

# UP-AND-DOWN ROUND PASSES VECHTE (79)

# Rankin's Scramblin' Earns Win

By ALAN LASSILA

Powerful Bob Rankin put together a string of birdies early in the final round and then salvaged a crucial par on the 72nd hole of the tournament with two brilliant shots to charge past staggering Jack Veghte and youthful John Darr, a pair of former champions, for his first Florida State Amateur Golf Championship Sunday at Longboat Key Golf Club.

Rankin, who won the Ohio State Amateur title in 1955 and was third in last year's Florida event, birdied six holes to offset two bogles and a pair of near-disastrous double

bogeys as he wiped out Veghte's four-stroke lead.

The 40-year-old Ohio State graduate carded an even par 72 for a 288 total, two shots better than Darr and three ahead of Veghte.

Roger Kennedy of Pompano Beach fired a final round 75 to take fourth place with a total of 294. Dick Stephens of St. Petersburg took fifth at 295 and Plantation's Dennis Iden, the leader for the first two days, and Mickey Van Gerbig of Palm Beach deadlocked at 296.

Veghte's totally unexpected collapse — he wound up the

day with a 79 — set the stage for his Clearwater neighbor to breeze into a three-shot hudge after the 15th hole.

Rankin saw his drive bounce out of bounds on the par-three 17th hole and suffered his second double bogey of the round, dropping him back to even par for the day.

Then, trying to reach the par-five 18th hole in two, he hit a four-wood that flew directly toward the green — but not far enough. The shot dropped into the lake protecting Longboat's challenging finishing hole and with it, thought Rankin, went his title hopes.

## SCORES

### CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT

Bob Rankin	71-73-75-71—288
Clearwater	71-73-75-71—288
John Darr	73-65-70-79—291
Jack Veghte	71-74-74-75—294
Roger Kennedy	71-73-80-78—302
Pompano Beach	72-73-76-74—295
Dick Stephens	66-73-84-75—296
St. Petersburg	72-73-76-74—296
Dennis Iden	72-72-73-74—296
Plantation	70-73-81-74—298
Palm Beach	74-73-76-75—298
Robt. Myers	71-75-73-81—300
Richard Leckey	75-74-78-74—301
St. Petersburg	73-76-75-78—302
Miami	71-73-80-78—302
Clearwater	77-71-74-81—303
Howard Everett	75-71-79-79—304
Delray Beach	74-73-82-78—306
Hal Hutchinson	73-75-81-77—306
Bill Woodke	73-75-78-81—306
Clearwater	71-73-80-78—306
Jack Smith	71-77-80-84—312
St. Petersburg	73-74-81-83—311
Jack Leckey	72-73-77-90—312
Bud Alexander	71-77-80-84—312
Roy Ford	72-77-81-84—314
W. Palm Beach	72-77-81-84—314
Jack Sullivan	74-75-85-82—314
Edinburgh	71-73-84-no card
Jack Leckey	73-75-79-no card
Plant City	73-75-79-no card
St. Petersburg	75-74-77-no card
Clearwater	75-74-77-no card
Luther Essex	75-74-77-no card

### FIRST FLIGHT

Ted Lindsay	76-77-75
Frank Arskin	76-74-74
Jim Bechtel	77-75-79
Bob Bechtel	74-77-74-81
Carl Hunter	77-76-79-75
St. Petersburg	73-78-78-81—311
H. O. Davis	76-74-80-83—312
Clearwater	77-75-78-81—312
Clearwater	77-74-86-79—315
Orlando	77-75-81-82—315
Orlando	72-80-80-83—315

### SECOND FLIGHT

Robert Moss	77-79-74-77
Pelee Resh	75-78-85-83
Raymond Boyte	80-74-79-80—313
Shuman	77-78-77-82—314
Jim Timm	75-82-81-79—315
Jensen Beach	77-79-79-83
St. Petersburg	75-82-82—324
Andy Hunter	79-76-85-86—324
John Killing	74-80-86-86—326
Scalets	80-78-88-88—327
Gene Dunn	75-78-86-88—327
Deerfield Beach	74-81-81-withdraw
Don Tarnow	74-79-89-withdraw
Kirkland	75-81-85-withdraw

### THIRD FLIGHT

N. Harris	76-78-76-78—310
John Canzani	76-81-78-76—311
Whitcomb	76-81-78-76—311
P. Chartrand	76-81-82—319
D. Lester	78-79-81-81
Donna Balle	79-78-79-81
Tom Almon	79-78-79-81
Douglas	79-78-79-81
W. R. Watts	79-78-81-81
H. Spence	79-78-81-81
K. Spence	79-78-81-81
D. Mast	81-76-87-no card
M. Feltus	81-76-87-no card

### FOURTH FLIGHT

Mike Killian	80-79-88-71
B. Baugh	80-79-76-76—311
Key Seales	79-80-81-82—319
W. Williams	79-80-81-82—322
Ben Brown	80-79-83-86—328
W. Schmidt	78-81-81-91—331
Jack Dedon	80-78-87-88—332
Larry Pelton	79-79-89-90-76-withdraw
Fred Kelly	80-79-79-withdraw

“When I hit that wood shot into the water on the 18th, I thought I had lost it for sure,” he said later after accepting his tournament silver. “I thought I was about even with Jack at that point.”

Though Rankin was unaware of it at the time, Veghte had lost another shot to par and was still one behind. But, thinking the whole tournament rested upon his next two shots, Rankin lofted a nine-iron to within 12 feet of the pin and rolled in the putt for a fantastic par five.

Veghte still had a chance to catch his close friend with a pair of birdies on the final two holes. But the defending champion couldn't come up with the necessary shots bogeying the par-three 17th after pushing his tee shot into the sand trap and accepting a par on the final hole.

Darr, who recently graduated from the University of Florida, had played a steady if unspectacular, round and earned sole possession of second place with what he termed a “lucky, freak shot.” Darr chipped in from the right side of the green for a birdie four. The wedge shot was struck “much too hard” but the ball caught the pin and plopped into the hole.

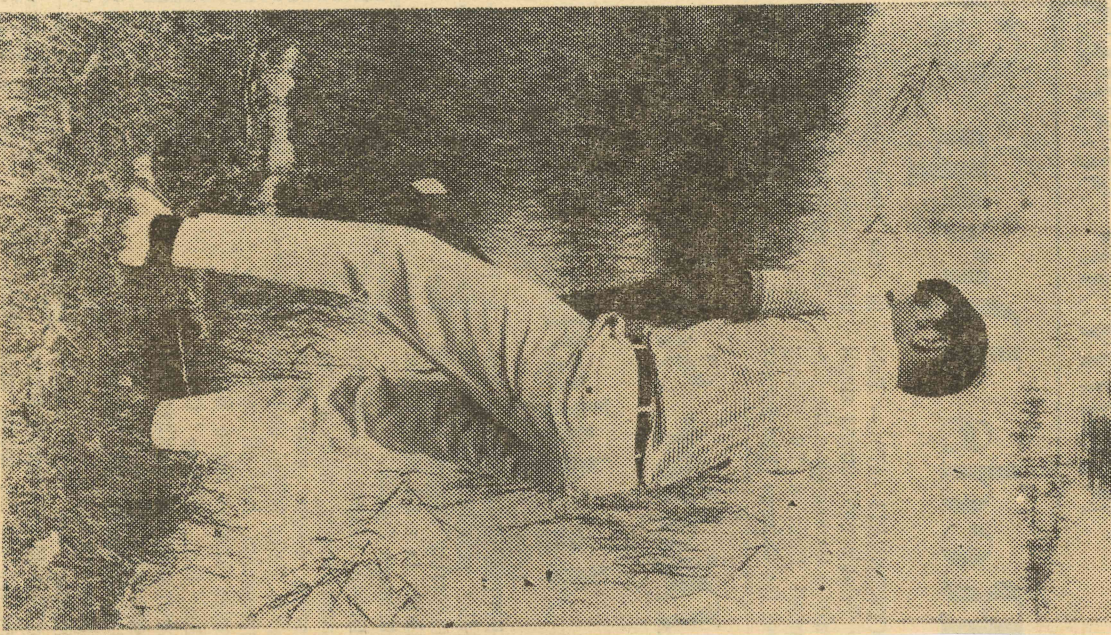
Veghte saw his seeming commanding lead evaporate almost as quickly as Dennis Iden's had the day before. He made the turn in three-overs after bogeying the first five, eighth, and ninth against a single bird on the seventh hole. Any chance of recovery ended for him when he bogeyed four of six holes on the back nine.

Admitting that the tensic of leading the tournament the last day bothered him Veghte said, “I missed even important putt I had at that's the name of the game While Longboat's overabundance of water hazard caused many of the players to alter their club selection Rankin stuck with his trusty driver and was long off the tee, which were moved back for the final two rounds of the tournament.

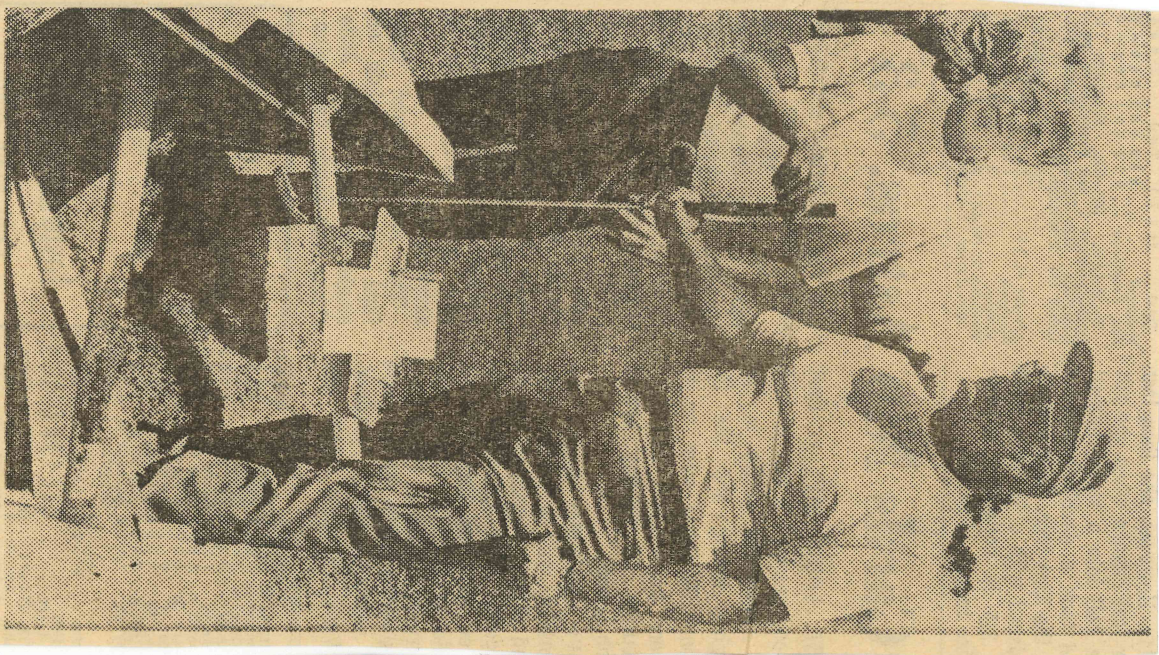
“Tee shots are the key playing on this course,” said. “I hit my driver belt off the tee than either in three or four-wood. After a you can hit a four-wood straight into the water just as easily as one with a driver.”

Rankin, who was just about the only player in the tournament to avoid a bad round, said he was “just lucky to win. Sure is a suspenseful course.”

For the state's amateur the suspense is over and the man who conquered it has trophy to prove it.



—Herald-Tribune Photo by Mike Davis  
**John Darr Cut This One Close**  
... at water's edge on 11th hole



—Herald-Tribune Photo by Jim Townsend  
**Ed Kirkland, 1963 State Am Champ**  
... Ed, Jr., 12, hands him a putter

### SIXTH FLIGHT

Sid Dosh	84-80-77-78—319
Leach	80-84-77-79—320
W. Paxson	82-84-79-78—323
B. McSillers	82-84-79-82—323
B. Tom	78-86-81-86—323
J. Dunham	78-86-81-86—323
Abe Crocker	78-86-81-86—323
W. Sian Hines	82-84-80-no card
Tom Tarnow	82-84-80-no card

### SEVENTH FLIGHT

R. V. Collins	86-81-82
Joe Higgins	85-85-87-84
Jim Young	84-86-84
C. J. Gunn	85-82-85
John Geigley	85-82-85
D. Bowman	86-82-86-82
Jim Keith	86-82-86-82
G. Schwentk	86-82-86-82
Bob Hays	86-82-86-82
W. L. Colvin	86-82-86-82

### EIGHTH FLIGHT

R. Hendley	91-89-87-84—351
D. Barry	88-82-94-88—363
W. McElhenny	88-82-94-88—363
P. Arnold	88-82-94-88—363
R. Cryzler	91-88-96-no card



SARASOTA -- Clearwater's tough Bob Rankin fought off veteran players, fantastic first round scores, limber-backed high school and college long-knockers, floods and high winds to walk away a winner in this year's State Amateur Championship. Rankin's steady 71-73-72-72, even par 288, took the title over a strong field at the long and narrow Longboat Key Country Club.

Rankin began the final round four shots behind defending champion Jack Veghte who had carved a magnificent three-day, four-under-par total of 212. Shades of Custer's last stand and The Super Bowl, it appeared as if everyone but Veghte would be playing for second place. Dennis Iden had come and gone with 66-73 and then ballooning to 84 on Saturday. John Darr was playing well but certainly not with the style that earned him the title and the tournament record of 278 at PGA National in 1967. He and Roger Kennedy were deadlocked at 219, unable to "get it going." Also at 219 after three rounds was long time Florida amateur standout Al Johns of Punta Gorda. Johns has just recently returned to tournament play after prolonged back trouble and stated that he was very happy to be playing this well and was "just trying to get his game back in shape." Sunday looked like a walk in the sun for Veghte.

Veghte began his final round with a bogey at the dog-leg, par four, first hole. He picked up another bogey at the long, watery fifth and then got a stroke back with a birdie at seven, a par five. Then, out of character for the Clearwater straight shooter, he pulled his tee shot into the left trap at the par three eighth and took a bogey and hit a poor tee shot behind a clump of palms at nine to make

bogey five. With a three over par 39 on the front side, the old-timers around Longboat figured the "wheels had come off" Veghte's game and it would be hard to make a comeback on the more difficult back nine.

Rankin, meanwhile, playing in the foursome just ahead of Veghte, had managed an even par 36 on the front and narrowed the gap between the two to one shot. Rankin's first nine holes included four birdies, two bogies and a double bogey.

Veghte began the back nine 4-4-5; Rankin started 4-4-4 on the first three long par fours and they were even. He birdied the 490 yard par five 13th hole and went out in front. Another birdie at 15 and a double bogey at 17 when his drive went out of bounds left Rankin at 18 tee three strokes ahead of Veghte and a hard-charging John Darr. Believing he was even with Veghte, Rankin went for the island-green, par five 18th with a four wood second shot and fell short into the moat. He took his penalty shot and hit a nine iron approach twelve feet from the cup. He knocked in that "character builder" for the victory.

Finishing on 18 behind Rankin, John Darr chipped in from the right side of the green for a birdie four and edged Veghte for second place with a 290 total. Veghte's final 79 put him third, three strokes ahead of Roger Kennedy who finished with 75.

Bob Rankin, who won the Ohio State Amateur in 1955 and finished third in the Florida Amateur at Panama City two shots behind Veghte last year, accepted the silver punchbowl set and the historic Camp Bowl for his victory in this 52nd renewal of Florida's oldest continuous sports event. He was the only contender in the tourney to avoid the "one bad round" and stated he was "just lucky to win. It sure is a suspenseful golf course."

Longboat Key, Sarasota . . . Well, the smoke has cleared. The shooting has stopped. Even the rain has stopped. The Florida State Golf Association's Amateur Championship is over. The natives around these parts are still reasonably proud of the fact that nobody broke par on their course for four rounds. The state's best amateur golfers are convinced they can't do it. They are also convinced about a couple of other things:

- 1) It rains in Florida in mid-June.
- 2) Longboat Key Golf Club has, by actual count, 47 water hazards and six and a half million palm trees. Host pro John Kindred claims there is at least one golf ball in each tree. There is also one alligator in each hazard, not to mention a few thousand balls.
- 3) Of the 158 players who began the tournament, 118 of them returned a 72 hole total. Officials believe that a few of the contestants may still be on the course. Another widely held theory is that they were washed away in the great flood during what will become known as Wet Friday. One of the players, Steve Morgan of Orlando, was, in fact, blown into the pond, clubs and all, as he made a run for the "ark" on that fateful day.
- 4) Of the contestants interviewed, 99% of them were more familiar with the name Bob Rankin than with Orville Moody.



An official report on the weather was obtained from Senator Jim Williams of Ocala, an early Fourth Flight favorite until Mike Killian shot out the lights the last two days with 69-71. Williams said on Wet Friday that he had checked with the State Capital and with his office in Ocala and had gotten the long range forecast. Said Williams, "It is raining everywhere in the World."

FSGAer Laine Rinker of Stuart, on his way to a four day total of 321, stood on the bank of one of the hazards looking for an errant tee shot. The slippery bank gave way and Laine went into the water up to his package of tees. A fellow competitor, taking advantage of the situation, asked Rinker to stroll down the hazard a few feet and look for his ball, "Since you're already wet." Rinker obligingly climbed out of the water and squished down the bank. Turning to look for the fellow's ball, he again slipped and went in. Said Laine, "I should have realized that from the last time. It's slick and I'm goin' with the grain."

Jack Graves, Longboat's Golf Course Superintendent who did such a great job of keeping the championship course in excellent condition, has his tournament tale too. Graves and his crew had to define all the water hazards according to FSGA specifications before the tournament began. He reports that it took 450 red stakes.



As a general rule, golfers are a happy lot and this group was no exception. The winners and runners-up and even some of the "No-Cards" gathered on the porch of the sprawling Longboat Key Clubhouse to congratulate Bob Rankin on his fine even par total and the impressive victory as he received the coveted Clarence Camp Championship Bowl. Club Manager Jerry Tinkle broke out the champagne and all present began looking for new ways to toast the victory and the successful completion of the tournament at what, for a little while, was Casual Water Country Club. As the second or third bottle of bubbly popped its cork, FSGA Executive Director Bill Carey, commenting on host Tinkle's generosity with the Welk-Ade, said, "Jerry, we might not play the tournament here next year, but we sure will come back here to award the prizes."





Herald-Tribune Staff Photo by Jim Townsend

*Unidentified 'Tippy-Toe' Belter*  
... tees off on No. 5 at Longboat