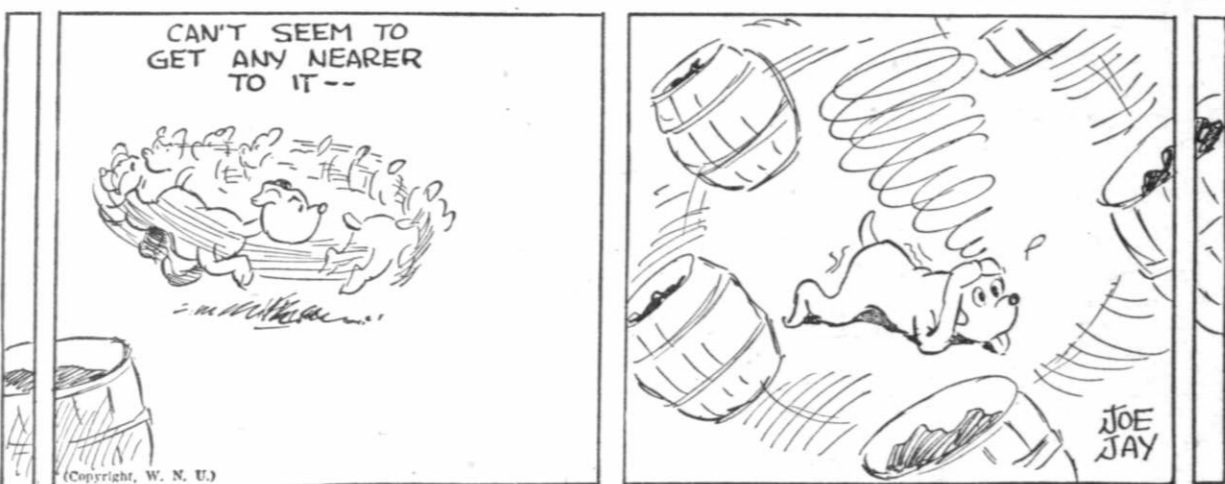


OUR COMIC SECTION

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N. Y. State Police Lift Mask from Hollywood's Wonder Man

John Montague Beat Bing Crosby at Golf Using Baseball Bat, Shovel and Rake.

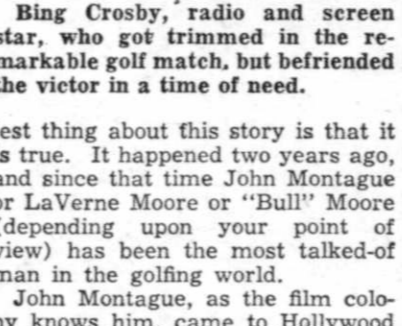
By WILLIAM C. UTLEY. "SHUCKS," said Bing Crosby's burly golf partner, "I could beat you using a ball bat, a shovel and a rake!"

Now, if you have ever seen Bing Crosby play golf you will realize that this challenge would not be unlike telling Joe Louis, "I could lick you with one hand tied behind my back."

The dreamy-eyed crooner's average age is about 74, which is golf of a professional caliber. The arrogant gentleman had been in the habit of "spotting" Bing a stroke on each of five holes and collecting with withering consistency.

"It's a bet," said Crosby, and it was decided to play one hole, for \$200. Bing, using the regulation bag of clubs, took two shots to the green and two putts for a perfect par four.

Wonder Man Shuns Publicity. Some screwy, magnificently screwy, stories have come from Hollywood, where press agents have the imagination of an Edgar Rice Burroughs and the conscience of Baron Munchausen. But the screw-



iest thing about this story is that it is true. It happened two years ago, and since that time John Montague or LaVerne Moore or "Bull" Moore (depending upon your point of view) has been the most talked-of man in the golfing world.

John Montague, as the film colony knows him, came to Hollywood three years ago. His ability to play golf was astounding. He was handsome in his burly way. His manners were delightful. He was chivalrous with women. He apparently had a bank roll. He had two Lincolns and a Ford. He could drink a fifth of Scotch and eight gin fizzes for breakfast and never bat an eye.

Montague shunned publicity. But as Greta Garbo proved, one sure way to get into the limelight is to try to stay out of it. No one in Hollywood knew who Montague was, whence he came or where he derived his income, not even Oliver Hardy, the rotund comedian with whom the mystery man lived for a while. And apparently nobody cared.

But a man can't do the things Monty did and remain in oblivion. His feats of strength were as amazing as his golf prowess. He held up a heavy automobile while a friend changed a tire. With one hand he picked up George Bancroft, husky moving picture "heavy," and stuffed him in a locker, upside down, during a moment of horse-play. He could even lift Ollie Hardy in one hand. He ate a dozen eggs in less than half a minute. He (it was whispered) had whipped from three to six men at one time.

Drives 400 Yards. These exploits pale beside Monty's feats on the links. He drives straight as a die, and consistently from 40 to 60 yards farther than the longest drive Bobby Jones ever made. Driving balls into a slight wind he has averaged more than 300 yards per drive. With the same slight wind in back of him, 875 to 400 yards per drive!



Dead Canyon road—three quarters of a mile—in five shots, with plenty of room to spare. George von Elm, a member of the club and former national amateur champion, testified that he played with Montague for a month and Monty never was over 68; such golf could win any championship in the world!

At Palm Springs, Montague broke the course record four times in four consecutive days. The last day he turned in the unbelievable card of 61! He wears out the exclamation marks on a reporter's typewriter.

Still John Montague preferred obscurity. He refused to play in tournaments. Only once, after much pleading on the part of his friend Hardy, did he consent to compete. That was in the annual club championship play. He sprained his ankle on the sixth hole, but finished 18 holes anyway—with a 64! Then he dropped out.

Turns Down \$20,000 Offer. He refused to talk to reporters. He would never allow himself to be photographed. Once when a photographer, concealing himself in bushes, managed to expose a few plates before Montague discovered him, Monty smashed the plates and paid the man \$100 for the damage.

Offered \$20,000 to demonstrate his ability in a moving picture "short," he said: "I won't permit one picture to be taken of me; why should I pose for a whole reel?"

Despite Montague's reticence, a light like that simply can't be hidden under a bushel. Grantland Rice, the eminent sports authority, was reluctant to believe the stories which came via the grapevine from the Lakeside club. They couldn't be true. For instance, the one about the time Monty, calling his shot, picked a bird off a telephone wire 170 yards away with a brassie set.

He couldn't prevent fame. Rice determined to find out for himself. He went to Hollywood and played a round with Montague. He decided all that had been said was true. During the round, Monty "picked up" on the eighteenth hole, where he could have had a 64!

Impressed beyond measure, Rice told of John Montague and his golf feats in a syndicated sports column. Westbrook Pegler wrote a column about him, describing him as a combination of Paul Bunyan, Popeye the Sailor Man and Ivan Skavinsky Skovar. Soon there were other stories.

These found interested readers. Some were even fascinated. One such fascinated reader was John Cosart, of Troop D, New York state police, Oneida, N. Y. Somehow this thirty-two-year-old Montague, with his golf genius, his strength and his huge 220-pound frame, seemed familiar.



John Montague, strong man golfer of Hollywood, equipped with the "clubs" he used in taking a \$200 golf bet from Bing Crosby.

struck out 19 batsmen in a game. Young Moore's golf had been good enough to land him a job as a professional at the Clayton, N. Y., country club. He once had played the nine-hole municipal course at Syracuse in 28.

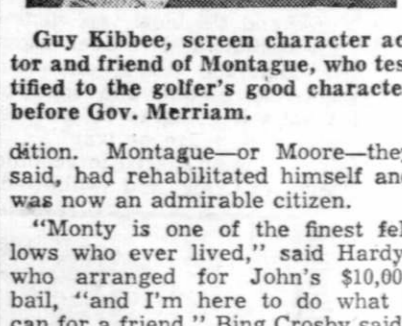
Moore Had Police Record. Moore had a passion for making records, and some of them were police records. He got a six-months' suspended sentence in 1927 for posing as a policeman and taking \$50 from a grocer accused of selling liquor.

On the night of April 5, 1930, four young men held up a roadhouse near Jay, N. Y., taking \$700 from Kin Hana, the owner. When Hana's father-in-law, Matt Cobb, objected, they gave him a vicious beating.

As the robbers made their getaway, one of their cars struck a culvert. One robber was killed. Two were captured and got 16-year prison terms. The fourth, believed to have been "Bull" Moore, disappeared.

The New York state police sent Moore's fingerprints to the Los Angeles police department. On last July 9 Hollywood's strong man was arrested in the Beverly Hills apartment which he shared with Oliver Hardy, and charged with the New York robbery. When they took him to jail he admitted that he was "Bull" Moore and that there was no longer any reason for avoiding publicity. He posed willingly for photographers, but refused to discuss the charges against him.

Arrest Shocks Hollywood. The arrest was a bombshell to the many celebrated friends of "John Montague." To a man, they backed him. Dozens of them, all influential, wrote pleas to Gov. Frank Merriam, asking that he refuse extra-



Guy Kibbee, screen character actor and friend of Montague, who testified to the golfer's good character before Gov. Merriam.

dition. Montague—or Moore—they said, had rehabilitated himself and was now an admirable citizen. "Monty is one of the finest fellows who ever lived," said Hardy, who arranged for John's \$10,000 bail, "and I'm here to do what I can for a friend." Bing Crosby said: "He's a great guy and a grand fellow. We'll all back him 100 per cent."

Among Monty's additional sponsors appeared such names as Bert Wheeler, Spencer Tracy, Charlie Chase, Guy Kibbee, Frank Craven, Andy Devine, Gene Tunney, Howard Hawks and George von Elm. Nevertheless, he went back to New York to face the music.

The one mystery none of them was ever able to solve was the origin of Monty's bank roll. He admitted he bet \$200 a week on the races. He was always flashing a handful of hundred-dollar bills. Some rumors had it that he owned-a gold or silver mine in the desert, to which he returned when in need of fresh capital. But anyone who ever attempted to follow him was lost in a cloud of dust.



Smiley. "Bad Enough" "Did't you say your dog was worse than his wife?" "Yes."

Something Else. "Chorus Girl—stand in front of my mirror for hours admiring beauty. I suppose you're vain?"

Down a Peg. "The film critic was writing by the actor playing the lead role. In his review he should be played as a lowly it slowly as the

Mother's Loving. "What memories a faithful woman. Who thought 'lost' best? Who saw the lightning each child? Whose love was peace and protection? Dear mothers of the world, your path in life may be a bumble part. But ask each man to be the life's purest gift. I know he'll say 'a mother's loving heart'—One's heart"



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YOU CAN THROW IN HIS FACE ONCE TOO OFTEN. WHEN you have that grape, when you are all on edge—don't blame the man you love. Your husband can't know how you feel for reasons that he is a man. A domestic quarrel with no wife at all is as common as band seven days a week.

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