

## ***ABOUT MASON RUDOLPH***

Vanderbilt Golf's annual tournament is named for Tennessee golfing legend Mason Rudolph, who after a long and fruitful 21-year playing career in professional golf, joined the Commodore program as the team's head coach in 1992 for five seasons and then served as the Director of Golf for another five seasons after his stint as head coach.

Rudolph joined the PGA Tour in 1959, but made his mark nine years earlier on the amateur golf scene, qualifying for the 1950 U.S. Open at the age of 16 and then later in 1950, becoming the first 16-year old to win the prestigious USGA National Junior Amateur Championship. From nearby Clarksville, Rudolph won back-to-back TSSAA championships in 1951 and 1952 and represented a victorious United States side as a member of the 1957 Walker Cup team.

His accomplishments as a junior player did not go unnoticed. In 1999, Rudolph was selected by Golf World magazine as one of the Top 10 Best Junior Boys of the 20th Century. Rudolph played collegiate golf at the University of Tennessee and Memphis State (now the University of Memphis) before being called into military service.

After serving, Rudolph joined the PGA Tour in 1959 and was named the Rookie of the Year. He won five official PGA Tour events during a 21-year career, playing 15 Masters and 16 U.S. Open Championships. Rudolph also was a six-time winner of the Tennessee State Open (1956, '59, '63, '64, '66 and '72). Also during his professional career in the 60's, Mason amazingly played 105 consecutive events without hitting a ball out of bounds.

In 1971, Rudolph again was selected to represent his country, this time on a Ryder Cup team that included Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Lee Trevino and J.C. Snead. Again, Rudolph's American side took the event.

Rudolph was elected as a charter inductee into the Tennessee Golf Hall of Fame in 1990, and was inducted into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 1995.

Rudolph, who passed away in 2011, was a mainstay around the Vanderbilt golf course and practice range, and all of those who knew Mason came away a better person. His stories still permeate the Vanderbilt Legends Club and he will never be forgotten in the Commodore golf community.