

Outlines Work for Pros

IT is common knowledge that in any social group there is an admixture of good and bad. A cursory examination of society in all its phases shows these two elements whether you take the family as the smallest social group or the nation as the opposite extreme.

Society is grouped in other ways, however, as witness all manner of associations formed for the conduct of business or pursuit of pleasure.

In fact, any objective that must be gained is done through an association or combination of its participants. This takes

on various forms. All clubs—football, baseball, golf and the multitude of other sporting organizations are formed in this way, for the organization and pursuit of health-giving exercise. In business there are various chambers of commerce and local associations. No business of national importance (and there are hundreds) is complete without its association. Many of these reach a high degree of organization undreamed of to the layman. The stock exchange is a potent example.

And why all this organization? This is best answered in the form of another question—Why all the trade unions and labor organizations during the industrial revolution? Were not these for the benefit of that part of society that formed them? To free their members from their oppressive masters and present them with a higher standard of living was the avowed object of all these movements.

Protection, then, is the watchword of all organizations—whether sporting, social, or business—protection of the good majority from the undesirable minority. Never a day passes without some individual withdrawing (sometimes voluntarily, but often by request) from his club or society. Even the mighty Stock Exchange is not immune from such conduct.

RALLYING THE GOOD PROS

The writer of the accompanying call for recognition of the well-qualified professionals and the weeding out of the unfit has been connected with professional golf for many years.

He asked us if we'd be afraid to print his warning to the good professionals that they'd better clean house in the professional ranks or else —. GOLFDOM can't see that the story's too hot to handle. It does put the establishment of standards and appraisal of fitness rather squarely up to the P. G. A., but with the reigning and vigorous national and sectional heads of this body it looks to us like the necessity of action couldn't be in better hands.

There's a clean-up due. The worthy pros have been compelled to carry the burden of the worthless and "false alarm" pros long enough.

And now comes the hour of our discontent, for which it is, as we proceed to assimilate these remarks with the game of golf, which is our immediate concern.

Calls for P. G. A.

Help

Golf is controlled by a big three, so to speak, the U. S. G. A., W. G. A. and P. G. A. I omit as subordinate to these three the multitude of state and district associations necessary to a proper control and administration of the game. All three major organizations attain great and useful objectives. Of the three,

however, I venture the opinion that the P. G. A. fails to fulfill functions which might well come within its grasp and are deserving of most urgent attention.

This is no mere destructive criticism, but is prompted with a view to improving a state of affairs which seems to have drifted along unheeded. As is well known, every business of any consequence has a rating. This is given after a careful survey of many considerations entering into the conduct of the particular business. This rating, too, has a meaning. It is a signal to the world at large that "So-and-so" has a certain business standing in the circle to which he belongs. Furthermore, it is evidence that by being so admitted to this group he has earned the respect of his competitors and associates and that they are ready and willing to protect him as they may seem fit. In this way a law is introduced into business whereby "good businesses drive out bad."

This brings me to my point. Professional golfers, besides being professors of skill, are called on to show some real business acumen. They run small businesses and in some isolated cases these take on the proportions of young department stores. It is this group which the P. G. A. endeavors to control, but how far

this control extends is a matter of opinion.

The rapid growth of the game during the past few years is now history. But has the P. G. A. grown with the game? Many new pros may be recruited to the ranks each year, but I seem to know several of excellent standing both as players and business men who have relinquished their memberships. The idea that good business men should withdraw from their association is quite foreign and the very best evidence of something being amiss. These are they who ought to be protected instead of being allowed to walk boldly out, as some do. In other words, separate the sheep from the goats, shepherd the sheep, but drive out the goats.

Suggests "Pro" Rating

It is for this very reason that I offer the suggestion of rating every professional in the country exactly as businesses are rated. I can foresee opposition, but this is no more than to be expected, for all innovations are received thus. The advantages of such a rating must ultimately be manifold. Such a scheme should be undertaken by the P. G. A. working in conjunction with the clubs who employ these pros. Added to this embryo reorganization committee should be the manufacturers. It is no mean task, and if it accomplished nothing but cleaning the profession of undesirables it would have accomplished something worth while. It would raise the cream to the surface.

Were such a rating undertaken it would be at the disposal of all clubs about to engage the services of a pro. At present clubs take a leap in the dark, and too often before the season has advanced many weeks they find they have bought a "pig in a poke." This would help to eliminate the great number of annual changes which take place in the professional ranks. The mere fact of a club having engaged five pros in as many years is in itself proof of an unhealthy state of affairs in the golf business.

The third benefit to be derived from such a scheme would be to the manufacturer. By having access to such a system he would benefit to the same extent that each club would.

I have only hinted at three benefits such a system would bring to light, but it will be obvious there are a multitude of minor matters that might arise for discussion. Why not, then, these three directly interested parties get round a table and set the ball rolling.

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One Way Out

Within a comparatively short space of time—roughly two years—it has come to my knowledge that some twelve or fifteen professionals have had resort to the bankruptcy court.

When one considers the number of pros in the country, also that golf has been played during a generation or more, this may seem a small number of failures. To those on the "inside," however, that is just twelve or fifteen more than ought to be. Golf has enjoyed and still enjoys a period of prosperity. Who can say that it knows the meaning of the word depression with new clubs springing up all over the country, and existing clubs increasing their memberships?

Clubs increase not by tens and dozens but by hundreds each year, and players now are numbered in hundreds of thousands.

It is the very fact of this rapid growth that brings about the unstable condition that exists in the golf business today. All rapid growth of this type is potentially unhealthy. Business is full of cases where disaster has followed in the wake of booms. And the golf business has been enjoying a boom for at least the last 10 years in the United States.

Certain people are attracted to the game who have no license whatsoever to designate themselves as professionals. Others, again, able and competent professionals, lack that business acumen and poise necessary to hold down their jobs. Laxity on the part of the governing body (I refer specifically to the body of golf professionals, as the governing bodies of golfers as represented by the U. S. G. A. and W. G. A. reach the acme of perfection as compared with the salaried brigade) has helped materially to bring about this state of affairs.

As in all mushroom-like growths, this golf business is no exception to the rule of excesses which they generate. Men are made rich over night who formerly scarcely knew where their next night's sleep was to come from. Human nature being what it is, these "nouveaux riches" proceed to live as they have often dreamed they would. It is addiction to these excesses which has led to the downfall of the majority of the twelve or fifteen. The truth of this will be apparent if one studies their names and the clubs with which they were connected. Most are men of considerable ability as professionals, but lack the force of character to resist such things as the market and the pony. Other ex-



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cesses many are wont to indulge in are too apparent for my citation. I pose as no paragon of virtue, for I confess to a little gamble, also to a refreshment. The trouble lies in suddenly getting rich and indulging in these luxuries to excess and to the detriment of one's business.

Thousands of professionals throughout these United States are engaged on nine-hole courses and some even smaller. I know many of these to walk off the course in the fall with four and five thousand dollars and more of clear profit with which to spend the few winter months that remain. Many of these are in small towns of 10,000 and less of population. Meet some of these small men (if I may so designate them) when they come "to town" and you will enjoy a royal and jolly evening.

How come, then, that some of the Big Moguls of the professional business—enjoying good salaries, large and moneyed memberships, and lots of play on the courses—must resort to the bankruptcy courts.

There is only one answer: They have drifted from excess to excess. One thing went wrong and they made a mighty plunge in an effort to extricate themselves, only to fail more miserably. From bad they went to worse, sinking deeper and deeper into the mire.

The Professional's Status

Now, this man—the professional—has a position of dignity on which to stand. He is one of two or three or four hundred of the elite of the community. He may even be the only one in the town of twenty to forty thousand and occupies a position analogous to the mayor. Everyone knows him and yet cases are extant of his having humiliated himself even to the extent of having had to change his name. This he has done in order to receive credit from his dealers in order to supply his clientele with the requisites of golf. Hopping from town to town, state to state and even coast to coast has been thought easy, but organized society being what it is keeps hounding him until he at last comes to the bankruptcy court.

This last course may be taken voluntarily, though I have the suspicion it is more often legal advice of a somewhat questionable repute. These failures may have been given this as their "one way out," and one which would cost them a

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Have these men ever pondered over this course before taking the plunge? I am certain they can't have thought too hard. They are well known to hundreds, nay, even thousands. They have brought discredit not only to themselves but have assisted materially in lowering the prestige of the club which they have the honor to serve. And with the manufacturer they have succeeded in arranging things that business is entirely cut off or on a strictly cash basis.

Greater harm, however, is that of a moral nature. Pros of this questionable type forget they belong to a large and noble profession. The eyes of the country are concentrated on this body all the year round. Acting as some do, they drag the entire profession down with them.

Ant Treatment

You understand as well as anyone, if you happen to have been unfortunate enough to have been pestered with ants, just what a nuisance they can be. They mostly do their work in the summer time when it is very difficult to grow grasses. They continually bring dirt out of the ground and it seems to burn up the surface where the ant hills form. In a number of cases where I have constructed courses, upon going down into the ground we have found ant beds 6 feet in diameter and about 18 inches deep. I don't know why we came across all these ants, whose numbers ran into millions, unless some time in the past there had been some dead animal buried there. That is one reason why I have never been of the opinion that bone-meal is very good for putting greens, although it has bacteria that is absolutely essential to plant life, but on account of the nuisance it is very apt to give the user, I do not highly recommend bone-meal where other fertilizers could be substituted. To exterminate ants a very simple mixture of powdered borax and sugar can be used.

For ant-hills about two inches in diameter put on some of the mixture, about as much as could be laid on the nail of the little finger. Put on each ant-hill in proportion to the size. This sounds like a very simple remedy, but for some unknown reason the ants disappear; where they go to is a mystery. The only thing we do know is that it gets results.