

Monday, April 6, 1981

# Arnold Palmer coming to town

By M.B. Dillon  
staff writer

Whether he is with or without his Penzance, Arnold Palmer will be in Bloomfield Hills with his golf clubs this summer.

According to his agent, Palmer will be a contestant in the U.S. Senior Open at Oakland Hills Country Club July 9-12.

Sam Snead, Art Wall Jr., Charlie Sifford, Doug Ford and Jack Fleck are among 50 other seniors already entered, according to a spokesman for the United States Golf Association (USGA).

Doe Giffin, Palmer's agent, said the Senior Open "has been on Arnie's calendar since the first of the year. He sent his entry form into the USGA about 10 days ago."

"It's a first-rate event at an outstanding golf course. Palmer thinks



highly of Oakland Hills," Griffin said.

"Anything the USGA sponsors is going to draw top rankings," he continued. "I'd have been very surprised if Arnie didn't enter, and I think other exempt players (who don't have to qualify) would be fools to pass it up."

Palmer will be packing for both

the Senior Open and a sentimental sojourn, his agent said.

"Palmer has a soft spot in his heart for Detroit," he said. "In 1954, he won the U.S. Amateur at the Country Club of Detroit. That was the springboard to his pro golf career. He turned pro shortly thereafter in '55."

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STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Arnold Palmer, one of the most popular professional golfers on today's tour, will play in this year's Senior Open at Oakland Hills.

## What you need to know about tournament

By M.B. Dillon  
staff writer

It's official.

Arnold Palmer will enter the \$100,000 U.S. Senior Open that arrives at Bloomfield Township's Oakland Hills Country Club July 9.

Other celebrated golfers likely to grace the lauded links include Don January, Billy Casper, Jerry Barber, Gene Littler, Tommy Bolt, Julius Boros and Dow Finsterwald.

Defending champion Roberto DeVincenzo also may turn up to defend his title.

THE CLUB agreed to host the U.S. Senior Open as half

of a package deal offered by the United States Golf Association (USGA). The other half, looked upon by some as the Senior Open's rich relative, arrives in 1983 — the heralded, halved U.S. Open.

"It (the Senior Open) is going to be a great tournament from a gallery perspective," said Bob Wood, tournament chairman.

"We're expecting about 40,000 people — so people will be able to see much better than they could at the 1979 PGA (which drew 140,000 to the 'Monster South course')." So far, the tournament has raised \$94,532 in ticket sales and \$135,950 in advertising revenue.

"Due to the nature of the event itself and the sad state of the economy, we're not expecting this to be a big moneymaker," said Wood, an Oakland Hills official. "We

don't stand much of a chance to make a big paycheck.

"But we accepted it as a service to the USGA. It's a contribution to the game."

"We've discovered it's just as much work as the PGA's in 1972 and 1979 were. We're not doing anything less than we did then."

THE U.S. SENIOR OPEN is really just a baby, and a marginally healthy one at that.

Only golfers 55 years and older participated in its debut last year at New York's Winged Foot, and because the tournament arrived on the heels of the U.S. Open played nearby at Baltusrol, N.J., crowds weren't up to par.

But things should be different on the tournament's first anniversary.

The qualifying age is now 50, and the USGA-groomed course will ensure a stringent test for the players — and a spectacle for spectators.

"Players are just so much better today than they used to be," said Wood.

"But they won't be airmailing the ball over bunkers. It'll be a very difficult course. The USGA visited us long ago and established tee positions and fairway widths."

The South course, nicknamed "the monster" by golfer Ben Hogan after the 1951 U.S. Open, has fast, undulating greens and thick rough that won't assist seniors in shaving strokes off their games, either.

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## Basketball Sparks place 3rd

By Doug Funke  
staff writer

If it's any consolation for the Westland Sparks, they defeated the Chicago Sidewinders, 57-49, Saturday in the consolation game of the 33rd annual National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament Finals.

The Casa Colina Condors, who made the long trip to Westland from California, successfully defended their title with a 61-49 win over the North Florida Renegades.

The Sparks, six-time national champs, led all the way against the Sidewinders. It was 30-17 at the intermission and 47-28 midway through the second half.

Everyone had a chance to play for the Sparks in that game. Dave "Tree" Waller scored 18 points and Ted Chatman netted 15. Leon Sturtz added 10 points to the offensive cause.

THE SPARKS' VICTORY over Chicago in the consolation game, though, was overshadowed by a 57-56 loss to Casa Colina Friday night in a semifinal clash. The Condors and Westland entered that game ranked first and second, respectively, in the nation.

Chicago lost to the Renegades, 56-55, in double overtime in the other semifinal.

The Sparks, playing before a large and partisan crowd at Westland John Glenn High School, led the Condors 25-10 midway through the first half, but ended up on the short end of a 39-31 score at the halftime break.

It was catch-up time throughout the second half, but the Sparks just couldn't quite do it.

What was the difference between the Sparks' duel against the Sidewinders and the Condors?

"Maybe the pressure was off (in the consolation game)," said Bud Rumble, player/coach for the Sparks. "I'd say that was the biggest thing."

"I'd call that (consolation) a pride game," he continued. "I don't believe in going out there and going through the motions for third and fourth place."

Gary Odorowski, veteran forward for the Sparks, agreed.

"It (the consolation) was a nothing game, but you don't want to come in fourth if you're a Spark. Third is bad enough."

Odorowski said that the Condors defensive pressure took the Sparks out of their game.

"We didn't get enough picking," he said. "Our whole game is picking and screening and we didn't do anything. It was like everyone was trying to win the game instead of picking and letting someone else win it."

CHATMAN picked up three fouls within the first 3 1/2 minutes against the Condors and finished with only 10 points. Curtis Bell, Casa Colina's big man, totalled 22 points and 15 rebounds.

Bell tied the single game record for scoring in a NWBT championship game with 29 points against the Renegades.

"Casa Colina has a good ball club," Chatman said. "We just couldn't get all of it clicking at once. We came back, but when we had the chances, we couldn't click."

"The best team doesn't always win," he said with a smile. "Overall, we had a good year (27-3 record)."

The Condors defeated the Sparks by five points earlier this season at a tournament in Kentucky.

IN A ONE-POINT loss, you can look back at any number of factors which may have made the difference.

The Sparks, for instance, committed

12 turnovers against the Condors and converted on only six of 17 foul shots. Many of those misses came on the front ends of one-and-ones.

"There isn't any one factor in a loss," said Denver Brannum, a member of the Wheelchair Hall of Fame. "You could go back to the first play of the game — unless you get a layup in the last two seconds and blow it."

Brannum had difficulty trying to explain the change of tide midway through the first half against the Condors.

"I really don't know. I can't pick one thing out," Brannum said. "We went back and forth. They got up, we couldn't come back and that's it."

RUMBLE SAID he considered the semifinal game against the Condors to be the championship game. "I figured whoever won it would win it all."

"You can't blame it one one person for the loss," Rumble said. "We had easy shots and blew it, they had a couple of quick outs and they seemed to get momentum."

And the missed free throws? "We had a chance to win it right there," Rumble said.

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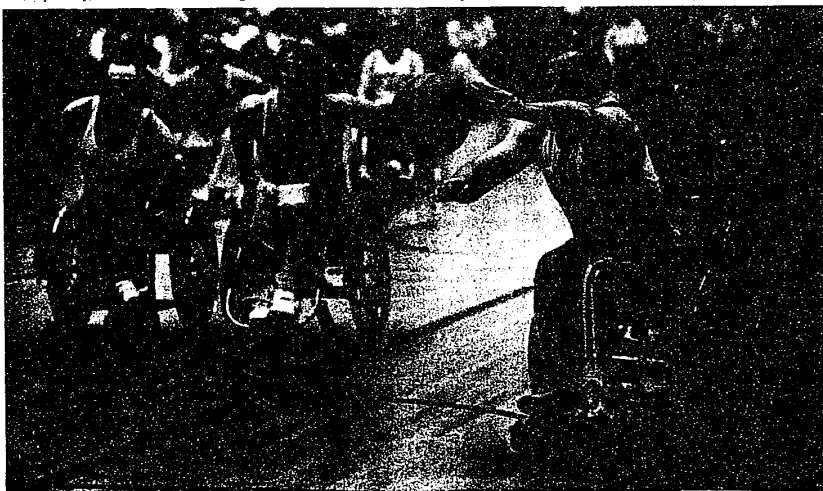
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BILL DRESLER/staff photographer

Gary Odorowski (13) drives toward the basket and an easy layup.