

Graham tames 'Monster' for PGA crown

By DENNIS O'CONNOR

The "Monster" has finally been conquered, but not before giving champion David Graham one last licking.

Graham won the 61st-annual PGA championship at Bloomfield Township's Oakland Hills Country Club yesterday by sinking a nine-foot birdie putt to defeat a frustrated Ben Crenshaw on the third hole of a sudden-death playoff.

Graham earned \$60,000 for his first-place finish. Crenshaw took home \$40,000.

The 33-year-old Australian made a mockery of the mushy, wet greens and short rough at Oakland Hills until the final hole. He breezed along in course-record fashion with seven birdies on his final round before double-bogeying the par-4, 459-yard 18th to force the playoffs.

Graham and Crenshaw finished regulation play with identical eight-under-par scores of 272. This was the third straight year the PGA Championship has been decided by a playoff. It marked the first time in Oakland Hills' history, though, that the winning score of the four-round tournament was under par.

Graham sunk pressure-packed putts of 17 and eight feet on the first two playoff holes to stay alive in the championship. He then saw Crenshaw bogey the par-3, 202-yard third hole before calmly sinking his birdie putt for his first major title and only his fourth victory since joining the PGA tour in 1971.

"I felt like I played the first 16 holes of the golf course as well as I've played," Graham said. "I knew at the beginning it was going to be a long day. I knew I had to make a lot of birdies, and I knew it would be tough when Ben birdied the first three holes."

"I thought I was in the tournament when I started. I knew when I birdied the third hole that I was in the thick of it."

Crenshaw, a 27-year-old Texan, seems to be making a habit of finishing second in recent action. He has finished runner-up in his last four of six tournaments.

"I was fortunate to get in the playoff in the first place," Crenshaw said. "Hats off to David — when you double-bogey at 18 and still end up with a 65 in a major championship, that's one great round."

"I don't like second place worth a damn."

Graham started the final round at three under par, four strokes behind the third-round leader and eventual third-place finisher, Rex Caldwell. In addition to his first two birdies, Graham birdied the seventh, eighth, 10th, 11th and 15th holes. He missed

another birdie by two inches on the ninth hole.

Crenshaw, the second-round leader, entered the final round in second place only, two strokes behind Caldwell. Crenshaw was erratic all day, finishing with six birdies and three bogeys for a 67.

Caldwell, the Cinderella golfer of the tournament, played steady golf all day but never threatened Graham and Crenshaw after the two playoff participants passed him on the leader board. Caldwell finished the final round with a one-over-par 71 for a four-round total of 273 — seven under par and one stroke off the lead. Caldwell's third-place finish earned the Texan \$25,000.

The Oakland Hills course — nicknamed the "Monster" by tour great Ben Hogan after his three-under-par 67

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which lead to his victory in the 1951 U.S. Open — wasn't the challenge to the professionals as many thought it would be.

Nine players finished with sub-par rounds. No player has ever finished with sub-par rounds in the five previous major championships at Oakland Hills.

In fact, many PGA officials were very upset over the numerous sub-par round turned in — an uncharacteristic feature of Oakland Hills or any PGA championship course. The wet greens, plagued by constant rain all week long, played much slower than usual. The

rough was also very short for a major championship.

Tournament officials were not upset with the local turnout, however, as a new, all-time PGA attendance record of 145,102 fans — including 35,569 yesterday and 34,568 Saturday — was set, surpassing the old mark set in 1972 at Oakland Hills.

Local favorites Al Merger and D.A. Weibring both failed to make the cut after the first two rounds were completed on Friday.

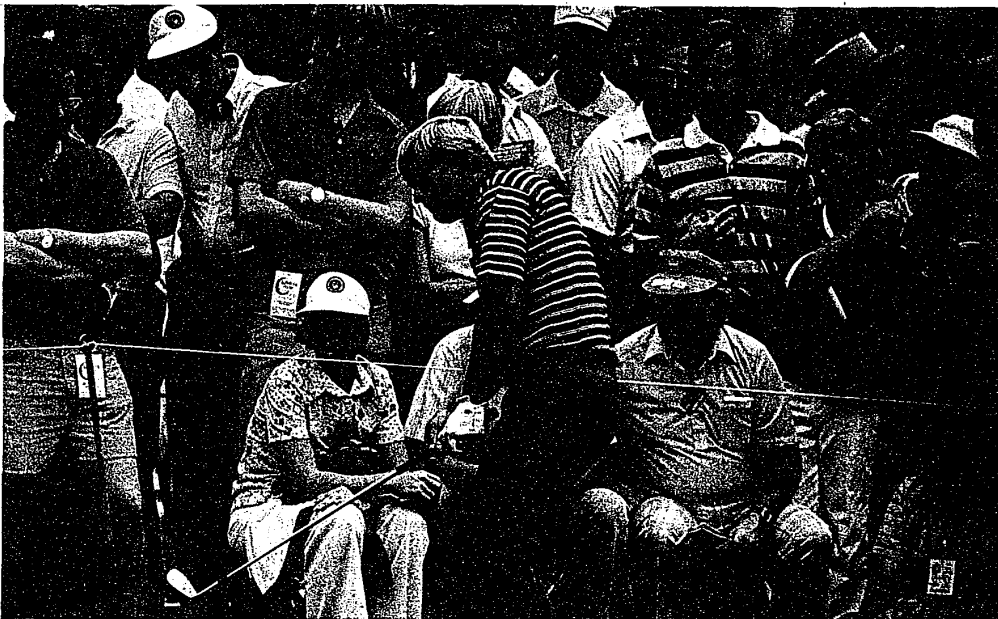
Birmingham's Menger, the host pro at Oakland Hills, shot a 76 on Thursday but came back with a one-over-par 71 on Friday, missing the cut of 146 by only one stroke. Weibring, a former assistant at the Red Run Golf Club and winner of the Quad Cities Open two weeks ago, carded a 76-73 — 149, three

strokes from the cut.

Tom Watson, the tour's leading money winner this year with \$387,386, established himself as one of the championship favorites after his opening-round 66. He entered yesterday's action four strokes off the pace. He shot himself out of the tournament, however, when he triple-bogeyed the par-4, 413-yard 11th hole.

Jack Nicklaus, a pre-tournament favorite, turned into the forgotten man of this major event. He made the cut by three strokes, but shot an eight-over-par 78 Saturday. He finished well back with a 14-over-par 294.

Arnold Palmer experienced a horrendous first round, shooting an 11-over-par 81, which all but knocked him out of the championship. He came back with a 74 on Friday for a 155 total.



Long a gallery favorite, Jack Nicklaus was never a contender in the 1979 PGA championship. But the crowds still watched in awe as the long-time big money

winner pitched a short approach. On Saturday, when Nicklaus shot a 78 and was barely part of the action, his presence still drew intense attention.

(Staff photo by Steve Cantrell)

PGA scorers

Final Tournament Standings

David Graham	69-68-70-65	272
Ben Crenshaw	69-67-69-67	272
Rex Caldwell	67-70-67-71	274
Ron Streck	68-71-69-68	276
Gibby Gilbert	69-72-68-69	278
Jerry Pate	69-69-69-71	279
Don January	68-69-73-69	279
Howard Twitty	70-73-69-67	279
Lee Graham	69-74-69-68	280
Gary Koch	71-71-71-67	280
Andy Bean	76-69-68-68	281
Jerry McGee	73-67-69-70	281
Jack Renshaw	71-74-69-70	281
Tom Watson	66-72-69-74	281
Bob Glider	73-71-68-70	282
Hubert Green	69-70-72-71	282
Bruce Lietzke	68-67-71-76	282
Gene Littler	71-71-67-73	282
Graham Marsh	69-70-71-72	282
Bob Byrnes	72-72-70-78	283
John Schroeder	72-72-70-78	283
Frank Conner	70-73-69-72	284
Rod Funseth	70-69-76-69	284
Peter Jacobsen	70-67-67-73	284
Cary Player	73-70-71-73	284
Alan Tapie	73-68-76-70	284
Mark Barber	73-73-69-71	285
George Burns	71-74-67-73	285
Mark McCumber	76-68-70-72	285
Jackie Nickles	69-70-72-74	285
Dr. Gil Morgan	72-73-70-70	285
Larry Nelson	70-75-70-70	285
Ed Sneed	77-67-70-71	285
Lee Elder	70-71-73-73	287
Lynn Janssen	73-71-73-71	287
Tom Kite	72-72-69-74	287
Jim Masserio	70-73-71-74	287
Bill Rogers	70-72-73-72	287
Dave Stockton	70-75-72-70	287
Lee Trevino	70-73-72-72	287
Calvin Peete	75-71-70-72	288
Sam Snead	73-71-73-73	288
Jimmy Wright	72-69-72-76	288
Kenneth Zarley	73-69-71-75	288
Tommy Aaron	73-73-69-74	289
Jim Colbert	73-73-72-71	289
Don Fadgett	71-73-72-70	289
Chi Chi Rodriguez	71-72-72-74	289
Jim Simons	76-76-75-72	289
Red Curl	72-73-73-73	290
John Mahaffey	72-74-71-73	290
Bob Mann	71-73-71-75	290
Wally Armstrong	74-71-73-73	291
Dave Barber	74-69-71-77	291
Jim Dent	70-72-76-73	291
Leonard Thompson	72-67-78-74	291
DeWitt Weaver	73-73-71-74	291
Fuzzy Zoeller	70-75-70-71	291
Keith Fergus	73-70-72-76	291
Barry Jacek	71-73-73-73	292
Ray Floyd	74-70-77-72	292
Mark Hayes	72-73-77-72	293
Ricky Thompson	72-72-75-76	293
Scott Bees	73-72-75-74	293
Al Geiberger	76-72-75-75	294
Lon Hinkle	73-72-71-78	294
Jack Nicklaus	72-72-78-71	294
Austin Straub	73-70-72-79	294
Lanny Wadkins	71-75-75-78	295
Bobby Wadkins	77-68-75-76	296
Dean Refram	76-69-79-75	298
Dennis Coles	76-76-74-83	303
Ronald Smek	72-74-78-79	303

Graham gets reprieve

Friends battle in playoff thriller

By MARTY BUDNER

Ben Crenshaw is an ardent admirer of David Graham.

Crenshaw, who lost the PGA Championship to Graham in a sudden-death playoff yesterday afternoon at Oakland Hills, is used to playing with the 33-year-old Australian.

"We're very good friends. I've played a lot of practice rounds with David," said Crenshaw, who has now finished second in four of his last five outings. "We've helped each other out a lot. It really seemed strange that we were walking down the course together in the playoff."

Crenshaw was awarded the opportunity to play for the championship when Graham double-bogeyed the 18th green. Graham went on to the last hole

in regulation action with a two-stroke lead.

However, Graham's tee-shot went off the fairway, and his second shot landed in the gallery over the green. Graham missed his chip shot to the hole and eventually scored a double-bogey — his worst single-hole tally of the tournament.

In playoff action both players parred the first hole and birdied the second. It was Graham's consistent putter which kept the playoff alive when he canned two long, pressure putts.

The par 3, 202-yard third hole finally determined the champion.

Crenshaw's first shot landed in a bunker and the second stayed on the green, but slithered well beyond the hole. His first putt circled off the hole and Crenshaw finished with a bogey four.

Meanwhile, Graham's first shot landed on the green just a few feet from the hole. He easily sank his next shot for his first major professional golf championship victory in eight years on the tour.

"I THOUGHT I had him on the first hole and the second, but he (Graham) just made the putts," said Crenshaw. "Finally, I just hit a bad shot on the third hole and that was it."

"I felt like I had it, but he had a good feel for the putter all day," he said.

It was Graham's fourth PGA tour triumph. He had previously won the Cleveland Open (1972) in a playoff over Bruce Devlin, and the Westchester Classic and American Golf Classic in 1976.

With his \$60,000 victory in the PGA, his money total for 1979 now stands at \$113,209. He has won \$558,302 as a professional.

fessional.

"The turning point was when I birdied seven and eight, then again at number 10," said Graham, a Del Ray Beach, Fla., resident. "I was in control of everything I was doing. I don't think the whole situation really hit me until I walked onto the 18th tee."

"The tee shot from the 18th was absolutely the worst shot I had all week. I had no idea where the ball finished up. I had a good lie, but I didn't know exactly how far it was to the green. And there were so many people out there I couldn't get a good angle to the green."

"I used a 6-iron, but I should have used a 7. I tried to get too cute and carry the ball on to the green. I should have just hit it short of the green. When I hit it I thought the ball was going into the clubhouse."

As it turned out, Graham went into the clubhouse a winner.

Golf fans broil like lobsters

By BOB GROSS

Golf fans are like lobsters — they tend to cluster at certain points, turn red when the heat hits them, then usually end up with their tails either broiled or steamed.

But unlike lobsters, golf fans have the collective temperament of Job — they put up with more inconveniences for viewing sake than any other group of sports fans.

Why did 145,102 persons attend the PGA last week and put up with so many inconveniences when they could have stayed home and watched the championship on television?

"It's the thrill of being there," said Walter Brooks of Lansing. "You know you can watch any sport better on the tube — it's just the thrill of being there."

"We got pretty close to Jack Nicklaus," he added, "and that's worth it."

Golf personalities are a big part of a tournament's lure. Sue Atwood of Franklin said, "If you play golf and enjoy the game, it's the experience of being here and seeing the people involved . . . being here and seeing them firsthand."

Atwood said her favorite players were Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player and Andy Bean.

Steve Thomas of Birmingham said, "I don't think the feel of a tournament is as vibrant when you're sitting there in the living room."

"This is the first time I've been to a golf tournament," he continued. "It's real exciting — I think I'm hooked."

While most fans put up with minor inconveniences, such as people standing in front of them, sunburn and rain, at least 60 encountered more serious problems.

Dr. Paul Trimmer of Bloomfield Hills, in charge of the first-aid trailer, said his crew treated 60 patients starting with Monday's practice round. Injuries included allergic reactions to insect bites, blisters and a fractured dislocation of an elbow.

"We haven't had any real bad injuries," said Dr. Trimmer. He noted that his staff treated 16 people for lacerations resulting from having been struck by golf balls.



Texas Rex Caldwell chips the ball up to the green during PGA action yesterday. Caldwell was the third-round leader, but his 71 in

the final round dropped him to third place behind champion David Graham and runner-up Ben Crenshaw. (Staff photo by Steve Cantrell)