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HERB GRAFFIS

SWINGING AROUND GOLF

Two calls tell career golf stories:

There was a wide span of golf course maintenance history in a couple of telephone calls I got in the same hour one day recently.

The first one was from Adelor (Bud) Petit, a former Western Golf Assn. president who also had been a president of the Knollwood Club in Lake Forest, Ill. Petit and James Royer, also previously a Western and Knollwood president, headed a Knollwood committee arranging a tribute to Lindo (Butch) Bernardino, who is retiring after 46 years of service to Knollwood. He has been superintendent most of that time.

Bernardino is one of an era of geniuses who changed golf course maintenance from a chore of play pasture growing and mowing to a profession and art of landscape management that has had more influence on the beautification of the United States than any other sport has been able to offer. There has been plenty of hero worship of the great players of golf but very little written and said about the marvelously versatile artists who have developed golf course management. In the Chicago area alone there has been an array of these colorful characters. Among them were GCSAA presidents John McGregor, Ray Gerber, Norman Johnson, Bob Williams, Roy Nelson, Norman Kramer and the first PGA president, Robert White, who was also a pioneer in course management schooling. There were the Dinellis, the Bertuccis, Joe Roseman, the Millers, Eddie Dearie, Bob Duguid, the Stupples, Emil Mashie, John Coutre, the Boyds ... you could name 50 of them who helped make golf history. Yet they remain unsung.

The other call was about tomorrow in course maintenance.

Clyde Raible, owner of a golf course in Knoxville, Ill., asked about a school which his daughter could attend in learning golf course management. Clyde says his young lady is deeply in love with golf course work and confident there would not be a happier career in the working world than that of developing a beautiful golf course that could be enjoyed by many who need beauty brought into their lives. A little about where golf course maintenance has been and where it is going.

"Replace divots" an old plea found useless? "Replace divots" requests now seldom are players' responsibilities on well-managed courses. The reason is simple. The divots do not heal.

Repair of divots with soil, fertilizer, seed or even stolons is quicker, more effective, provides good playing condition, is better looking and does a needed job without adding appreciably to the costs of first-grade maintenance, according to superintendents whose courses identify them as authorities. Scattered divots in a shot area quickly get to be a sloppy mess. Mowing does not shred the divots so the Bermuda of bent chunks are distributed for healing. Seniors who have played a lot of golf all over this country will tell you they have never seen what they would consider a course maintained in good condition that has tees and shot areas scarred by unattended divots.

There was a time not too long ago when the good caddie was taught how to do the best possible job of replacing a divot. Even when fairway watering systems came in, the divots rarely healed and a player found himself with the difficult task of playing a delicate approach off a

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GRAFFIS *from page 8*

loose piece of sod. Playing from a cuppy lie in a divot scar was easier. The first fellow I remember who took the "replace divot" line off scorecards was Tom Walsh, one of the owners of Westgate Valley, a fee course in south suburban Chicago. He became PGA President in 1937. Tom's brother Frank was a prominent player of that period. There were three other Walsh brothers who were professionals and course operators. The Walsh brothers and their friends in charge of courses never were able to get divots to grow satisfactorily, so they topdressed the scars and let nature take its course. The Japanese were quicker to get the divot repair answer applied than we were. The girl caddies carried bags of fertilized soil and seed with which they deftly and swiftly patched the scars. The girls picked up the divots and carried them to compost piles.

Colorful new dress of rules book and USGA report scores: Change of the USGA Rules of Golf book from its conventional and rather drab style of cover to a red-banded cover with red headings inside has brought favorable comment from many who previously only glanced at the book. There has even been comment that red ink might be used to clarify or emphasize details of the rules.

The color was suggested by Harry Easterly, chairman of the Rules of Golf committee. The bright new styling of the 81st annual report of the USGA executive committee which awakened many golfers and club officials to the immense interest and value of USGA yearly activities was the suggestion of Janet Seagle, the association's librarian and USGA museum curator.

Western and U.S. Opens meet head-on in a headache: Luck, but not business judgment of sportsmanship, will determine whether or not playing the Western Open this year in the Chicago area a week following the U.S. Open was a mistake.

The Western Open at Butler National Golf Club in western suburban Chicago will be played June 26-29, the week following the U.S. Open at Medinah Country Club 15 miles away from Butler. The U.S. Open caboose date was the only acceptable one the Western Open could get from the Tournament Players' Division of the PGA. The

Western Open really began the tournament circuit. While the usual Christmas gift and other early promotion of U.S. Open ticket sales were being conducted by the promoter who cares for this business of the USGA and the host club, away went much of the guarantee of the Western Open gate that finances the Western's Chick Evans caddie scholarships. Maybe the golf car is succeeding the caddie but there now are 850 of these scholars in universities. There have been more than 4,000 of the scholarships financed. These scholarships now cost around \$5,000 a year. The caddie scholars are a group of young men, and a few young women, who are very carefully selected. They are people professional golfers better have as supporters.

In addition to these superior young people, the Western Golf Assn. can present its Par Club, and organization of financially and socially prominent men and women who contribute \$100 a year or more to the WGA Evans scholarship fund. Many of these men and women have accounted for the support that built and maintains the tournament circuit. The Chicago situation is potentially a delicate one for Jack Nicklaus and Johnny Miller. Both have lucrative contracts with Chicago-based companies — Nicklaus with Brunswick Corp. and Hart, Schaffner and Marx; and Miller with Sears. These days corporations have enough problems without becoming involved with the playing schedules of pro athletes.

Ryder Cup vets of 1927 join Al Watrous party: A beloved veteran of American pro golf, Al Watrous, will be honored at a celebrity program to be played at Great Oaks Golf Club, Rochester, Mich., Aug. 26. Gene Sarazen, Johnny Farrell and Joe Turnesa, who were teammates of Watrous on the 1929 Ryder Cup team, plan to play. Hagen, Dudley, Horton Smith, Al Espinosa, Diegel and Golden completed that team which lost 5 to 7 to the British, are now playing in greener pastures. In 1926, Watrous finished second to Bob Jones in the British Open. Watrous now is 76 and frequently scoring better than his age. He says he usually can beat any of his 22 grandchildren. He lives in Sarasota, Fla. □