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HERB GRAFFIS

SWINGING AROUND GOLF

Money pinch: A friend who lately has visited good golf clubs in different parts of the country said it is plain to see the effect tight money has had on golf course conditions. But the slump in conditions of some courses in poor shape is not what worries him most about the unpleasant financial situation in golf.

"What really worries me," said my friend, "is what the money pinch may be doing to the fine social standard of some clubs. They are taking in members whose only qualification to belong to a first-class club is money, and are pricing themselves out of the reach of many of the young married couples who have the social, intellectual and leadership qualities that are essential to a club to have prestige but not snobbery.

"I am beginning to see club members who obviously are new to their responsibilities in an intelligent society. On the course and in the clubhouse they do not know how to act as good club members should. I also see too many of the young men and women most desirable as good club members playing public courses when they do play golf."

Standard contract: Golf course superintendents and their employers need a standard employment contract that at least will be a recognized basis for hiring.

Lately, superintendents in all parts of the country have been urging that the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America prepare an agreement that may bring some uniformity and improvement in the employment of superintendents. For years, the Professional Golfers' Association and the Club Managers Association of America have made available proposals with clauses that cover most situations involving the pros and managers and their employers. The

superintendents have negotiated pretty much on an informal basis.

Employment contract terms having the study and approval of the superintendents' association would provide needed guidance, strength and more job security, say the superintendents who are pushing for 1/3 their association to present a basic contract that would clarify and improve the relations between superintendents and employers.

Santa Claus: Early but clear signs point to the biggest Christmas gift golf selling campaign smart pros have ever staged. The reasons for the forecasts are — (1) The pros need the money. Weather and general financial conditions have not favored golf equipment and apparel buying, especially at private clubs. (2) The golfing public wants a lot of new equipment. For example, the old clubs look awfully old since the cast iron head clubs have come in. (3) An avalanche of close-outs at stores and many money-making pro shops cutting prices to convert club inventories into cash sold plenty of the new design clubs that might have been Christmas presents.

So do not be surprised if there is an unusual Christmas golf club gift sales promotion by pros who are in the habit of doing some cute price-cutting. Graphite shafts in woods are certain to be a Christmas gift special where pros have the capacity to install these shafts in heads that players like.

Christmas apparel sales will have a raft of pro shop bargains of smart attire over the usual specialty shop merchandise and some pre-PGA Merchandise Show items that will make pro customers fashion leaders. It seems to be a sure thing that if a pro is not Santa Claus to himself in his shop in November and December, he has to blame himself for passing up money. Look at what is in bags in your racks now and you will see what you should sell. □