben Hogan's amateur partner when they won the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am. He also won senior championships in 1958, 1959 and 1960.

Tribute Wall



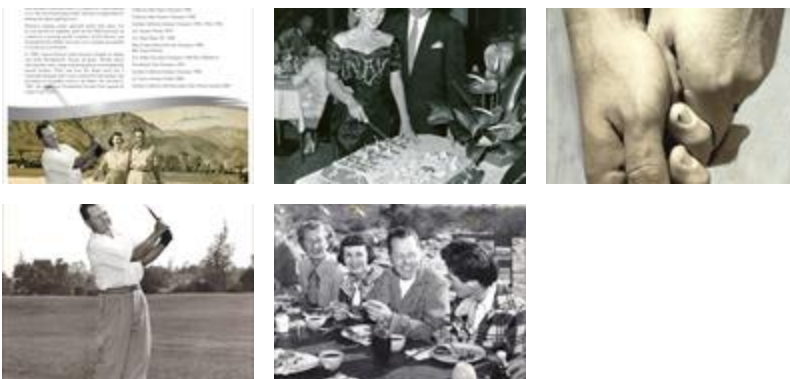
“ *Reflecting on Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Johnny Dawson*



Reflecting on Memories - March 07, 2018 at 01:39 AM



“ *19 files added to the album Dawson Memories Album*



Reflecting on Memories - March 06, 2018 at 01:49 AM