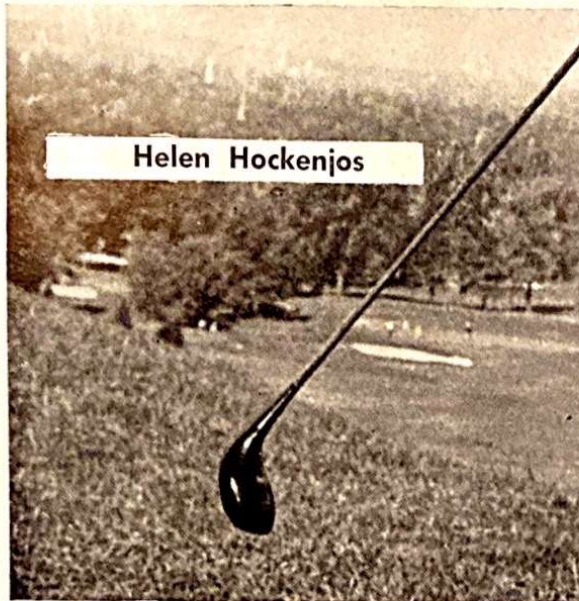


Boss Lady

*She wouldn't let
the WMGA sleep*



Helen Hockenjos

NAME any of the top metropolitan golf titles and chances are that Mrs. Helen Hockenjos has won it at least a couple of times since she became a tournament regular 17 years ago. Yet today, sunny Helen's principal concern in golf is not so much winning titles as seeing to it that others get a chance to win 'em.

For the Mount Arlington, N. J., stylist is now in her second year as president of the Women's Metropolitan Golf Association, and her goal is to make this an area second to none in women's tournament activity. Nobody doubts she'll do it, for the memory of what she did for women's golf here during the war is still fresh among the golfing sistren.

The war brought women's tournament play in the metropolitan area to a dead halt. The 61 clubs in the WMGA paid wartime standby dues, but the WMGA itself was in a deep sleep. It closed its New York offices and several of its most valued executives took jobs with golfing organizations elsewhere.

Enter Helen Hockenjos and a crew of persevering association members. It was time to chase the doldrums, they decided. They drew up a schedule—a skimpy affair consisting of only nine tournaments—but at least a start. And they put Helen in charge of getting the tournament stars out on the links again.



She held the job of tournament chairman from 1945 through 1947. In that period, of course, the war ended. And when it did, the WMGA at least was moving under a little head of steam instead of having to start from scratch. To Helen Hockenjos went a big share of the plaudits.

Moreover, the WMGA saw that in Mrs. Hockenjos it had a golf organizer of no mean ability. It was almost natural for them to elect her president in 1948 and again in 1949. And a job like that doesn't do a tournament golfer's game any good, for as Helen says, "As tournament chairman and then as president, I've been so busy with details I haven't had too much time to devote to my own game."

AND what a game it is! It's a game that elevated her to the New Jersey state championship in 1936, 1939 and 1948; to the women's New Jersey Association championship in 1936 and 1942; to the WMGA New Jersey Shore championship in 1936 and 1939 and to a bushful of other titles.

In the 1939 Shore Championship, she compiled a score of 234 over three courses—Deal, Rumson and Hollywood—which stands to this day as the record low for that tournament. Her card gave her the title by 16 strokes over another of Jersey's favorite golfing daughters—Maureen Orcutt.

And they know Helen Hockenjos as a champion down in Florida, too. She and her husband, William Hockenjos Jr., are frequent visitors to Palm Beach, and in the march of golf seasons down there, Helen Hockenjos has managed to get her name etched onto many a cup.

But a Florida tournament she recalls most vividly is one she didn't win. It was the Ormond Beach tournament and Helen came up to the finals with a remarkable record. At no point in the tournament had she been behind any of her opponents and that included such distaff worthies as Laddie Irwin, Jane Cothran and Kathryn Hemphill.

Helen found herself pitted against Patty Berg in the final round. For 16 holes she held the great Berg even, and not once in the match was she behind. Then came the 17th hole and she lost it. She was behind for the first time in the tournament. She lost the next hole, too, and with it the title.

If Helen was disappointed, it was nothing compared to how her caddie felt. For when she saw him on her next visit to Ormond Beach, he said: "Miss Helen, I been hating that 17th hole all year."

THERE was another defeat in 1938—and another caddie—that Helen Hockenjos recalls. This time the setback was in the final round of the Palm Beach Tournament and Helen's conqueror was the same Kathryn Hemphill she had beaten at Ormond Beach.

Willie the caddie took Helen's defeat hard. When she returned for the 1939 tournament, Willie

insisted on accompanying her over a practice round. He had to see for himself whether Helen had improved enough during the year to go all the way to the title.

So Helen, tailed by Willie, shot a practice round. And at the end, Willie said: "I sure like the way you're hitting them wood shots, Miss Helen. If there ain't no strange ladies come down here what is good golfers, you should do right well in the tournament."

As it happened, Helen beat all the ladies, strange and otherwise, in the tournament until she came up against Jean Bauer in the finals. Bauer won, and for the second straight year Helen was a Palm Beach runnerup.

Over these and other close defeats, Helen philosophizes: "Playing these tournaments isn't important to me for how many I win or lose. It has given me a tremendous return of good fellowship and sparkling competition."

A nice philosophy, but the record shows she doesn't have to fall back on it too often. For when she reports to the scoreboard it's usually as the winner. This year, what with her manifold duties as a WMGA leader, she'll probably be doing more than report to the scoreboard—chances are she'll be running the scoreboard.

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A Wee Bit More, Pal

The ball lay in the center of the fairway but the duffer wasn't sure, he said, what club to use for his second shot.

He took a six iron, put it to the ball, changed his mind, put a five iron to it, changed his mind, put a four iron to it, changed his mind, put a three iron to it, and said to his caddie:

"Nice lie, isn't it?"

And the caddie, watching the operation carefully, said:

"Not yet."