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Japanese Golfer Wins Big Spring Tournament

THE golfing world received somewhat of a shock when last week's 20th annual Spring Tournament here was won by a Japanese player, Rokuro Akahoshi, a 24-year-old Imperial Prince who makes his home in Princeton, N. J., where he attended college for two years after being graduated from Lawrenceville Academy. Not until the fall of 1919 did he ever hit a golf ball. His victory here was popular for he proved himself a true sportsman and fighter and impressed the experts with the possibilities of his game.

In the matter of hitting a ball, Akahoshi reminds one greatly of Walter Hagen, his swing seeming to be even sounder than is that of the former British and American open champion. He "stays put", as they say, better than does Hagen who sways forward as he hits a full stroke. As a putter Pinehurst has seen few more consistent men than Akahoshi; it is a rare thing to see him miss a putt of less than 10 feet and his long ones nearly always give one the impression that they may drop.

He is a mighty smiter, getting tremendous distance when his timing is right and his irons and full mashies are hit crisply. In the matter of half shots one finds his greatest weakness but he is endeavoring to bolster up this department of his game and the experts here declare that he will become a serious contender in any company in a few years.

The eventual tournament winner who is a member of the famous Pine Valley club, stood fifth when all the qualifying figures were compiled. He began by scoring a 79 on the No. 3 course and was one of the three to break 80 there on that day. He followed with a round of 84 on the No. 2 course which included a 7 on the 17th hole where he got tangled in a trap. His victims in match play, in the order of their coming and going, were Larry Paton, of Boston, winner of the St. Valentine tournament; E. C. Beall, of Uniontown; William F. McPhail, of Boston, one of the Bay State's real stars; and Donald Parson, who had won the tournament a year ago.

The Japanese sharpshooter twice was carried to extra holes, to the 19th by Paton and to the 20th by Beall, who registered a brilliant 3 on the 18th hole to square the match. McPhail bit the

dust thrown up by Akahoshi, 3 and 1, while Parson was stopped in the final by 4 up and 3 to go. In three of his four matches the winner came from behind to win. Paton stood dormie 2 but the man from the Orient was not to be denied. McPhail stood 2 up with six holes to play, then watched the persistent man of Tokyo win four of the next five holes.

The game is growing by leaps and bounds in far-off Japan and this win here of Akahoshi's undoubtedly will do its bit to speed up interest in golf among Akahoshi's countrymen. He went home two summers ago and played on several courses. He says one course, near Yokohama, is of true championship calibre and that there are many fair nine-hole courses in the country.

To John D. Chapman, of Greenwich, went the gold medal for leading the field of 319 to the qualification wire. His opening round of 73 on the No. 3 course gave him a long lead which he held to by stroking the championship course in 78. His total of 151 was eight better than the return of B. P. "Buck" Merriman, of Bridgeport. Third qualifier was McPhail with 84 and 76, this latter being the low of the entire field on the No. 2 course. Scores of 169 put their

makers into the first flight to do battle for the President's trophy which finally went to Akahoshi.

Altogether there were 17 divisions of 16 drawn for match play and, counting prizes for flight winners and runners-up, consolation victors and medalist, the prizes totalled 52.

STATZELL MAKES HOLE IN ONE

One of the outstanding things of the tournament week was a hole-in-one scored by George W. Statzell, of Aronimink, a former Pinehurst Seniors' champion, who putted right into the cup from the tee at the 138-yard 14th hole of the No. 3 course. Here the tee shot calls for play with a mashie over a little pond. W. E. Truesdell, of Garden City, another veteran of links campaigns got a 3 on the 523-yard 17th hole of the same course in the qualification round. A week earlier he had made a 3 on the 537-yard hole of the championship course, so that within a week he got eagle 3's on the two longest holes in Pinehurst.



Rokuro Akahoshi, Winner of the President's Trophy in the Twentieth Annual Spring Tournament last week, in which more than 300 golfers took part.