



Tom Gaffney.

were greatly appreciated over a period of 25 years, until 1950.

As part of Open Week in July 1925, Holley won a 36-hole professional event by three strokes from Tom Gaffney, with rounds of 74 and 73. And in an 18-hole event a year later, top prize went to the Royal Dublin clubmaker, Fred Smyth after a course-

record 69, which stood until the course was extended five years later. Gaffney was five strokes back in third place, while Holley had a disappointing 77.

There was also a member/professional fourball competition, which was won by Jack Quinn, in partnership with S Martin Ashlin, the club president, with the fine score of 10 up.

Gaffney's performance in those professional events would have been considered quite admirable, given that he was essentially a teacher who made only the odd foray onto the competitive scene. We are told that he had an enormous affection for the course, while his teaching skills created a lasting bond between himself and a grateful membership.

While Gaffney was a gifted teacher, the club encouraged him to maintain a competitive edge, as can be gleaned from the payment of a gratuity of £7 for him to play in the Irish Professional Championship at Castlerock, in 1933. And a £5 cheque was paid for the "T Gaffney Gratuity" in 1928. The quid pro quo, however, was that where club duties were concerned, he was expected to be on the course at 8.0am, though he could "go back for breakfast." He was also expected to be in attendance at the club for the whole of Saturday, though he could take a half-day on Tuesday.

His son Willie was becoming established as Tom's successor when the club had a visit from a representative of the magazine "Irish Golf" late in 1955. The scribe, "T M", later reminded his readers that while Harry Bradshaw had shot a 65 around Killiney in 1943, 70 had been broken only once there is competition over a period of 40 years. As indicated above, that was by Fred Smyth in an invitation event in 1926 on what was then an appreciably shorter layout.

Danny O'Brien, who started out as an assistant at Co Louth, had graduated to the role of resident professional at Ennis before moving to Laytown and Bettystown in 1954. It was during eight years there that he guided the golfing fortunes of outstanding players such as Declan Branigan, Des Smyth and his older brother Val, before moving to Killiney at the end of 1961.

While colleagues such as Christy O'Connor, Harry Bradshaw, Jimmy Martin, Norman Drew, Ernie Jones and Christy Greene were competing on the then embryonic European Tour, O'Brien was satisfied he could make a good living from his shop at Killiney and giving lessons to the members. So it was that he began work each morning at 8.30 and remained active throughout the day, whatever the weather.