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HERB GRAFFIS

SWINGING AROUND GOLF

COX'S BUSINESS SAVVY A PLUS FOR PGA

Hiring *Mark Cox* as executive director should be the wisest, most profitable move the Professional Golfers' Assn. has made in many years. (See August *GOLFDOM*, p. 32B.)

Cox has the experience and business judgment that qualifies him to be a business manager, something the PGA has needed since it was started. By any title Cox will be a business manager.

Most of the PGA's problems are due to its officials not recognizing that professional golf is primarily a business and secondly a game and adjusting its policies and procedures accordingly.

The PGA as the association of home professionals, who do a business of more than \$350 million annually, has a significant influence on the multi-billion dollar investment in golf properties.

The division of the PGA in 1968 was the inevitable result of not heeding the managerial differences between the home professionals, whose progress depends on serving the golfing public, and the objectives of the journeymen professionals, whose interests are self-serving.

Until Cox came along, the PGA had been unable to get a top operating man who knew golf as a business and as a game well enough to satisfactorily manage a golf industry business.

Albert Gates, the first PGA commissioner, was a corporate lawyer who loved golf and who took the PGA job because the association needed business guidance. He wasn't the man, however, for a little outfit short of money.

Tom Crane, another lawyer, was invaluable in handling the legal problems of the PGA's growing pains. Patiently and diplomatically, he settled the political wrangles, caring for wartime difficulties and saving the PGA around \$2 million, which would have put the association in bondage to John D. MacArthur, the landlord at Palm Beach Gardens. Crane was not the man, though, to get the PGA's internal and external business affairs out of complications and confusion and put them under control.

Surveys of two business management consulting firms found that the PGA could stand vast improvement in its operations as a business.

Robert Creasey, another lawyer, came in on an emergency call as an administrator of PGA business, but he wasn't the business manager the situation needed.

Lloyd Lambert, who filled in between Creasey and Cox and who had been assistant to Tom Crane, also was a lawyer and has been a valuable anchor man in arranging PGA meetings and coordinating its operations. Lambert and Tom Boyle, comptroller, have done well in trying to get on a business basis an operation that business management experts have said needs overhauling, modernization and simplification.

Although PGA treasurers, starting with Bill Wotherspoon, have tried to explain the figures and the earmarked funds to members, very few of the 7,200 member professionals, have the slightest idea of their association's condition.

That's the picture that confronts Cox as business manager for the PGA.

continued on page 9

GRAFFIS *from page 6*

Tony Thayer, manager of the new El Conquistador G & CC, Bradenton, Fla. . . . *Joseph Donoghue* now general manager, Westwood CC, Houston. . . . *Domonic O. Harvey* goes to Ridgeway CC, Memphis, as manager, from Village CC, Uniontown, Ohio. . . . *Francis L. Bailey Jr.*, now general manager, Waialae CC, Honolulu, going there from Redlands (Calif.) CC.

James Shirley joins the golf architectural firm of Joe Finger and Associates, Inc., of Houston . . . *Bob Boldt*, now University of California golf coach. He formerly was captain of the university's golf team, then was on the Tour . . . *Jack Higgins*, professional at Meadowbrook CC, Tulsa, Okla., named as golf coach at Oral Roberts University.

California with 683 golf facilities is the leading state in golfing establishments—New York has the largest number of "regulation" courses, 587. The shorter courses are proving strong features in selling retirement and vacation residential properties.

Fred Sherman, now professional manager at Escondido (Calif.) CC, recently bought by Campana Company for \$3.5 million, including 50 acres for residential sites.

Gary Slatter, now manager and professional for the Corfu Golf Tour Enterprises, highly recommends the program of Harry Obitz and Dick Farley, which requires their assistants to practice an hour each day. "That hour a day of studious work on his own game is bound to make the assistant a better golf professional in every way," declares Slatter, who was assistant at a Canadian municipal course in the summer and playing an average pro game. Then, during winter work in the Bahamas with Obitz and Farley and the compulsory hour's daily attention to his own game, Slatter went north to finish second in the 1971 Canadian PGA and set six course records. He's kept at his practice during his management and promotion work for the fabled Grecian isle and got second money in the Danish Open, 1973, which had a strong field.

At present prices, a Corfu golfing holiday is the biggest bargain in Europe, the Obitz and Farley protege maintains. The course in the scenic island was designed by Donald Harradine of Switzerland. Superintendent is Leslie Beetham from England. Slatter says Beetham is very good. The course has Penn-cross greens, rye fairways and a bermuda-type rough. There are 18 on the maintenance force. Hand weeding is done. American machinery could be used effectively, but

mechanics are rare. Beetham won an inspection tour of some United States courses as a prize in an European course maintenance competition.

In case you wish to follow Ulysses and golf in Corfu, Gary Slatter's address is 21 Alexandras Ave., Corfu, Greece.

John Kinsey named director of golf, Big Sky of Montana, Inc., which plans to open nine holes this fall, with the other nine to open in spring, 1974. □



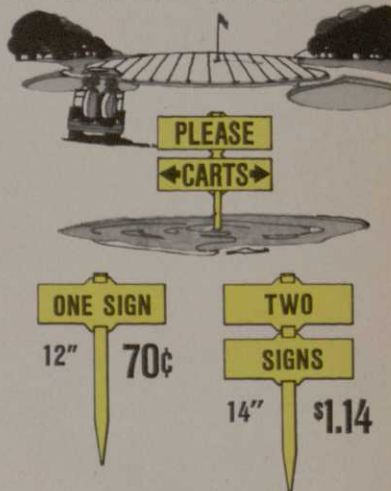
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