The LPGA Teaching and Club Professionals: A History
The 1960s

Shirley Spork

In 1960, **Shirley Spork** was elected chairperson of the LPGA Teaching membership and served in that capacity through 1967. **Jane Read** (1968-70) took over for the remainder of the decade.

Under the guidance of Spork and **Barbara Rotvig**, the first **LPGA National Golf School** was conducted in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1960. Spork and Rotvig are credited with most of the organizational efforts and beginning the LPGA Teaching membership's legacy of **"teaching teachers to teach."**

The first LPGA National Golf School staff included **Ellen Griffin**, **Betty Hicks**, **Mary Ann Reynolds**, **Jackie Pung**, **Mary Lena Faulk**, **Marilynn Smith**, **Spork** and **Rotvig**. These early members of the LPGA Teaching division were considered pioneers in their own right, entering a world that up until that time had been predominantly male.

LPGA National Golf School – University of Vermont

"Although the LPGA Executive Board donated $500 to fund the first school, later schools were financially self-maintained strictly from the attendees' fees. The

objectives of these schools were to:

1. Learn to teach golf more effectively;
2. Increase LPGA teaching membership;
3. Improve one's own game, and
4. Make it known that the LPGA has standards of acceptance so that the PGA would rely on these qualifications for hiring women professionals

"The schools were offered to:

1. Prospective future teachers of golf
2. Physical education teachers and coaches
3. Members of the LPGA Teaching Division
4. Interested local women golfers.

"The first National Golf School was highly successful due to the countless hours donated by the first LPGA staff. Those in attendance were given certificates of completion, and, if interested, could apply to become future applicants to the LPGA Teaching Division.

"In 1966, The National Golf Foundation (NGF) entered the scene, and in cooperation with many LPGA members, was beginning to aid in the educational process. Ellen Grifffin had been touring the country, lecturing and giving clinics to educators learning how to teach golf. In her third year, Griffin asked for LPGA members **Shirley Spork** and **Lorraine Abbott**'s assistance. Spork, Abbott, and Griffin, along with countless other LPGA and PGA members, provided golf education seminars, through the NGF, for teaching coaches and teachers."

Shirley Spork holding a clinic

" Griffin was a pioneer in large group instruction in the schools and had co-authored with LPGA's Betty Hicks, the valued *Golf Manual for Teachers*. "Those first participants saw some history in the making. They had the privilege of viewing seven loop films by Ellen Griffin, golf coach at the University of North Carolina and her creative partner, University of Michigan coach, Barbara Rotvig, Griffin, Rotvig, (and other teachers) isolated fundamental golf skills for a series of 2-3 minute continuous loop films cartridged for use in a special 8mm projector. So valuable were these repeated visual performances for the student that the Athletic Institute decided to produce loop films in all sports being taught in the schools at the time.

"Response to NGF's consultant service to the schools was so positive that, between 1966 and 1976, the number of

Ellen Griffin

consultants grew from eleven to sixty. Again, LPGA Teaching Division members were highly visible. Those who gave untiringly of their time were **Lorraine Abbott, Marge Burns**, **Mary Dagraedt**, **Ann Casey Johnstone, Mary Beth Nienhaus**, **DeDe Owens**, **Goldie Bateson**, **Carrie Russell, Barbara Smith, Peggy Kirk Bell,** and **Carol Johnson**.

"The remuneration for consultant service was modest, with a token honorarium and expenses jointly provided by the NGF and the co-sponsoring school. The real satisfaction came from knowing we had helped the schools become more knowledgeable about golf and how to teach and coach successfully in the school setting. It also came from affording our consultants the opportunity to share and learn from one another as they teamed up for clinic work or attended staff seminars." -- Lorraine Abbott

The preceding quoted material from "National Golf Schools, 1961-1966" by Kay McMahon with contributions from Shirley Spork and "The Relationship Enjoyed Between the LPGA and the National Golf Foundation During the Period of 1966 thru 1976" by Lorraine Abbott. Both articles were published in the *LPGA Teaching Division Register, 1950-1990,* LPGA Teaching and Club Professional Division

The LPGA National Teacher of the Year Award

The LPGA National Teacher of the Year Award was established in 1958, one year before the founding of the LPGA Teaching Division. Helen Dettweiler was the recipient of that inaugural award, followed by:

Peggy Kirk Bell

1958 - **Helen Dettweiler**
1959 - **Shirley Spork**
1960 - **Barbara Rotvig**
1961 - **Peggy Kirk Bell**
1962 - **Ellen Griffin**
1963 - **Vonnie Colby**
1964 - **Sally Doyle**
1965 - **Goldie Bateson**
1966 - **Ann Casey Johnstone**
1967 - **Jackie Pung**
1968 - **Cloria Fecht**
1969 - **JoAnne Winter**

Click here for a complete listing (to 2008)

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Ann Casey Johnstone

Jackie Pung

JoAnne Winter

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