

# Ten Commandments for Keeping the Pro Job

By JACK FULTON, JR.

**T**HIS article is going to make some pros "sore." We are willing to take this risk, because it is going to do more of them, particularly the younger ones, no little good. If you think any of these "ten commandments" are wrong, we will be more than glad to have you write us your views. If you have some additions or comments to make, pass them on also.

**O**NE of the hardest jobs a young pro has to learn is that he is an employee and not a member of the club that employs him. This was most forcefully brought out in the experience recently gone through by a young fellow with one of the largest clubs in the New York area.

He came to the club after five years' experience, three as assistant pro and two on his own, with a small Ohio club. He was excellently recommended as a good teacher, a fine player and a man with sufficient polish and education to satisfy the requirements of a metropolitan club.

For the first month or so of his new position, the young pro was all that could be expected. The members found him agreeable, intensely bent on making a success of his new job and anxious to please. They patted themselves on the back and congratulated each other on acquiring so good a pro; for the past five years they had hired a new pro each year, only to find him unsatisfactory.

The young pro was not blind to this feeling among the members and in his desire to cement it still further, he made a point of taking frequent trips through the locker-room and stopping to chat with the various members he found there. There were certain members in particular, the "regulars" always at the club, with whom he became very intimate. He felt he was getting along in great fashion and that he had his job for life if he wanted it.

But toward the end of the season he became aware that the bulk of the members were less cordial than earlier in the year. It puzzled him and indeed, he did not grasp the reason fully until one day when the president told him the club had decided not to renew his contract for the coming year.

The pro was aghast. What had he done? Then the president, talking as a father to a son, explained:

"In your professional duties," his employer began, "you are all a club could ask; we have no kicks; from that standpoint we've never had a better pro and never will. But you have made one mistake all year that has soured the membership on you and, although most of the club officials wanted to keep you on for another year, the members at the annual meeting asked for a change. We can do nothing but be governed by their wishes."

"Your mistake, and I really believe you will be very surprised when I tell you, is that you appear to be just a little too good for your job. You have made it a policy to spend a great deal of your time in the locker-room mingling with the members. As a result, when some member wanted supplies in your shop, you were not there to serve him but were mixing business with pleasure where you didn't belong.

"Let me give you a word of advice. If you want to be respected and looked up to in the next club at which you are employed, keep yourself aloof. Stay in your shop or out around the first tee, be cordial and friendly with everyone, but always hold back just a little. Show that you know you're an employee but a very high class one. Make the member realize it, too. I don't mean for you to act like Uriah Heep and overdo this 'umbleness' as he used to boast, but keep just a little apart. The older members will like it, you'll be more of a hero to the younger men, and the wives of the members, in particular, will respect your good judgment and reserve."

What a lot of good advice there is in that president's words, and how many young pros could profit by it. There seems to be something about country club life that lures them to excess familiarity not found in the pros whose jobs are the public links.

Alex Pirie, president of the Professional Golfers' association, said recently: "One of the problems of the P. G. A. is to keep our members in their good positions. Too many pros who are well qualified as teachers, club-makers and greensmen, lose their contracts each year. Personality has a lot to do with this unrest and a book entitled 'Etiquette for Golf Professionals' wouldn't do a lot any harm."

Pirie is right. The pro holds no menial position; his is just as honorable a profession as the doctor's and lawyer's, and one his club's members look up to. He need not be "umble" at any time. But it is essential that he *never mix with the members*. The old saying, "Distance lends enchantment" still holds true.

If I were a pro, I think I would be governed by certain basic principles of conduct something along these lines:

(1) I would keep out of the clubhouse, especially the locker-room, except on business.

(2) I would never address a member by his first name, but would always use the form "Mr. So-and-So."

(3) I would never refuse a tip for some slight favor I had done a member. I would say, "That's all right—forget it." But if the member insisted, I would accept the gratuity and thank him cordially. Use some judgment.

(4) On the other hand, I would never charge a member for such slight jobs, as renewing the wrappings on a club or buffing up a head.

(5) I would unhesitatingly take back any merchandise sold by me which did not satisfy the member. I would be imposed on at times, but the gainer in the long-run.

(6) I would be particularly careful to be agreeable but never familiar when giving lessons to women.

(7) If I had a wife, I would instruct her to stay off the club grounds, at least during the daytime. If she insisted on visiting me at work, I would require her to remain inconspicuous.

(8) I would never forget that I am a professional man just as much as any doctor or lawyer, and would remember that the country club is primarily my business, not my pleasure-haunt.

(9) I would play no favorites among the members. Club politics have cost many a good pro his job, simply because he had

the unwitting appearance of being on the "wrong" side.

(10) As far as the members knew, I would be a tee-totaler. I would refuse invitations to drink by saying, "Sorry, I'm on the wagon these days."

These ten rules are not offered as a sermon. Nor, obviously, will all ten apply to any one pro. But, if you think they are not common pro failings, ask any member of any club what his pro's worst fault is—you'll find it among the ten precepts listed above.

## Chicago Golf Show to Be Biggest Ever Held

WITH the opening curtain of the Third International Golf Show still three weeks away from GOLFDOM's deadline, the distinction of the event to be held at Hotel Sherman, Chicago, March 12-17, is assured as the biggest golf exhibition ever held. There are 104 exhibitors already signed for appearance. Of these 44 are showing for the first time.

Walter Hagen, who will be there as an active business man, boosting his own line of golf goods, also will be a big public drawing card.

The range of exhibits includes a vast array of equipment and supplies for the clubhouse, pro shop and course and it is confidently expected by the promoters, Sherman Lewis and A. L. Shaffer, that the event will draw so many purchasers from the country's golf clubs that the exhibitors will reap a rich harvest.

## Dress the Part of Prosperous Pro

HOW much do the style and cut of Hagen's clothes add to his popularity as a champion golfer? No insignificant amount. Cooper, Farrell, Watrous, Armour and all the other well-known professional golfers are careful to appear well-groomed at all times. They, too, know it pays to dress the part.

Any pro can take a tip from this. His earnings depend largely on his popularity with the members of his club. A clean-shaven, clean-handed, well-dressed pro earns many a dollar he would lose were he less well groomed.