WE NEED MORE GOLFERS

By C. V. ANDERSON, Byrnes Park, Waterloo, Iowa

GOLF isn’t growing as fast as it should. For some time I have been trying to figure out the trouble. The reason is, I believe, that there is not enough new golfers developed; too many people connected financially with the game are working on the golfers we now have.

The fee course officials are busy trying to get their courses in tip-top shape thinking that alone may bring golfers out; pros are working on their game for the next big tournament thinking if they make good showings that it will bring players to their clubs. Park officials are improving the swimming pool, trimming the lilac bushes and working on the golf course. Private club officials in some places still are figuring how to cut club dues, believing that is the secret to an increased membership; and manufacturers are busy trying to outwit each other in selling equipment to the present crop of golfers.

It’s just like a bunch of farmers all trying to get milk out of the same cow; the cow naturally can’t give enough to supply them all. What they need is more cows. What golf needs is not more cows but more golfers to sell to.

Pros Used to Sell Plenty of Golf

I believe, in this particular phase of the game, the golf pro does by far the most effective work. Ten or fifteen years ago the pros sold more golf than they are selling today, simply because they worked harder to interest people in playing. They knew a new prospect was sure to purchase the clubs, etc., from him.

Today this is not so much the case. If the pro does interest a person in taking up the game, he may be on the short end of the odds in selling the outfit. The equipment may be from some cut price dealer on a price or thru some wholesale “connection”. This has been going on for quite some time but it has slowly but surely discouraged the seller and developer of golf.

There are about 20% of the pros who have good jobs and are making a good living. Thirty-five to 40% are getting by; about 25% living in hope and another 20% going in the red worse as each winter slips by. I believe that the 25% living in
glad to cooperate. The pros could do their part by giving their services at a reasonable rate. They would donate in services what the others would put up in cash. With shorter working hours and more machinery humming, people simply must have exercise and something to do in spare time. We should go after them, get them started playing golf before they get started at some other sport. I believe the plan should go as far as having a developing committee in each state. There are a lot of chislers making money on the sale of golf goods who do nothing toward its development. Its time they kick in and do something toward this end.

There are a number of membership chairmen, club officials and club members who have worked hard at getting new members to join their club and this has been a big help in golf development. This class has worked hand in hand with the pro. For a continuous growth of the game we simply have to sell more golf, get more people started playing, and devise ways and means to do so.

Everybody who is now getting an income from golf or any part of the game and expects to continue in the golf business must do a share in developing new customers, and I don’t mean their participation should be limited to letting the other fellow do it.

A SUCCESSFUL method of financing a $17,000 swimming pool was employed by the Audubon CC, Louisville, Ky. Basis of the financing was the sale of $100 subscriptions, the subscribers being given coupon books for swims. Prices for use of the pool were 25 cents for subscribers, 35 cents for others and 70 cents for guests.

Officials of the club estimate that 40 members at $200 initiation fee joined because of the pool. Dinner and bar revenue has been increased substantially by the pool, which keeps the club active until 10 p.m.

Most of the pool use is by children and a few mothers up to 4 p.m., after which time adults take over the place. Audubon officials estimate that about a third of the adults using the pool cannot swim, but merely splash around in the ample space of safe depth.