



Sir Walter: Walter Hagen and the Invention of Professional Golf

Tom Clavin

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During the Golden Age of Sports in the 1920s, Walter Hagen was to golf what Babe Ruth was to baseball. The first professional golfer to make his living playing the game rather than teaching it, Hagen won eleven major professional tournaments over his long career -- two U.S. Opens, four British Opens, and five PGA Championships (including an amazing streak of four consecutive PGA wins) -- a record surpassed only by Jack Nicklaus. Hagen was also influential in helping to found the Ryder Cup and was the first American golfer to top \$1 million in career earnings -- a figure equivalent to over \$40 million today.

Award-winning sportswriter Tom Clavin has penned a thrilling biography that vividly recalls Hagen's dazzling achievements and the qualities that made him a star. Energetic, witty, and one of the best putters ever to walk the green, Hagen was a man who loved to party, was extraordinarily generous to his friends, and golfed the world over, giving exhibitions. He preferred to travel by limousine, and if he intended to stay awhile he'd bring a second limo just to transport his clothes, which were nothing but the finest. On his many trips across the Atlantic to compete in the Ryder Cup or British Open, Hagen was known to throw parties that lasted days, ending only when the ship reached the shore. He was also the first professional golfer to admit to playing not only for the love of the game, but also for the love of the winner's purse.

Walter Hagen, forerunner of today's sports superstars, is as dynamic a character as can be found in American sports history. Bringing Hagen to life with incredible detail and countless anecdotes, *Sir Walter* is the authoritative biography of the man who helped create professional golf as it's known today.

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