

average since Sam Snead's 69.23 in 1950. It also stopped Watson's streak of four consecutive Vardon trophies.

At the end of 1980, ol' Super Mex had run his victory string to 25 in his 14 years on the tour, No. 12 on the all-time list, just two wins behind the fabled Walter Hagen.

Trevino's pressure-filled conquests of the game's greatest players are legendary. Like his 1980 triumph in the TPC at Sawgrass, the PGA's own rugged course at Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. Trevino grabbed the lead with a skillful 68 in the third round as he outstroked Watson in a classic matchup. Watson, who had started the day tied with Lee, just one stroke off the lead, slipped to a 72.

On the final day, Lee was paired with two of the game's greatest players of all time, Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player. Neither could make Trevino buckle. Nor could Ben Crenshaw, Severiano Ballesteros, Hale Irwin, Hubert Green or several other players who made runs at Trevino during a truly classic afternoon of golf. Nicklaus and Player each shot 73s head-up against Trevino, who carved a brilliant 2-under par 70 on the 7,000-yard Sawgrass monster to win by a stroke over Watson and Ballesteros.

"I like smoke," he was to say later. "I've always liked pressure and I'm hard to beat when I get out front."

But was he surprised that one of the "big boys" didn't make more of a charge at him in that final round? Replied Trevino with his customary flamboyance: "Hey, I'm one of the big boys, too. I'm not cotton candy."

Then there was his playoff victory over Nicklaus to win his 2nd U.S. Open crown at Merion in 1971. And his second straight British Open triumph in 1972, a victory that thwarted Nicklaus' bid for the coveted Grand Slam at storied old Muirfield in Scotland.

Perhaps no other Trevino victory better portrays the man's incredible competitive spirit than that victory while most of the world cheered for Nicklaus to complete the near-impossible Slam.

Chortled the indomitable Trevino: "I didn't come to Scotland to help Nicklaus win any Grand Slam. If I played golf with my wife, I'd try to beat the daylight out of her."

Yeah, and give her three up a side and bet her a taco dinner he'd win the last hole with a pick and shovel.

Walter Robertson