

New Indoor School Teaches GOLF with the MOVIES

By HERB GRAFFIS



DEPENDING on the accuracy of the old Chinese maxim that "a picture says more than a thousand words," Eddie Garre, pro at the La Grange Country club and Parker Nall, pro at Edgewood Valley, have started an indoor golf school specializing in golf instruction by motion pictures. The establishment is located on the fifth floor at 228 South Wabash Ave., Chicago. The location is in a new building with good light and excellent ventilation. The boys opened the school January 2 and intend to run through until the opening of the outdoor season in Chicago.

Much has been said about the potential value of motion pictures in golf instruction and several professionals have used the movies of their pupils with splendid results in outdoor work, but, so far as we know, the Nall-Garre team is the trail-blazing outfit in the indoor field. Just what the actual results of this instruction will be when the graduates are turned out on the course are naturally problematical, but the improvement in form of the students during the three weeks the school has been in operation is impressive, according to the instructors' judgment from the film and performances.

The charge for the motion picture instruction is very reasonable considering the investment necessary. Nall and Garre charge \$45 for 10 45-minute lessons and 100 feet of film. Twenty-five feet of film are shot with the first, third, sixth and ninth lessons. They also have charges for film, projection and criticism of \$6.50 for 25 feet, \$10 for 50 feet, and \$17.50 for 100 feet of film. The film costs them six cents a foot for the film and developing.

Their camera and projection outfit set them back between \$300 and \$400. The camera and projector are Eastman equipment. The Eastman experts are working closely with the men in the pioneer school for the company apparently appreciates the vast field for motion picture sales opened with the effectiveness of movies in golf instruction has been convincingly demonstrated.

Lighting A Problem

Light problems are giving the boys plenty of trouble. The artificial lighting equipment suitable for catching each detail of the player's stroke on a motion picture film is something that remains to be worked out on a perfect basis. With the lens wide open the results are pretty fair under the artificial light they now are employing, but it is expected that trials of different equipment and the research work of the Eastman men will result in practical perfection. The camera they use shoots slow motion as well as normal speeds and their projector is so constructed that motion can be stopped or reversed at any point, thus simplifying the instruction.

The plan of instruction involves the use of the standard films of the stars such as Hagen, Jones, et al, which are available in film libraries. These films are used as models of form and are compared with the pupils' own films. One thing that Nall and Garre bumped up against right at the start of their operations is a scarcity of films, both normal motion and slow motion, of the foremost women golfers. They are having some shot for use in their school. The investment in equipment (in-

cluding nets, camera, projector, films, etc.) is around \$1,400. There is no putting course in the school.

Both of the fellows admit that there is much to be done with the plan and the equipment before it may be generally accepted as the model operation. When I dropped in to look over their layout they were experimenting with clubs painted white in order to get clearer definition on the pictures in the fastest part of the stroke. They have tried white screens back of the player and have found that this helps get better pictures due to its diffusion of light. They also plan to whitewash the floor of the net in which the picture instruction is given to help master the lighting situation.

Hope to Profit Pros

For some time both Garre and Nall have been studying the motion picture golf instruction proposition and are hopeful of steering the pro field into more resultful and profitable teaching as the outcome of their well-received efforts in the Chicago district. Nall cites the case of Bob Jones' use of motion picture films of his own stroke in helping him out of batting slumps, and other cases of rank-and-file golfers who have worked some improvement in their own games as the result of using the home movie outfits.

It is the Chicago fellows' hunch that golf instruction is ripe for a drastic change. The orthodox tedious and generally haphazard method of golf instruction, they maintain, is too slow and uncertain in its results, and away behind the times in teaching work.

"They'll believe the camera when they won't believe you," said one of the boys, in telling how the film simplified explanation and diagnosis of the pupil's faults. "Adults usually haven't good muscular and mental co-ordination and when you keep talking and talking to try to get their swing right, they frequently say they understand just to keep from being considered 'dumb.'" People generally expect results from golf instruction too quickly. When they see, in a film, their faults, they realize that it is because they are not doing what they have been taught, and not due to the pro's deficiencies, that they are not advancing as they hoped. In this way the motion picture instruction will undoubtedly stir up renewed interest in golf lessons, for I think that there has been a general let-down in the number of

lessons given by pros because the customer's wanted speedier results than they were getting by the usual manual and oral method of instruction.

"The movies are going to make teaching easier for the pro. He can go about his work with more certainty and a better understanding from the pupil. He will get more pupils and teach them more in less time."

One of the partners told me that he had proved to his own satisfaction that the student got more value and a far greater improvement in his game out of \$45 worth of movie lessons than out of the same money spent in the ordinary method of instruction. He had noted that for the advanced pupils who already were good players the films that were of most value to them were those shot from the back, but for the average student the film shot facing the player at right angles to the line of flight was more effective for teaching.

The school believes the best policy for winter instruction is to first sell the pupil a series of lessons without the movies as a limbering-up session.

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