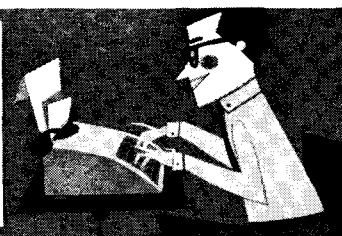


Top of My Head



Fore!

I WAS SORRY to see Mason Rudolph win the Thunderbird Classic Invitational golf match. I always sit before my TV set during these golf classics rooting for the underdog. Mason Rudolph has been the underdog I've rooted for for quite a few years. Now that he's won the big one I have to start looking for a new underdog.

I had grown rather fond of Mason Rudolph—an emotion I don't ever allow to creep into my rooting. But Mason Rudolph has been such an under-underdog and for so long that it had become almost a crusade to root for him. So I was sorry to lose him when he won. I was doubly sorry to read in a newspaper profile story of Rudolph the morning after his big win that his full name is Edgar Mason Rudolph.

I was glad he beat out Jack Nicklaus in the Thunderbird. I gave up rooting for Nicklaus long ago when he won his first big one—The United States Open or the British Closed. Or whatever.

Arnold Palmer and Gary Player have been off my list for years. And the same goes for Billy Casper who only recently spoiled it all by winning a big one.

Not only do I not root for them but I've added to my repertoire of rooting against golfers a whammy. This whammy is so diabolically effective that when you see a golf ball ring the rim of a cup and refuse to drop in, you may know that I have pronounced the magic words. They not only send the ball away from the cup but have often sent it skittering onto another fairway.

Once a golfer wins he loses me. Except Julius Boros. The way I started rooting for Julius Boros was when a friend of mine told me she had a girl friend whose sister is married to Julius Boros. She told me Julius Boros was a professional golfer. So it was only natural that when his name appeared on my TV screen during a golf classic I started rooting for him. Through my rooting he finally won, a few years ago, one of the

biggest classics—the United States Open. Or Closed. Or whatever.

So I gave up Julius Boros. But recently this friend of mine told me Julius Boros had four children and his wife was expecting a fifth. And that it had been some time since he had won another, and could I root for him? But I couldn't let emotion affect my rooting. Besides it irritated me that a man who can get such a low score in one sport should get such a high score in another.

And besides, I had been committed for some time to rooting for the underdog Mason Rudolph. So I gave in and added Julius Boros as an underdog to my rooting for second, third, or fourth money. In the Thunderbird I rooted Julius Boros into a four-way tie for fourth place. He won \$2,975. Which should be adequate for the fifth kid's medicare.

I do not come lightly by my enthusiasm for golf. Years ago a doctor advised I take up golf for health reasons. His health. He couldn't stand seeing me in his office every day. So for one solid, torturous year I played golf every day, summer and winter, accompanied by the assistant pro of the golf club.

The first day my score was 31 over par. By year's end this figure changed drastically. On good days I was shooting 42 over par. And the end was not yet in sight. At the same time the assistant pro who had been shooting along with me in the low seventies had now raised his score to the high eighties.

He suggested I give up the game. I did. I changed sports. I went to gin rummy. My score there has been rather high too. But at least you don't have to dress for it.

I was rather amused to read an interview with Mason Rudolph the morning after he won the Thunderbird. He gave credit for his win to his best friend, Johnny Pott. It seems that after one tournament in which Mason Rudolph had been entirely out of the money Johnny Pott advised him to raise his hands on the club. Mr. Rudolph said he did and that's how he won the Thunderbird. Not a word about my crossed fingers.

I don't mind this anonymity. I'm through with him anyhow. He ruined himself with me the day he won the big one. Just as Johnny Pott ruined him by advising him to raise his hands on the club. Time alone will tell who did the most for him. Johnny Pott or I.

Listening to advice from golfers leads to giving up the game. I'll never forget the advice the assistant pro gave me that last day I played with him. I took it for granted somebody had put the whammy on me. I had not asked him what my trouble was but he volunteered it.

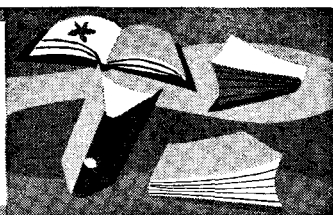
"Your trouble is," he said, "you stand too close to the ball after you hit it."

—GOODMAN ACE.



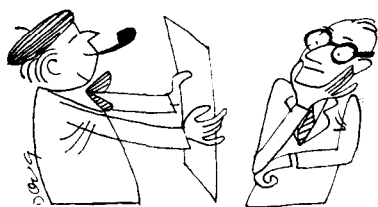
"I no longer have any opinion about anything."

Trade Winds



In shops, in airline terminals, wherever books are sold, I find enjoyment in studying the covers of paperbacks and the jackets on the hard covers. So many of them are so very well done. The versatility is impressive.

What has surprised me is the modest fee the illustrator receives for his work. The average book-jacket illustration brings \$150. The paperback cover—because of the larger print order—brings



from twice as much up to \$500, though the payment is in part determined by the list price of a given book.

Some publishers turn a manuscript over to the illustrator, leave it to him to choose the subject matter, he submits a rough sketch, gets his o.k., and goes ahead. Other publishers, particularly with nonfiction, suggest specifically what they want the illustrator to use. One of the very large paperback publishers adopts the conference method: members of the sales staff, as well as representatives from the editorial and art departments, meet with the illustrator and talk for a whole morning before agreeing on the art approach.

I am told the average specialist turns out from two to three jackets or covers a month. Without other sources of revenue, it would be difficult to make a decent living. Magazine illustrators, on the other hand, receive an average of \$1,500 for a picture for a short story. Al Parker, Coby Whitmore, Austin Briggs, Bernie Fuchs, and Joe Bowler receive more. The magazine market for fiction, however, becomes smaller. Where magazines once used five and six stories per issue, now most of them are down to two or three. Further affecting the illustrators' income has been the disappearance of *Collier's*, *The American*, and *Woman's Home Companion*, which among them used more than 300 illustrations a year.

Already it is obvious I never should have undertaken this twice-a-month assignment. The opprobrium heaped on me by readers who spotted the use of *apprise* (August 6th issue)—when surely I meant *appraise*, and which the

copy room also should have detected—leaves me humble if not altogether defeated.

"The mispronounced word that bothers me most," writes William Harford, "is *asterisk*, the second *s* being so often omitted."

Frequently in more old-fashioned days the use of that small symbol by authors was—like the dash—for the purpose of indicating an obscenity, or a scene in a book better left to the imagination. Inhibitions rarely concern modern writers. For their edification, or at least amusement, here is a notice to performers that was posted on bulletin boards in Keith vaudeville theaters: "Don't say 'slob' or 'son-of-a-gun' or 'hully gee' on this stage unless you want to be canceled peremptorily. If you have not the ability to entertain Mr. Keith's audiences without risk of offending them, do the best you can. Lack of talent will be less open to censure than would



be an insult to a patron. If you are guilty of uttering anything sacrilegious or even suggestive, you will be immediately closed and will never again be allowed in a theater where Mr. Keith is in authority."

This notice was posted by Sir Christopher Wren during the building of St. Paul's cathedral: "Whereas, among labourers and others, that ungodly custom of swearing is too frequently heard, to the dishonour of God and contempt of authority; and to the end that such impiety may be utterly banished from these works, which are intended for the service of God and the honour of religion, it is ordered that profane swearing shall be a sufficient crime to dismiss any labourer."

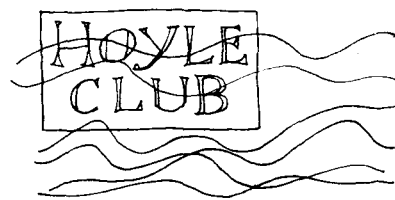
Now that I've had my lesson for the day, let that be a lesson to Saul Bellow, Tennessee Williams, et albee.

George Kaufman and Moss Hart have passed on. Richard Rodgers no longer has Oscar Hammerstein to work with. Alan Lerner and Fritz Loewe have parted company. Arthur Schwartz and

Howard Dietz are now largely inactive.

I know of no personal relationship sweeter than that experienced by Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay, and with the death of the former comes the end of a fabulous era of playwright collaboration. If the word *dear* ever properly described a man, it described Buck Crouse. Evenings at his home, and at the Lindsays', were the most cheerful and *gemütlich*, and never were there more gracious hostesses than Dorothy Stickney and Anna Crouse.

Buck's passing marked the twentieth anniversary of the disbandment of the Hoyle Club, which was the once-a-week poker-playing session that was a form of successor to the original Thanatopsis



group. Of the regulars in the final years, Kaufman, Harold Ross, Theron Bamberger, Bernie Hart, F. P. A., and now Crouse, are no more. There remain only Lindsay, Arthur Kober, and myself. We



distinctive

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