

Palmer Is Back At Favorite Course

By BOB MYERS
Associated Press Sports Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Arnold Palmer is back at one of his favorite golf courses, the Ranch municipal course in West Los Angeles, hopeful of winning the \$100,000 Los Angeles Open.

The 72-hole winter fixture gets underway Thursday and the opposition for Arnie and his California army is formidable.

There is Billy Casper, the defending champion; U. S. Open champion Lee Trevino, and many

of the top professionals who dominate the sport.

A year ago Casper, on his 13th attempt, finally won the Los Angeles Open, and went on to win more money for the year than anyone else—about \$205,000.

But Casper's victory was registered on another golf course, Pasadena's Brookside municipal layout, a site chosen by the pros because certain improvements demanded at Rancho had not been made.

So Casper has yet to conquer Rancho while Palmer, who finished three strokes behind California's Casper in Pasadena and was publicly critical of the course there, guns for triumph No. 4.

Palmer made it No. 3 in 1967 with rounds of 70-64-67-68—269, 15 shots under par for Rancho's 6,800 par 71 test. He won the event the year before and in 1963.

Casper tamed Brookside's par 71, 7,021-yard layout with 70-67-68-69—274 and picked up the \$20,000 winning purse. Palmer's 277 was worth \$12,000.

Palmer, whose last tournament was the Hawaiian Open last November, has been in Palm Springs in recent days doing television commercials and sharpening his game.

He was sidelined temporarily by the flu and didn't decide to enter here until the deadline Sunday night. Palmer won only two tournaments in 1968, the Bob Hope Classic in Palm Springs in February and the Kemper Open in Sutton, Mass., in September.



GET HIGH
Harry Bostic (35) and Mike Heitmann (22) of the Aggies both leap high for a rebound in the first half of Tuesday's initial conference win over the Texas Tech Red Raiders, 85-84. The next action for the Aggies will be Saturday afternoon against Arkansas in Fayetteville. (Photo by Mike Wright)

Curtis Hits Only On Field

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—Someone once quoted Baltimore Colts' linebacker Mike Curtis as saying, "When I'm off the field I'm a gentleman. When I'm on the field I'm an animal."

Curtis was asked about that Wednesday during a practice for Sunday's Super Bowl game between the National Football League champion Colts and the American Football League champion New York Jets in Miami.

"Gee, I guess I said it, but I was only joking." Then, thinking for a few seconds, the 232-pound left linebacker added, "I guess it's apropos."

Curtis has the reputation of a killer on the field. He doesn't limit it to the opposition. If a teammate riles the one-time Duke fullback in practice he's just as liable to pop him.

"I don't know what makes me so aggressive," said Curtis. "I guess it's just that I like to compete. I don't like to be beaten. I enjoy contact a lot. I like to hit somebody."

When it was pointed out he didn't have this reputation for aggressiveness in college, Curtis said, "It was there. In college I didn't talk much with writers. I've come out of my shell with the pros."

Curtis said he wants it known, however, that he doesn't eat nails. I'm not a crazy nut. When the Colts drafted me they knew I was aggressive. That's why they wanted me. I led my college team in tackles."

"I can recall," he said, "always enjoying the rough things. I would build a fort of logs and then let the kids throw rocks at me so I could try and get out of the way of the rocks. I liked to ride a raft down the rough part of the river. I liked a good beehive gun fight as long as they weren't aimed at the face. When I rode a bike I enjoyed having an accident or bumping into something."

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