

GOLFDOM

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE OF GOLF

PUBLISHED 10 TIMES A YEAR:
MONTHLY JANUARY THROUGH AUGUST AND
COMBINED ISSUES FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTO-
BER AND NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

HARVEST PUBLISHING CO.

9800 Detroit Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44102
Telephone: (216) 651-5500

HUGH CHRONISTER
PRESIDENT

ARTHUR V. EDWARDS
PUBLISHER

JOE GRAFFIS SR.
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

LEO NIST
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM
VICE-PRESIDENT, TREASURER

EDITORIAL

DONALD D. MILLER
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

HERB GRAFFIS
SENIOR EDITOR

ROBERT E. EARLEY, JR.
ASSISTANT EDITOR

NICK ROMANO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

DICK FARLEY
MERCHANDISING CONSULTANT

CIRCULATION

GILBERT HUNTER
VICE PRESIDENT CIRCULATION

DONALD D. LANGLEY
DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION

PRODUCTION

PAUL BALTIMORE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

DARRELL GILBERT
ADVERTISING PRODUCTION MANAGER
9800 Detroit Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44102
(216) 651-5500

ADVERTISING

HEADQUARTERS: 9800 Detroit Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44102
(216) 651-5500

JEAN NEUENDORF
Executive Assistant

DOROTHY LOWE
Classified Advertising Manager

EASTERN OFFICE:
757 Third Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10017
(212) 754-4359

WILLIAM DECKER
Regional Manager

MIDWESTERN OFFICE:
333 North Michigan Ave.
Room 808
Chicago, Ill. 60601
(312) 236-9425

JEFF WARD
Regional Manager

TOURISSE GREENFIELD
(312) 337-7717



HERB GRAFFIS

SWINGING AROUND GOLF

AMONG OTHER LESSONS EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT

Five-year plans for golf course or clubhouse improvements are valuable except that after three years very few remember what the five-year plans were.

GRASS OR MEN HARDEST TO MANAGE?

Anytime there are a few superintendents sitting around and discussing their work you can start an educational debate by asking, "What is harder to manager? Grass or men?"

I don't remember hearing a conclusive answer.

Most of the time I heard the testimony, the experiences indicated that when the superintendent was working with his chairman and his maintenance staff, there didn't seem to be much trouble with the turf.

LAST OF PGA ANGELS WINGS AWAY

Robert Hudson, the last of the two "angels" who first blessed pro golf with big money, died recently in his home city, Portland, Ore.

Pro golf was scratching hard trying to dig up more money when Bob Hudson and George May arrived scattering money in the '40s. Maybe he was not the man who was the most liberal host of American pro golfer troops, but who knows another candidate for that distinction?

SEMINAR SEES OLD-STYLE LESSONS DYING

The most thrilling afternoon I have had in recent years in golf was not at a championship. It was at the 1974 Fourth National Golf Foundation Educational Consultant Seminar.

There I got a glimpse of tomorrow in the game and business of golf. The tomorrow looks bright.

The seminar brought together PGA, CMA and LPGA members who have been especially effective in instruction, college and high school golf coaches, college physical education authorities and the Foundation's Educational Services Staff, Bob Toski and Marilynn Smith.

It became evident that the pattern of golf instruction was on the verge of radical overhauling.

There has not been much change in golf instruction since the present plan of half-hour lesson tee instruction was improvised about 70 years ago when the demand for instruction exceeded the capacity of tutors to give the then customary playing lessons. There have been advances in techniques and details of instruction but not application of the instructors' knowledge and no appreciable improvement in scoring since 1905 when a golf magazine observed that 95 percent of golfers scored 95 or higher.

We talk about the high cost of slow play but do not mention the high cost of slow learning of the game.

For years professionals at private clubs and at pay-as-you-play courses have seen that the better a golfer scores the more he or she plays, and the more the player buys from the pro shop.

Women take more than 60 percent of golf lessons. And why not? Golf lessons are given at places and times usually of the utmost inconvenience to the working man, regardless of what his occupation or rating. And the old method of the half-hour lesson is discouraging and dreary but never has been replaced by a modern plan which arouses a learning attitude in the pupil and gets him — or her — soundly and simply grounded in a basic orderly routine, so the pupil is helped to learn how to teach himself.

to page 8

The results of the college coaches in advancing golf ability of the kids is amazing and the coaches say is due to the kids coming to them in an attitude of eagerness to learn. How to create the fire this attitude among the kids without ambitions to make the team and in adults was an area explored by the bright minds of the Foundation's seminar. And how to carry that research further into the PGA home pros's opportunities and service was a self-given assignment by Gary Wiren, a former club pro and college golf coach and now educational director of the PGA.

Wiren will have a difficult task awakening club officials, fee course owners and public course officials to what good they could do by coordinating club and pay-play course operations with a modern plan of instruction which would be the biggest booster and fun promotion operation has had in this country since its first golf rush in the early 1900s.

That fourth seminar of the National Golf Foundation showed more imagination in modernizing a phase of golf to benefit the whole game and business than I have heard in any other part of the business for a long time. Club pros, officials and managers had better watch this development. It can mean a great revival of club interest, service and business.

HOW MANY MILLIONAIRES IN GOLF BUSINESS?

With Gene Littler becoming the eighth tournament purse millionaire there is increased talk about how many pros have become millionaires. The official count includes Nicklaus, Palmer, Casper, Player, Crampton, Weiskopf, Trevino and Littler.

That is the count the Internal Revenue Service can make from the purses. The millionaire status of fellows such as Snead, Hogan and Nelson, who won more events that most of the purse millionaires is known only to the IRS. Snead, who made very few bad investments, is believed to be the first of pro golf's playing millionaires.

There is one group of wealthy pros discreetly modest about their riches. They are professionals who own and operate daily fee courses on

property valued well into the millions.

The fee courses are an immensely important valuable part of golf business which have not received due recognition.

The National Golf Foundation's survey of courses at the end of 1973 showed there were 3,870 daily fee courses, of which 1,823 were 18-hole or larger, with 2,218 being nine-hole facilities. This is a good proportion of the 11,956 private, municipal and daily fee conventional and par-three and executive courses of the country. The resort courses are counted among the daily fee courses.

A surprise in this category of courses is the number and character of those owned by professionals and course superintendents. They own and profitably operate many golf properties that are in the million-dollar class. They bought their land and built their courses and clubhouses when prices were moderate. A few of the million-dollar plants, such as that of Harold McSpaden in the Kansas City district, are rather new.

Four year ago, I asked salesmen, pros and superintendents to help make an estimate of the number and value of golf properties (courses and ranges) owned by pros and superintendents. The estimates varied from 100 to 500 and the values from \$60,000 to \$18 million. At that time it was guessed there were at least 50 pros and superintendents who could sell their properties for \$1 million or more. The guess seemed high to me but considering that is an average of only one per state, maybe the guess was not extravagant.

Consider too that these golf property owners are the real business starts of golf. They know how to locate and operate their properties to make money.

STUDY WASTE OF THE UNUSED CLUBHOUSE

The mandatory minimum house account which George S. May pioneered at his Tam O' Shanter club in northwest suburban Chicago has been followed by another innovation getting popular among Chicago district clubs trying to attain a good average of house revenue. It is the proportionate assessment plan, based on members' patronage of the clubhouse.

As a necessary and urgent balance for clubhouse expenses these plans have raised money but continue to remind us there must be a better answer to the basic problem. The problem is that the clubhouse at many private clubs is too expensive for its use. It is almost like a church in unused space much of the time, but the clubhouse taxes are plenty more.

Some newer Florida clubhouses cut the cost of golf by having small but charming and generally adequate clubhouses. The lack of space and services are not nearly the cause of as many complaints as assessments resulting from over-built clubhouses.

The club with the expensive clubhouse is stuck with it and all that can be done is to devise profitable means of using the clubhouse more. That is going to be a major problem of club officials, clubhouse managers and general managers for some years.

It is not uncommon to see dining rooms of metropolitan district golf clubs with diners at only a few tables an evening. In the neighborhoods of those clubs, restaurants are busy with the meals and tips, often higher than club meal prices.

How to make the clubhouse more attractive as an evening dining place for members and their families would not be beyond the ingenuity of club management.

One way we are confident the answer will be supplied is by use of the modern golf lesson plan instead of the old half-hour lesson way now in common use.

The new and more effective plan which amounts to effective supervised practice has been advocated by Claude Harmon, the late Lloyd Mangrum, and other professionals who had been especially successful in showing pupils how to learn to teach themselves.

Under the modern plan, men who get off the suburban trains or drive home between 5:00 and 6:00 could meet their wives and children at the club, have their golf instruction with the family play three holes or so and have a swim before dinner and still get out of the club before the employes are on overtime.

You will see many improvements in club operation in eliminating the extravagance of clubhouse waste.