

**Golf Profile**

# Brown's career had a rough start, but eventually made history

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Chronicle Sports Editor

Before he had even heard of Jonas Salk and his famous vaccine, Pete Brown was stricken with polio.

A caddy in Jackson, Miss., Brown had learned the art of hitting a golf ball by watching. He had memorized every nuance of the game and was itching to get a chance to play. Yet, just as he got that chance, polio overtook his body when he was 19 years old and ravaged it like termites dismantling the frame of a house. One by one he lost control of his limbs.

"I couldn't walk and I couldn't talk for a year," Brown said. "They didn't have a cure then."

But Brown somehow pulled through the seemingly hopeless situation and went on to make history.

"The doctors don't know how I made it," he said. "I don't know how I made it."

Ten years after successfully battling polio, Brown became the first black to win a regular Professional Golfers' Association tour event. His victory came in the Waco-Turner Open in Waco, Okla.

"Dan Sykes was the clubhouse leader and I needed par on the last hole to win," Brown said. "The last hole was troublesome, a 240-yard par-3. My first shot went in the rough left of the green, but my chip shot was beautiful and I made a 3 1/2-foot putt for par."

"Sykes was well-known and I think everybody was expecting a playoff, especially after my tee shot went left."

The Waco-Turner win changed Brown's career.

"That opened a lot of doors for me," said Brown, a two-time United Golf Association National Open winner. "It qualified me for the Tournament Players' Championship, the Colonial and

the PGA Championship, events blacks had never played in before."

Brown, among 16 men who will be inducted into the National Black Golf Hall of Fame Saturday in Greensboro, played on the PGA Tour until 1972. His only other win came in the San Diego Open in 1970. But, considering the effects of polio, Brown felt lucky to win at all.

"I would have liked to practice hard every day," he said. "But I couldn't. I had a bad back and my legs ached. I'm like Cal Peete; I can get going good for two weeks and then I have to rest."

Brown worked at a driving range owned by NBC in Burbank, Calif., for 13 years before coming out of retirement two years ago. That's when he joined the PGA Seniors Tour. The 51-year-old Brown, who is a pro at Madden Golf Course in Dayton, Ohio, plans to stay on the Seniors Tour until he's 55.

Then Brown will retire from golf altogether and return to California.

This weekend's induction ceremonies will be held in conjunction with the National Black Hall of Fame Open. The tournament that is part of the North American Golf Tour, a predominantly black satellite tour that makes stops in Knoxville, Tenn., and Asheville before moving to Greensboro's Bel-Aire Golf Course. Tournament Director Harold Dunavant said this year's purse is the largest ever for the Triad stop on the tour.

Previously, the Triad tour stop had been the E. Jerry Jones Pro-Am, played at Winston Lake Golf Course for 21 years.

The inaugural tourney's purse totals \$15,000, including a \$3,000 first-place check to the winner. The runner-up will get \$2,000 and the third-place finisher \$1,000. The senior flight winner will earn \$700.

Proceeds from the tournament

## BLACK GOLF HALL OF FAME

will go to set up a junior golf program in the Triad. Dunavant plans to run a free juniors clinic at Bel-Aire July 28-Aug. 8.

There also will be a nine-hole exhibition on Friday with a winner-take-all prize of \$500. Participants include Brown and three other inductees, James Black and Chuck and Jim Thorpe.

The tournament director expects more than 200 golfers to participate. The registration deadline is Friday.

Dunavant said the response to the Hall of Fame has been overwhelming.

"I've received calls and letters from all over the country," he said. "Most of the people are saying that it's about time — that blacks don't honor ourselves enough."

Dunavant said the Hall of Fame will be headquartered temporarily at a black business in Winston-Salem. He said he has obtained a two-year commitment from the business, which he will identify at a press conference Friday.

Dunavant also got a letter from Arnold Palmer, who will be inducted into the hall because he was responsible for making golf popular to the masses. Palmer said he was flattered to be selected, but he will be unable to attend the induction ceremony or play in the tournament because of a prior commitment.

Others to be inducted are Peete, among the money leaders on the PGA Tour this year; Lee Elder, the first black to surpass the million-dollar mark on the PGA Tour, and Charlie Sifford, who won more than 50 black tour events and was a regular on the PGA Tour in the 1960s and '70s.

Also, John Shippen, the father of black golf who finished second

in the 1896 U.S. Open; Ted Rhodes, one of the best golfers to ever play the game, winning nine tournaments in 1941 alone; Bill Spiller, who had an outstanding black tour record and made strong showings in occasional

PGA Tour events; Howard Wheeler, whose black tour record was impeccable but who rarely was allowed to play in PGA events.

And Joe Louis, whose hero status helped fight discrimination in general while he sponsored many black golfers and tournaments; Jim Brown, who sponsored the Cleveland Holiday

Open; Mose Stevens, a frequent and generous supporter of black pros, and Thomas Smith, a golf instructor and promoter.

Leonard Dunavant will be the master of ceremonies at the Hall of Fame banquet Saturday night at the Holiday Inn Airport. Dunavant is principal at Essex County (N.J.) High School and an avid golfer.

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PLAY BALL

## Local Sports

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Cameron Browder doubled and a sacrifice from George Strausbaugh sent him to third. Greg Cox singled before a fly ball by Jeff Burton was lost in the lights. Long grounded out to score Burton.

The Raiders scored a run in the fourth to close the gap to 4-2.

The Giants added two in the fourth on singles by Browder and Wes Ragland, sandwiched around a walk to Kingsmore. Strausbaugh added a single to bring Kingsmore home for a 6-2 Giants' lead.

The Raiders rallied in the top of the fifth inning and scored six runs to take an 8-6 lead.

Winston-Salem countered with a single run in the bottom of the fifth before scoring four in the sixth to grab the lead for good.

Cox walked, Browder doubled and Strausbaugh and Long provided back-to-back RBI singles. Another single and a sacrifice fly delivered the final two runs.

Giant Manager Nelson Petree believes that the loss was due to the repeated moving back of the games because of rain in Roxboro last week.

"I think that our problem was that because they had to reschedule the game because of rain three nights in a row, a lot of our guys just couldn't make it," Petree said.

The Giants, 14-3, will play a regular-season game Sunday at Ernie Shore Stadium at 3 p.m.

### Parkland Unbeaten

Parkland remained unbeaten in the Winston-Salem Summer Basketball League.

The Mustangs claimed their fifth win Monday night with an 83-68 decision over West. William Bitting led Parkland with 20 points. Dwayne Morgan countered with 19 for West.

Robert Thomas totaled 14

points to lead the Spirits past Mount Tabor 70-68. Pat Cunningham had 11 for Mount Tabor.

In last Thursday's games, West edged North 76-75 behind Kevin Mumford's 26 points. Rodney Scott led North with 21.

Ben Miller's 29 points propelled the Sabres past Bishop McGuinness 90-52. John Bennett added 19.

### Cancellation

The Winston Lake Family YM-CA has cancelled the karate tournament that was scheduled for this weekend.

Trimona Garlington, the Y's physical director, said there would be an attempt to reschedule the tournament at another date.

### Volvo Regional

The Grandslammers tennis team will compete in the Volvo 3.5 women's regional next

weekend in Lexington, Ky.

The Grandslammers are the state and city champions. They have won two of the last three state titles.

Their first-round opponent in the regional at the University of Kentucky will be the Alabama representative.

### 14th Street Program

Each weekday a group of 21 children meet at 14th Street Recreation Center for a basketball and weightlifting class.

The class teaches basketball fundamentals and keeps young bodies in tip-top shape.

"You can't play ball anymore if you're not fundamentally sound," said Hansel Hentz, the class's teacher. "These kids can learn the fundamentals now and be a step ahead."

The youngsters go through three types of exercises in the gym: loosening up, running through basketball drills and

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