

# Buick's 10 Most Memorable Players

By Jack Saylor

## JACK SAYLOR: BUICK'S 10 MOST MEMORABLE PLAYERS- AN ENCORE COLUMN

*As the Buick Open approaches each year, my mind turns toward the late great Jack Saylor. I remember tossing down a cold one at the Airport Bar in Waterford in the early 80's and telling him I was about to start a new golf publication, The Michigan Golfer. Since we were in the company of my father and Harold Horn, a life long friend of both, I knew his response would be tempered. He indicated that publishing was a tough business, but that there was room for a golf publication and let me know that he would be willing to help out the magazine got off the ground. Almost 30 years later the MG continues to motor on and part of its rich editorial heritage is the content that still lives on in our Michigan Golfer archives <http://www.michigangolfer.com/news.html>*

*We have run this a couple of other times in the past and always get some nice feedback. Please enjoy a Saylor classic.*

### 1. Tony Lema, 1964.

A latter-day Walter Hagen, who exuded good cheer and appreciated a good victory and was willing to share. Champagne corks popped in the pressroom, a nickname was celebrated and, best of all, he won again in '65. Alas, he left us far too soon.



Peter Jacobsen, 1980.

### 2. Peter Jacobsen, 1980.

It may have been the hybrid Buick-Goodwrench, but didn't lessen the impact on this talented, friendly competitor. The lasting memory was Jake holding month-old daughter Amy with one arm while accepting the trophy as Amy barfed all over Daddy's shirt.

### 3. Hale Irwin, 1981.

Although he usually prevailed on more difficult tracks (i.e. three



Hale Irwin, 1981

U.S. Opens, two Memorials, etc.), this all-time great showed he could go birdie-to-birdie in a shoot out, too. He emerged from one of the tightest Buick finishes from a four-

way playoff with defending champion Jacobsen, Gil Morgan and Bobby Clampett.

#### 4. Ben Crenshaw, 1986.



Photo by Mark Arpin

**Ben Crenshaw,  
1986**

Scored a popular victory by pulling off one of the best shots in Buick history. At the short, par-five 13th, where a par usually lost you ground to the field, his second shot nestled against the trunk on the wrong side of a little pine tree for the right-handed

Crenshaw. No problemo. Gentle Ben turned lefty, flipped his wedge to the reverse side and popped a shot within a couple of feet to save his birdie-and perhaps the title.

#### 5. Robert Wrenn, 1987.

This likeable Virginian picked Warwick Hills for his “15 minutes of fame,” which lasted a torrid four days in which shot an unbelievable 26-under par 262 and missing tying Ben Hogan’s record by a Sunday bogey at No. 14, one of the very easiest holes. The victory touched off seven financial-productive years, but no more wins before he exchanged clubs for microphone.

#### 6. Julius Boros, 1963.

Nobody tired of watching Big Jay’s rhythmic, easy-going, smooth swing, wondering how he generated such power, plus the equally effective work around and on the greens. A giant of the era, he beat perennial runner-up Dow Finsterwald by one shot. He loved fishing the ponds in his spare time so he returned and won again in ‘67.

#### 7. Dave Hill, 1969.

One of the hardest workers and greatest strikers of the ball ever to



Photo by Mark Arpin

**Robert Wrenn, 1987**



Photo: Michigan Golfer Archives

**Dave Hill, 1969**



trod the tour, Peck's Bad Boy avenged brother Mike Hill's loss of 1968 (to Tom Weiskopf), with a fine 11-under 277 that put him in the books as the last Buick Open champ as management pulled the plug on the event until cooler heads thankfully prevailed nine years later.

## 8. Fred Couples, 1994.



**Fred Couples, 1994**

Coming to Warwick after a long layoff and fighting back problems, Couples seemed like a poor bet even to make the cut. But with his lazy, effortless Boros-like swing

style, Couples ignored inclement weather, even endured a 36-hole day and won going away with a blazing 18-under 270.

## 9. Chip Beck, 1990.



**Chip Beck, 1990**

Never altering his smile whether making birdie or double-bogey and had the groove this week to win another exciting four-man playoff with another fan favorite, Fuzzy Zoeller, along with U.S. Open playoff rivals that year, Hale Irwin and Mike Donald. The company liked Beck, too, and signed him as a Buick spokesman.

## 10. Billy Casper, 1958.



**Billy Casper, 1958**

There was more chalk lines on Warwick Hills than on the local football field to mark unplayable, free-drop areas on the new and quite rough golf course, but the \$100,000 purse was crisp (Sam Snead said they'd play down Woodward Ave. for that money). The field was classy and so was the winner as Buffalo Billy nipped Arnold Palmer, along with Ted Kross, by one shot. It started a great Michigan tradition. [http://michigangolfer.com/aug00/buick\\_top10.html](http://michigangolfer.com/aug00/buick_top10.html)

**MG**

### Other Saylor Archives

“How low can they go?” 2002 article

by Jack Saylor

<http://www.michigangolfer.com/aug02/buickopen.html>

“Jack Saylor: Golf's Piano Man,

by Art McCafferty

<http://www.michigangolfer.com/jan04/index.html>

“A Tribute to Jack Saylor”

Michigan Golfer Television

<http://michigangolfer.tv/2004shows/saylor/>