



SAM SNEAD

TRI-STATE SECTION PGA

Distinguished Service Award

SAM SNEAD was born on May 27, 1912 in Ashwood, Virginia. He was the youngest of five brothers and one sister. His family was of modest means, prompting Sam to go to work at an early age. His first employment consisted of caddying at The Homestead and building the third green at the renowned Cascades Golf Course.

Sam played all sports and at the age of twelve was given some old discarded iron heads from three golf clubs. He went to the local horse stables and got three well-used buggy whips. He drove the whips in the iron heads and had the beginning of his first set of clubs. Sam played with these clubs for some time and realized he needed a driver. His father and he climbed the mountain behind their home and dug up a swamp maple which has a knot below the ground on the root. From the trunk of this tree, Sam carved his first driver to go with his set of three irons. A picture of this club hangs in the Tavern. He says that swinging these limber irons helped him develop his incredible timing and rhythm which he still maintains today.

Throughout Sam's high school years, he excelled in all sports. The records he set at Valley High School in basketball, football and baseball have not been equalled to date. He was voted All-American in football, and was offered scholarships to various colleges. During his senior year of high school, Sam hurt his back in football, and was advised by his coach to rest and work at his golf. He quickly excelled on the golf course, and his coach told him to forget about football and to stay with the golf clubs.

After graduating from high school, Sam turned pro in 1934 at The Homestead. The Cascades hosted a Tour tournament in 1935 and Sam entered against the likes of Sarazen, etc. Snead was three off the lead after three rounds. Nobody had ever heard of this young man from the hills of Virginia. He was driving the ball out of sight. On the last round he drove the par four first hole and two putted for a birdie. The name 'Slammin' Sammy Snead was probably created that day. Sam did not win that

tournament, but only lost by one shot. Sam joined the PGA Tour in 1937. Thus, began a golfing career unmatched by anyone in golfing history. Sam went on to win 184 tournaments.

Sam married his high school sweetheart, Audrey Karnes, in 1940. While honeymooning, Sam won the Canadian Open, and afterwards celebrated at Niagara Falls. They were married for almost fifty years. Mrs. Snead passed away in January, 1990.

Becoming known at first by huge drives, he shot 61 on the way to a local victory in 1936 catching the attention of the golfing world. Sam finished fifth in his first tour event which gave him the encouragement to play the circuit full-time. The rest is history!

Spanning over 60 years, it is unlikely that any other man has performed better, longer than Sam Snead. At age 24, in 1936, he obtained his first victory at a West Virginia PGA event. Continuing on throughout his career chalking up his most recent victories in 1982 and 1983 at the age of 70 when he won the renowned Legends of Golf tournament. In between that time, around the world he has more than 185 victories under his belt, including 140 victories on the American tour.

Sam won seven major championships – three Masters, three PGA championships and one British Open. He also represented his country on nine Ryder Cup and three Canada Cup (World Cup) teams, winning the individual title in 1961 at age 50. During his long golfing career he finished in first place 185 times, second place 63 times, and third place 54 times. Sam finished in the top ten 358 times and in the top twenty-five 473 times. In 1959, he shot a world record 59 in a USGA sanctioned golf tournament.

Over the years, he has set over 100 course records and has made thirty-five holes-in-one.

Sam has become famous for his side-saddle style of putting. Many people have raised their eyebrows at his style, and Sam has always replied in his down-to-earth manner, "When you finish a round of golf, they don't ask you *how*, but *how many!*"

The Greenbrier was the "work home" for Sam Snead for a period covering 38 years (1936-1974).

Coming back in 1992 was only a natural thing.

He still loves to teach and help others to enjoy the game, and gives over 100 lessons each summer.

In recent years (last 5) he has given lessons to Tom Watson (won the Memorial a week later), Vijay Singh (won the PGA later that year), Tom Kite (won on the PGA Tour later that year), as well as Nick Faldo, Peter Jacobson, Craig Stadler and Bobby Watkins.

He still has a keen eye for the golf swing, and still loves to watch golf on TV.