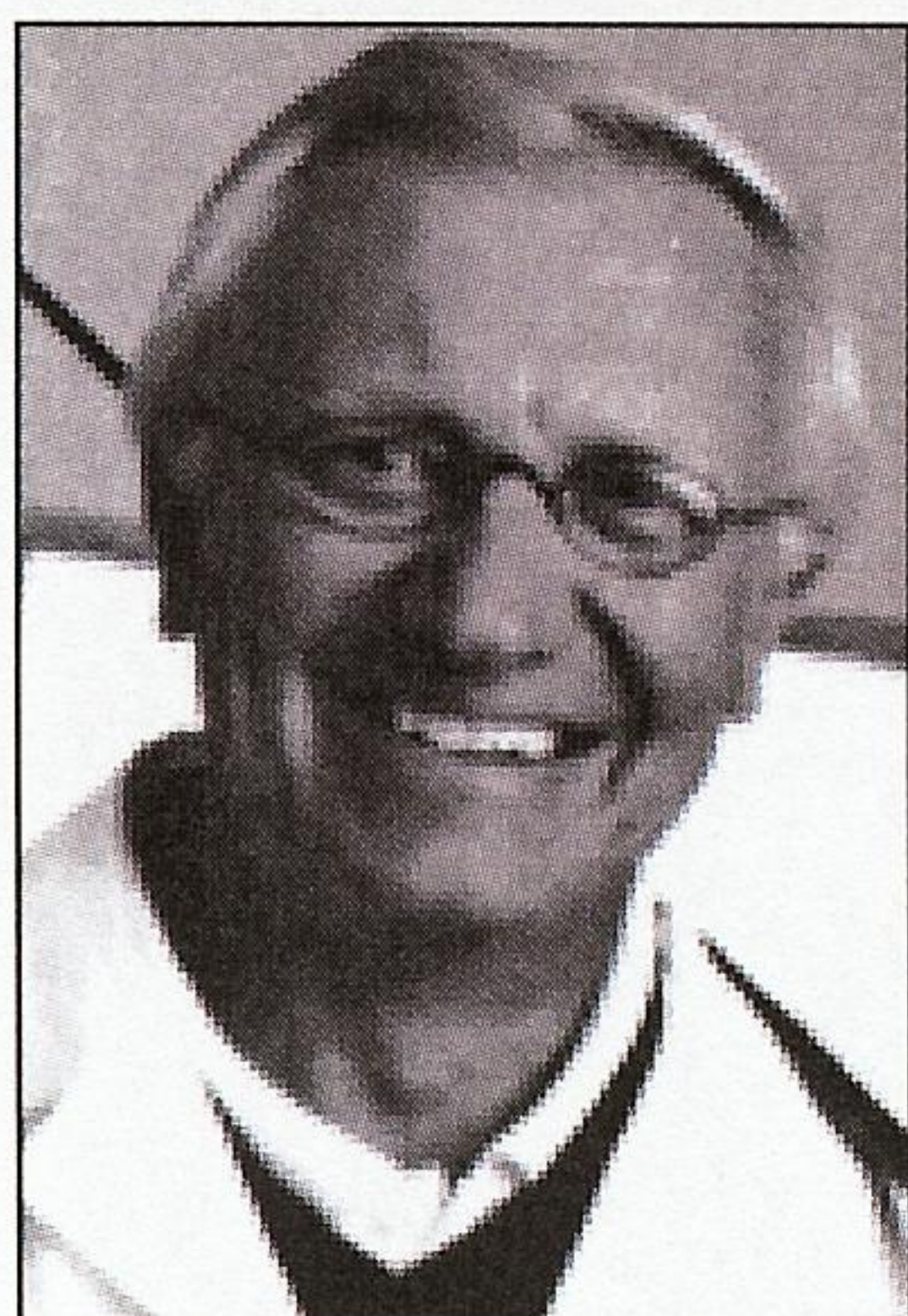


By Frederick W. Box, NYSGA Historian Emeritus

The Konsek Saga

A record three consecutive victories started in 1958 by John Konsek of Cheektowaga, a Purdue sophomore at 18 and the 1957 Junior champion, at Yahnundasis Country Club, New Hartford, a 6,450 yard par 70.

Ray Billows, John Ward and Tommy Goodwin were in the field but it was Ward again reaching the finals where youth was served 4 and 2.



John won his way by defeating: Dr. C. H. Payne, Utica, 4 and 3; Mandel Doppelt, Rye, 4 and 3; Vic Riccio, New York Mills, 2 and 1; Tom Huber, Syracuse, 1 up; Jerry Affion, Newburgh, 5 and 4; Frank Kosien, New York Mills, 1 up and Ward, 4 and 2.

Konsek led all the way and was 2 up at 18 scoring 71 to 72 for his 37 year-old opponent. He added another win by 27, halved the next five holes and closed the match with a birdie at 34.

An all-Buffalo final came in 1959 at the Troy Country Club where Konsek

was matched with Ward Wettlaufer, who played a national schedule and had won the North and South Amateur.

John Ward and Robert Monk, the 1954 champ, went out in the first round and young Warren Simmons of Canandaigua eliminated the seven-time champion Ray Billows 5 and 4. Wettlaufer gained the finals defeating Charles Decker, Wellsville, 4 and 3.

Konsek's record: 4 and 3 over Peter Nisselson, Mamaroneck; 2 and 1 over Simmons; 8 and 6 over Daniel Blatt; 1 up over Peter Van Campen, Albany; 4 and 2 over John Moynihan, Troy; and 4 and 3 over Wettlaufer.

The Purdue junior and Big 10 Champion led from the sixth hole while shooting a 65, six-under-par, to 70 by Ward. When it ended Konsek was eight under par for the 33 holes.

Some semi-final matches were played over 36 holes for part of the decade but then went back to 18 in 1957.

It was another all-Buffalo final when John Konsek won his third state title to match his third Big 10 Championship, this time at Locust Hill Country Club, Rochester, a 6,525 yard, par 72 course. The finalist this time was Edwin Kaczor of Hamburg.

Ray Billows defeated Ed Hughes of Elmira before losing. A trio of Southern Tier golfers played well: Charles Keating, Jr., son of the Corning Country Club pro, knocked off Allen Short of Jamestown and Ward Hamm Jr., Elmira, before losing to Konsek. Warner (Butch) Berry of Ithaca retired Don Allen of Rochester departing courtesy of Kaczor.

Among Konsek's victims were: Larry McGinnis, Poughkeepsie, 5 and 4; Skip Wallace, Ithaca, a junior champion, 1 up; Keating, 2 and 1 and Kaczor 8 and 6.

The repeat titlist took the lead at number 2 and never trailed, shooting 73 to Kaczor's 75 in the morning and piling up six consecutive wins by 25 in the afternoon. Konsek had won 22 straight matches over four years that included the 1957 Juniors.

The Konsek victory string came to an end in 1961 at Onondaga Country Club, Syracuse, a 6,541 yard, par 72 course, that started another many time winner, Don Allen of Rochester on his great career.

Ray Allen Jr., Don's brother, John Ward and Charles Keating Jr. of Corning were in the classy field but it was progress of Allen and Konsek that delighted the spectators.



This is another chapter in a series from Frederick W. Box's manuscript, "The 20th Century NYSGA". Mr. Box of Elmira is the New York State Golf Association's first and long-time historian, now retired.

NYSGA History: Chapter 8

Dewart Robinson, Syracuse, and Ward were among Allen victims before his match with Konsek, who extended his string to 27 matches. The former Colgate University golf captain was 2 up at 18 with three birdies in a 70-72 edge in scoring. Writers said Allen straightened

his tee shots in the afternoon, combined with brilliant approaches and bullied putts and lost only two holes in that stretch. The final tally was 5 and 4.

Allen came close in 1962 losing in the final to Bill Tryon of Elmira in 38 holes at Glens Falls Country Club in a battle of insurance executives.

Tryon gained the final by defeating Robert Westerling of Schenectady 2 and 1 while Allen had the same result against Stewart (Skip) Wallace of Ithaca, the 1956 Junior Champion.

It was a ding-dong battle that was all even at 36. They halved 37 with birdies and Tryon knocked in another putt from 28 feet for a birdie and the victory.



Don Allen

Don Allen resumed his winning ways in 1963 at Knollwood Country Club, Elmsford, where Tryon defended and Ray Billows, Tommy Goodwin and Lloyd Ribner were among the favorites.

Tryon lost to Richard Rooney of Clinton 1 up after defeating Frank Lillich of Rochester, 2 and 1. Ribner knocked out Goodwin 1 up and then Billows 4 and 3.

Meanwhile Allen ousted: Robert B. Wallace, Ogdensburg, 2 and 1; Jim Maver Jr., Winged Foot, 4 and 2; Walter Gaca, New York Mills, 2 and 1; John Carroll, Geneva, 5 and 3; Bob Hoff, Rochester, 5 and 4 and Rooney, 7 and 6.

Don was up 3 at 18 with a 74, won 19, 22 and 23 with a 39 at 27 holes to Rooney's 43. They halved the next two holes and the match was over.

Allen's record: 5 and 3 over John Downey, Oswego; 1 up over Bill Leagans, Ithaca; 4 and 3 over Hugh Skelley, Armonk; 6 and 5 over Mark Yahn, Snyder, the 1960 Junior winner, and 3 and 2 over Dr. Edward O'Keefe, Schenectady.

Allen shot a three under par 69 to gain a 3 up lead at 18, but O'Keefe matched shots in the afternoon winning three holes while losing the same number. The doctor won 33 with an eagle but each parred the next hole to end the match.

Hole-in-one Story From One of our Readers.

This note was sent to Bill Moore, NYSGA Executive Director, and we thought we should pass it on.

Interesting story:

I made a hole in one at my home course on 8/25, The Lake Placid Club. When I got home I told my wife. She almost fell off her chair. She said that I better check the answering machine. When I did I found out that my brother also scored a hole in one on his home course in California, his first 8/25.

The ball I was using was a Titleist with my brother's home course name on it - Foxtail. Don't know where this is going, but I thought it was worth sharing.

Mark Gilligan

If you have any unusual or interesting stories, we would be glad to hear from you. Contact us at www.nysga.org. Send text and/or photos.