

Joseph C. Dey, Junr., Executive Director of the USGA, tells you

## "HOW TO WRITE LETTERS ABOUT GOLF"

**D**O you ever have an urge to write letters to an editor, or to a public official—or even to a golf official? Whether or not you have given in to this particular temptation, it's not too late to realise the importance of style in letter-writing.

Of course, what you have to say may be very important and replete with truth; but **how** you say it may be the key to its effectiveness.

How do successful letter-writers do it? Many of them write the United States Golf Association; since they use a wide variety of styles, you may find it useful to examine their tastes. This, then, is a sampling of honest-to-goodness letters to the USGA.

An attribute of a really effective letter is brevity. Like this:

**"My friends cheat. Please send me a copy of the Rules of Golf."**

Or this, from a youngster:

**"I would like to have some information about my amateur static."**

Or this from a lady in California:

**"Would you please send us a copy of your description of a player who does not turn in all scores, or amends them, to maintain a 'suitable' handicap?"**

There's only one description: "Indescribable".

The wistful letter has a low-pressure appeal to some folks. Here's an example of wistfulness that pulls at the heart-strings:

**"I would appreciate it very much if it were at all possible for you to help me locate a position as an assistant pro.**

**"At the present time I am employed in the city in a position I have had for three years. But every time the sun comes out and the weather begins to get nice, my heart yearns for the golf course."**

### GRATITUDE—WITH NEEDLE

Then there is the letter that expresses gratitude but at the same time has a gentle needle and may even make you feel a bit of a heel. The writer of one such model letter is the Episcopal Bishop of Pittsburgh, the Rt. Rev. Austin Pardue—and he was *not* writing the USGA.

His family was spending the summer at Easthampton, on Long Island, and Bishop Pardue used to visit at week-ends. It was a summer of great drought, and the Maidstone golf course was burned to a crisp. One Saturday afternoon in the locker

room the distraught chairman of the Green Committee, Phillip Brown, sought the assistance of Bishop Pardue.

"Autie," he said, "can't you do something about this drought? Can't you arrange for some rain?"

"Well, I'll see," the Bishop replied. "I'll speak to the Boss. When would you like a delivery?"

"How about tonight, or tomorrow morning—early?" asked the eager Mr Brown.

"Pretty short notice," was the reply. "You'd better give me some alternative dates."

"Well," said Mr Brown, "how about next Wednesday or Thursday?"

"I'll do what I can," the Bishop promised. "I'll speak to the Boss."

Nothing happened that night, nor the next day, and Bishop Pardue went back to Pittsburgh after the week-end. But in the middle of the following week there was a deluge, which literally saved the parched Maidstone course. Phil Brown was overjoyed, and he sent a telegram of thanks to Bishop Pardue. In reply, the Bishop wrote him somewhat as follows:

**"My Dear Mr Brown and members of the Green Committee:**

**"My Senior Partner and I have received your message of thanks with gratification. We have been in the business of serving mankind a long while, but it is always pleasing to receive such expressions as yours.**

**"If you should want future deliveries, we would be glad to arrange for them, but we would suggest the hours between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Sunday, when all of our branch offices are open."**

## **"HOW TO WRITE LETTERS ABOUT GOLF" — contd.**

### **MONEY**

Letters dealing with money are often quite effective and revealing of character, depending upon which end of the money you're on. Take entry fees for championships, for instance.

There is the nonchalant, brassy sort of communication. Once a gentleman's entry fee was a basketball check which the bank bounced right back at the USGA. With no reluctance at all, the USGA called the gentleman's attention to this trifling matter. He replied with another check and the following philosophical note:

**"Try this one. My wife beat me to the check book. You know how it is. Sorry. No one hurt. Tear up the other one."**

But sometimes our conscience doth make cowards of us, to the degree that we can't wait to write—we must hurry to the

telephone, as did a wife who communicated this message:

**"My husband's entry fee check was drawn on a joint account which I had overdrawn," she said breathlessly. "Please let me make it good and accept his entry. I don't want him penalized for my mistake—and I don't want to hear about it from him for the rest of my life, either."**

Entry accepted.

You'd think that hopefulness would be a compelling quality in a letter, but don't depend upon it. At least hopefulness cuts no ice with the hard-hearted men who handle the Open entries. To enter the Open, an amateur's handicap must be not over two strokes.

Once a hopeful amateur boldly stated:

**"I have never been handicapped."**

Entry rejected.

*To be continued*

With grateful acknowledgements to the  
*USGA Golf Journal*

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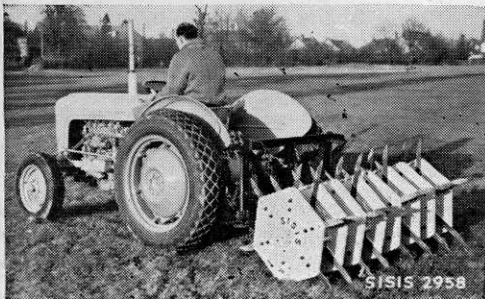
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