
100 YEARS OF THE CPGA



Members of the Carolinas Section Executive Committee are, left to right, front row: Tony Evans, Fayetteville; Dugan Aycock, Lexington; Tommy Card, Raleigh; Bobby Howard, Hopkins, S.C.; Johnny Johnston, High Point; and Jack Horner, Durham; Standing, Grant Bennett, Florence; Grady Shumate, Clemmons; Jim McNair, Aiken; and Phil Wiechman, Wilmington.

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Going Full Time

by **Lee Pace**
Author & Historian

Dugan Aycock of Lexington and Aubrey Apple of Greensboro were among the linchpins who kept the Carolinas PGA Section growing and thriving through the growth of the golf industry in the mid-1900s. Aycock, head pro at Lexington Country Club, was section president from 1948-58 and again from 1966-68, and Apple, head pro at Green Valley, was an officer for 11 years and president from 1962-65.

“Aubrey was an all-around golf professional with a lot of class, a good administrator who trained a lot of young men for the profession,” John Derr, later a CPGA Executive Director, said upon Apple’s death in 2000. “He helped hold the section together at times when it was shaky.”

Throughout these years of organizing competitions and promoting the game and the profession in the Carolinas, Aycock and others felt the job had gotten too big for mere volunteers, section officers and committee members.

“The job of running our affairs was just getting too much for the working professionals,” Aycock said. “It had reached the point where an officer had to spend so much time on section matters that he ran a good risk of losing his job.”

Finally in 1967, Aycock, Apple and others in charge were able to

muster the budget and support to hire a full-time executive director from outside the ranks of the club professional. Their target was Jack Horner, a Fayetteville native, three-decade veteran of the newspaper business and for 23 years the sports editor of the Durham Morning Herald. Horner left the newspaper in December 1967 and started working for the Carolinas PGA on Jan. 1, 1968.

Horner at first worked from a home office but was on the road much of the time, estimating his days traveling at an average of 120 from April to December. Among his responsibilities were directing a 35-event tournament schedule; handling the CPGA Employment Bureau; editing and publishing a section yearbook; processing membership applications; collecting dues from apprentice and associate members working toward national PGA membership; and writing a regular newsletter to section membership.



*Jack Horner - First CPGA
Executive Director*

“I only hit the high spots,” he said two years into the job. “I am going in so many directions that I sometimes get the feeling I’m not doing a good job in any area. But when I see the results, I know who to thank — my members. I’m blessed with some of the most dedicated golf professionals in the world.”

“He has done a tremendous job for us,” Aycock said. “I had known Jack for more than 30 years and he was my first choice for the job. He has taken a load off the shoulders of our golf professionals.”

The Carolinas’ move to hire an executive director was among the first of the regional sections to go that route. Horner was featured in a 1969 story in *Professional Golfer Magazine*, the in-house publication of the PGA of America. The headline “Jack of All Jobs” spoke of the many facets of running a typical section of the PGA of America (at the time, there were 36). Corporate sponsorship is de rigueur in all levels of the



Jack Horner & Dugan Aycock

sections now with full-time staff.

“Jack ran the section out of the trunk of his car,” remembers Gary Schaal, who started his career as a golf professional in Myrtle Beach in 1973. “He didn’t have an office. He was the right guy at the right time. He traveled all over the Carolinas, running the tournaments and running the PATs (player ability tests). He did a nice job. He was a media guy, so he knew how to get the word out and generate some interest and energy in the Carolinas.”

Horner led the CPGA until 1976, when more growth prompted section leaders to expand the staff. Derr, a longtime golf journalist, broadcaster and public relations professional, was hired as the new executive director, effective Jan. 1, 1976. Steve Shubala of Jacksonville, Fla., took over as tournament coordinator, and Horner remained on a consulting basis and editor of the yearbook.

Derr was living in Pinehurst at the time and planned to commute for two months to the CPGA office that Horner had established in Durham. Then he would begin working from a new headquarters the CPGA was building in North Myrtle Beach.

“Derr is a well-qualified person,” said Goldboro’s Al Goodrich, section president. “We need someone well-gifted in public relations

sports world today, but Horner was ahead of his time in 1969 by courting American Tobacco Co. of Durham into sponsoring the Carolinas Section Championship to be known as the Tareyton Classic.

“Quietly, and almost unnoticed, there has been an administrative revolution of the grass roots level,” the magazine said in mentioning the many

work and with a thorough golf background.”

“John could walk into boardrooms and a corner office with a little more swagger than the average guy,” Schaal says. “He started raising purses. He could walk into the banks, tobacco companies and pitch them on supporting a tournament. I think he brought Michelob to the table. Everyone knew John and what he’d done in golf.”

Derr, 58 when he joined the CPGA, was a native of Gaston County and as a young man had been a sportswriter in Gastonia, Asheville and Greensboro. After World War II, he settled in New York, worked for CBS, then ran his own PR firm and in 1973 moved to Pinehurst to work for resort owner Diamondhead Inc. and be the chief administrator for the new World Golf Hall of Fame that opened in 1974.

One of his significant career accomplishments was broadcasting from 62 Masters Tournaments.

“I was fortunate to be there, seeing the action, and it was my pleasure to try to let others share my joy through my description,” Derr said. “I was heard by many, but I always tried to put myself in the position of being a reporter for a ‘shut-in’ who could not be there in person. I was telling him or her what was happening — speaking to that one person.”



John Derr Broadcasting from the Masters

Derr presided over the CPGA until 1986 and watched as membership grew from 620 to over 900 and the competitive schedule from 65 events and total purses of \$320,000 to 155 tournaments and \$800,000.

“John was very fatherly toward me,” says Schaal, who was section secretary/treasurer in 1981-84 and president from 1985-86. “He

helped me with some things to be a better pro and a better leader. He told me once, ‘When you go into these meetings, you need to be better prepared than everyone else. I want you to be smarter than me when you’re in the room.’ That was pretty good advice. He’d call me before a meeting and quiz me on the issues. That was a rare talent. He was a media guy but had strong governance skills.”

Schaal advanced from leadership positions in the Carolinas PGA to serving the national PGA, being elected president in 1992.

“You take Dugan Aycok, Aubrey Apple, Jack Horner and John Derr, they were personality lookalikes, they were very successful back in the day,” Schaal says. “They ran a good program. A lot of people rose to national office, we had good players and the section grew like crazy. We were always playing more events for more money than any of the other sections.”

Will Mann was another PGA leader of the late 1900s, serving on the section board from 1985-91 and being elevated to president in 1992-93. From there he served on the national PGA board and was its president from 1999-2001.

“Every section thinks they’re the best, but the Carolinas is the best,” Mann says. “Membership numbers, tournaments, purses, quality of golf courses—I don’t think you can beat our section. We had great leaders going a long way back to put us in that position.”



LEE PACE is a Chapel Hill-based golf writer who has written about the history, architecture and great golfers of the Carolinas over four decades. He has written more than a dozen club histories and in 2021 released along with UNC Press his book, "Good Walks--Rediscovering the Soul of Golf at 18 Top Carolinas Courses."



PGA

Carolinas Section

100 YEARS

★ 1923-2023 ★