

Highlighting the PGA Annual Meeting

A new home for the PGA, the image of the club professional and job status topped the list of concerns at the 57th congress

by VINCENT J. PASTENA

DALLAS—Delegates to the Professional Golfers' Assn. 57th Annual Meeting were hungry for any word on the association's future home. Nothing definite could be said at the time of the meeting, held November 12 to 16 at the Sheraton-Dallas Hotel, although Mark Cox, newly-appointed PGA executive director, noted that about four offers were presently under serious consideration. These offers included sites in Florida, Arizona and Texas. He asked all PGA members to exercise patience during the negotiation period, noting that rushing into a commitment on a matter of such importance to the future of the association could bring disastrous results.

The Long Range Planning Committee has laid out very specific minimum requirements for future PGA golf facilities. These include:

- 1) Two 18-hole championship golf courses built to PGA specifications, with room for additional courses as required (guideline is an additional 18-hole course every five years);
- 2) A clubhouse of sufficient size to handle the normal number of PGA members and their families who are expected to play the courses in January and February; a dining room with a minimum breakfast and lunch capacity of 400, locker room facilities for a minimum of 300 men and 150 women; room for classes or educational seminars attended by 200 to 300 people;
- 3) Ten acres on which the PGA could build offices (and Hall of Fame or museum, if desired);
- 4) Either a permanent structure with 100,000 square feet under cover for merchandise shows or a paved area of equal size on which the tents could be erected.

Negotiations for such facilities would follow guidelines that are pointedly designed to avoid any experiences

similar to those at the former Palm Beach Gardens site. For instance, any negotiations with the developer will seek the right to purchase courses and other facilities at some subsequent date and an option to purchase property on which one or more courses could be constructed. In addition, the association would want exclusive control over the golf facilities during January and February each year to give PGA members and their guests preferred starting times.

Cox noted that the association would not enter into any short term lease arrangements. One of the negotiation points would be a minimum 25-year agreement with an option to renew or purchase the property.

Because most of the debate was carried on in informal sessions, the delegates dispatched the formal sessions, adopting or defeating the various proposed resolutions, with great efficiency.

A major resolution adopted by the delegation called for a revision of the present membership classification system. The purpose behind the revision was to create a more logical and workable system around three main categories of professional status: active, inactive and retired.

Under the resolution, driving range operators were added as a separate category under Class A, defined as follows: "Members of the Association who operate and supervise a recognized driving range (transfer classification only)."

Golf directors, as a separate category, also were added under Class A as "members of the association who are or have been in Class A and who assume the duties of directing the total golf operation (which is defined as the golf shop, golf course maintenance, driving range and golf car operation if in use at that club or course and super-

vision of the golf professional) at one or more recognized golf clubs or courses . . . (transfer classification only)."

The entire resolution is lengthy, involving several changes. It is suggested that PGA professionals get a thorough briefing on its contents from their delegates to the meeting.

Delegates also adopted a resolution designed to toughen requirements on playing proficiency for membership applicants. The resolution more clearly defines a "creditable game of golf." Under its provisions, applicants must display their skill by making no more than the score indicated below for 36 holes on a course rated as shown:

Score	Course rating
151	68.0
152	68.5
153	69.0
154	69.5
155	70.0
156	70.5
157	71.0
158	71.5
159	72.0
160	72.5
161	73.0

In another move, delegates voted to reduce the possible tenure of the national president, secretary and treasurer from three consecutive one-year terms to two consecutive one-year terms. The new ruling will not effect the current officers, all of whom were re-elected for a second term at the meeting—President William Clarke, Secretary Henry Poe and Treasurer Donald Padgett. This group of officers will be the last eligible for a third consecutive term.

At the new business session, job status and public relations headed the list of major topics of concern. The concensus was that the association had

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"The past two years have not been that great and I believe a lot of it has to do with the economy," he says. "Soft goods are down and hard goods are holding their own."

Business in the Cleveland area is down somewhat in 1973, which will affect professionals' buying for 1974. The professional will check and double check quantity, but maintain the buying of quality. □

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anticipates a brisk business in used clubs as usual. "I try to sell people on the idea that top line used clubs are a much better buy than new cheaper clubs sold downtown," he says.

"All the clubs will be good movers next year," says one professional at a public course, who also operates several other sales outlets.

"People are not necessarily sticking with the widely known brands," he says. We've had good sales of the lesser-known clubs; actually we have a shortage of clubs." His ball buying for next year will center on those with

Surlyn covers, solid construction and the new dimple patterns.

Another public course professional, who formerly carried a heavy inventory of close-outs, but has not done so for the past two years, says he has mixed emotions about club buying for 1974.

"I think the investment case popularity will continue, so that's where most of my buying will be."

In shoes, he is closing out the low-end lines below \$20 and moving to leather, even in the \$50 range. It may involve limiting his inventory to only one line, but he thinks quality shoes are what his players want.

And just the opposite has been observed by another public course professional. "We'll buy heavy in shoe lines that sell for under \$30; that's where the market is," he says. In clubs: "We'll have to go almost exclusively with investment cast clubs; they account for 75 to 80 per cent of our club sales now."

He is also looking to special make-ups, particularly in bags, for good sales volumes, "We can't operate on the 40 per cent markup anymore. We have to buy lower to sell lower." □

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not done enough to inform the public of its achievements and good work or to build up the image of the club professional. Herb Graffis, founder of GOLF-DOM Magazine and presently its senior editor, stressed this point in his speech at the president's dinner.

In answering the objections of the delegation, Education Director Gary Wiren reported that during the coming year he will implement several projects aimed specifically at informing the public about the role of the club professional. Several delegates reported, too, that public relations efforts were planned on the sectional level.

In the other area of concern, job status, delegates from the Middle Atlantic Section recommended the creation of a new position, that of National Employment Director. All delegates favored this idea. As the section spokesman pointed out, a major problem in filling head professional positions is that, although equally qualified, the replacement rarely is compensated at the level of his predecessor. One accomplishment toward which the new director can work is the stabilization of compensation. He can strive also to bring the association to the middle ground between its present position as a "fraternal" organization and a labor union at the other extreme, the spokesman noted.

Awards this year went to Jack Nicklaus as Player of the Year, the second consecutive year Nicklaus has been thus honored. Warren F. Smith of Denver received honors as Golf Professional of the Year and George Aulbach of San Antonio received the Horton Smith Trophy for outstanding contributions in the field of golf professional education.

Six new vice presidents joined the executive committee: Al Chandler, Columbia, Mo.; Dick Forester, Houston; Harry A. Berrier, Gatlinburg, Tenn.; Lyle Wehrman, Sunol, Calif.; Hubby Habjan, Lake Forrest, Ill., and Lionel Hebert, representing the Tournament Players Div. □



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