

Pros aiming for PGA title

United Press International
TULSA, Okla. — Tom Watson still has plenty of time to capture the PGA Championship. But then everyone assumed Arnold Palmer had plenty of time, too.

When Palmer first surfaced on the tour, a player had to be a

card-carrying member of the PGA for five years before he could play in the association's championship event. That prevented Palmer from making his first appearance in that tournament until 1958, when he was 29.

He's played in all 23 PGA's

since, but the 52-year-old Palmer is still seeking his first PGA Championship, the only one of golf's four majors to elude him. Palmer, who has won 61 tournaments including four Masters, two British Opens and one U.S. Open, hasn't won any tour stop since 1973 and hasn't won a major since 1964.

Palmer will be in the 150-man field for the 64th PGA Championship beginning today at Southern Hills Country Club.

Palmer will tee off in the early afternoon in a threesome along with Dave Stockton and Isao Aoki, but he knows time is running out for him to join the elite group of only four golfers to have captured all four of the majors: Ben Hogan, Gene Sarazen, Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus.

"I'd still like to win a PGA," Palmer said. "I've won the British PGA, the Australian PGA, the Canadian PGA but never the U.S. PGA. There's a void. This is my profession; the PGA (tournament) is a big part of that profession. Winning this title is still very important to me."

"I always felt I'd win it. It's beginning to get farther away but I'm still not giving up. My chances of winning this week

are, at best, slim."

Palmer said: "(Billy) Casper never won the PGA. (Sam) Snead never won an Open and (Lee) Trevino never won a Masters. I'm not the only infant left out there who has won a major championship but has not won the PGA."

Watson, 32, also wears a three-jeweled crown, having added that third jewel last month with his initial victory at the U.S. Open. He has already won four British Opens and two Masters. Watson has never won the PGA although he did force a playoff with eventual winner John Mahaffey in 1978.

Palmer has had three PGA near-misses — 1964 in Columbus, 1968 in San Antonio and 1970 here at Southern Hills. He finished second each time: to Bobby Nichols in 1964, Julius Boros in 1968 and Dave Stockton in 1970.

"I don't think at this stage in his life it's bothering Tom that he hasn't won the PGA," Palmer said. "He's still young with a lot of years left. But if Tom goes a few more years and doesn't win it'll be something he starts thinking about."

TANK McNAMARA

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hill



Oilers

(continued from page 7)

Biles has put all his hopes in Nielsen, an agile, 27-year-old former collegiate star at Brigham Young. Nielsen also is unproven, but he has had plenty of training at running the Oilers' new one-back offense that features three wide receivers and plenty of deception.

Spreading opponents' defenses will create room for Campbell, who for the first time in 1981 did not win the NFL rushing title.

Two new finds on offense last year, split end Michael Holston and halfback Adger Armstrong, an Earl Cooper-type back, are sure to help the transition. There's also the steady stable of veteran receivers — Kenny Burrough, Mike Renfro and Dave Casper.

The off-season trade of tight end Mike Barber left a burden on Casper to stay healthy, although the Oilers moved Tim Wilson from fullback to tight end.

A training camp boycott of left tackle Leon Gray over pay threatened to disrupt positive strides made in the offensive line. Even without Gray, however, the Oilers had a heavy load of talent in center David Carter; guards John Schumacher, Ed Fisher, George Reihner and No. 1 draft choice Mike Munchak. Also included in the group are tackles Morris Towns, Mark Koncar and Nick Eyre.

The Oilers will field the same defense that allowed an unusually high 358 yards a game last year. Biles believes the defense will perform as it did in years prior to 1981, when the players were given more rest during games.

Houston's offense last season could not control the football nor could it score often enough to take the pressure off a good defense. The offense scored fewer than 18 points a game. Nielsen has been a 59 percent

passer over parts of four years, but he is injury prone. He's forced to the sidelines this year, the Oilers must go to rookie Oliver Luck from Virginia, rookie Ron Lee from Texas Tech or one of several other untested quarterbacks.

The Oilers' season depends on Nielsen.

"I don't feel any added pressure being the primary quarterback," Nielsen said. "The confidence I can do the job. If he performs as the coaches believe he can, everything will perk up with Campbell running for big yardage he did in his first three years, and with the Robert Zille-led defense returning eminence."

Jesse Baker has replaced retiring Elvin Bethea at left defensive end. Bethea has said season, his 16th with the Oilers will be his last.

Browns' Sipe won't call all his plays this season

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The decree came down Wednesday from Cleveland Browns' Coach Sam Rutigliano — quarterback Brian Sipe will not be calling all his own plays this season.

"We're definitely going to give him some help," Rutigliano said of Sipe, who will call from 65 to 70 percent of his own plays instead of his usual 90 percent.

Sipe, the NFL's leading passer and Most Valuable Player in 1980, was blitzed and beaten throughout most of last season and one time was so dazed by a sacking he walked to the wrong bench. But he is reserving judgment on the move.

"I've always felt the person who's best qualified to call the plays should call them," he said. "One change this season which Sipe likes is a relative lack of attention. Last summer, he was hounded by out-of-town sportswriters and that may have been

at least partially responsible for his poor showing in 1981.

This year Sipe is being handled by backup Paul McDonald, a third-year pro from Southern Cal.

And although Rutigliano has said McDonald "could start for the Cleveland Browns right now and we could win," he insists Sipe is still No. 1.

Two more players, linebacker Bruce Huther and guard Mark Paulsen, left camp Wednesday. Huther plans to pursue a career in business, and Paulsen returns to Kansas for graduate work.

Two players also missed practice — Joel Patten, because of a pinched nerve, and Elvis Franks, with back problems. Franks was held at the Cleveland Clinic Wednesday night for observation.

In other training camp news: — Veteran running back and return specialist Arthur Whittington was waived Wednesday

by the Raiders. The fifth-year running back had balked coming to camp and the Raiders tried and failed to trade him before releasing him.

— Charlie Johnson, the Philadelphia Eagles' All-Pro guard, has asked to be traded and left the team's West Chester State College training camp the request of Coach Dick Lurie, the team announced Wednesday.

"Charlie just says he can't longer go through the training preparation of training camp and the season like we do here," Vermeil said. "He's worn down and would like to go somewhere where they do work quite as intense and get out his career and maybe a little longer because of the atmosphere."

— The San Francisco 49ers Wednesday signed defensive lineman Grant Hudson, who was dropped earlier by the Orleans.

The 49ers also said Paul Fuernberger, a wide receiver from Eastern New Mexico, failed report to camp.

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