

# Need More "Opens" to Develop Gallery Habit

THERE is a menace to the future of pro earning power in the failure of the sharpshooting pro stars to encourage "open" tournaments. That opinion has been expressed with growing frequency during the last two years by knowing golf enthusiasts whose sincere friendship toward the pros is beyond question. Further strength is given the belief by statements coming from those who have handled the exhibition affairs of a number of the game's professional stars.

The insistence of a number of the leaders on a guarantee before they will appear in many tournaments already has killed some of the open tournaments that are potentially profitable for the pros and when "Rest in Peace" was posted over those events there also was a wake held for opportunities to establish pro reputations and to develop the habit of gallery attendance by the rank and file golfer. In these days of enlightened business judgment in pro ranks the subject is one to be given serious thought by the large number of pros whose tournament records and performances do not now give them any reason for exacting a guarantee for tournament appearance as well as by the select two score or less who can, with some reason, ask for a guarantee. A performing pro's reputation is based upon his record in approximately ten tournaments a year. That's little enough of a schedule for the pro aspirants to big money. They can look with very dim hope at Babe Ruth's \$70,000 a year. Ruth has well over a hundred chances a year to do something that will warrant his gate value and fatten his reputation. He has created his gallery and made his gallerites habitual camp-followers of his. In view of the astounding growth of golf it would be ridiculous to say that anyway near the limit has been reached in golf galleries, even though the procedure of legging it around the golf gallery involves effort and action to the extent that it seems destined to remain far short of baseball, football and boxing as a gate magnet.

## Create a Gallery Habit

But one thing you can write down in

your little book is that the short-sighted prevailing policy in overlooking the education of golfers in gallery attendance is making the going increasingly tough for those pros who should have high hopes of a mounting income from gallery fees. The Chicago District open, which promised to become a notable feature for the benefit of pro golf, was laid away in rest when the guarantee demands of pro stars became too heavy. The district officials responsible for removing the event from the golf calendar are business men, just as the performing stars, but the association executives were accustomed to taking risks in their business and couldn't see why the pros wouldn't take a chance too. The Wolf Hollow open, once the scene of a historic achievement in golf scoring, was removed from the golf calendar for the same reason. It is no particular secret that at least two more of the events that have done a whole lot to establish pro reputations and earning power and to add impetus to gallery attendance are in imminent danger of being removed from the scheme of things because their sponsors do not see fit to dig up the guarantees demanded by the "big shots."

There naturally are two sides to be heard from. The headlining pro may say, with considerable earnestness, that he has to make hay while the sun shines, he may ask why he should contribute his services freely for the profit of organizations of restricted influence and reputation, and cite the arduous and expensive details of scattered tournament traveling.

These three of the leading points to come up can be handled without difficulty. The sun will shine longer for the pro who is a masterly campaigner when he has more tournament opportunities to add to his fame and to nourish his gate value as an exhibition performer. He shouldn't hop, skip and jump over the country in order to play in the tournaments for which there is a legitimate reason.

There should be a reasonable schedule and itinerary arranged, and the gate, if in excess of the announced prize money, should be devoted to an increase of the

prize money, a sum to the club and possibly some to the P. G. A., on the basis of a mutually satisfactory split. These tournaments could be slated so the boys could make their exhibition jumps in between at a saving of time and expense.

It is the observation of men who have had considerable success in managing top-notch pro performers that the pros fare better when they play for the gate instead of a guarantee. Why shouldn't the same thing apply to the tournaments? The part of the country that is going to keep the boys busy in the summer with exhibition dates hasn't the benefit of the big purses the California and southern business interests put up, but is that any reason why it should be passed up in the promotion of gallery interest? That's what a number of thoughtful and competent students of the situation think. They cite the National Open as a case in point. The prize money for the pros was increased by the U. S. G. A. this year and the chances are that there will be further increases in the years following. It is admitted that the pros "make" the National Open but the event also "makes" the pros. The exhibition dates and the testimonials are the heavy sugar; winning the National Open is just the starter. To a lesser extent would a lengthier list of legitimate open tournaments in the country benefit the pros, but, at that, the value would be considerable. The stars of pro golf have to do their part in waiving the guarantee demands to a reasonable degree. The clubs are not tumbling over themselves to stage tournaments now. The list of applicants for the National Open doesn't show the array of clamoring candidates it used to—not by a long, long way. Booking the exhibitions isn't done with the same old ease, and as a general thing, the exhibition galleries are decidedly smaller. The big boys can do a whole lot to detour these danger signals by easing up on the guarantee requirements and staging a "charity ball" at the right time and place. Rickard made rich men out of many an ambitious boy in the fight field by being smart enough to ballyhoo events for sweet charity's sake and for the good of the cause. The pro aces might, to their good advantage, ponder on Tex's technique.

IT sometimes happens that tees are constructed on sloping ground, which necessitates the making of sloping banks around the tee; and during the course of their life the banks are subject to destruction from various causes and become unsightly and always a source of expense to maintain. This can be cured when the tee is constructed by covering the slopes or banks with wire netting. Lay the netting flatly on the ground and pin it down to the ground with wire pins 7 or 8 inches long made from ordinary fencing wire and made in the form of hairpins. The grass will grow up beautifully through it and the netting is never detected; a scythe can be used without danger, and the banks or slopes are protected for all time.—*From the Journal of the Golf Grnkprs. Assn., England.*

QUITE a large part by weight of all grasses comes from the air, but unless the soil is well managed the grasses cannot avail themselves properly of this food. As the air above poor soils is just as good for grasses as the air above good soils, it is important to feed the poor soils by supplying what is required. This very important substance is called nitrogen. An important factor in the feeding of turf is thorough knowledge of the soils, indigenous growth and climatic conditions. Three greens within a few hundred yards of each other, yet the nature of the soil, aspect and their formation, may be entirely different, and each requires individual treatment. Of great importance is to keep all soils in as neutral condition as possible; either a too-acid or an alkaline soil interferes with the growth of grasses.—*From the Journal of the Golf Grnkprs. Assn., England.*

TO the majority of players the greatest pleasure in the game is to watch the flight and finish of a well-struck ball. Blind holes should be avoided as much as possible; too many make play as if one is playing in a fog.

A raised tee is very useful for this purpose, and especially at the short holes, where all the turf and the bottom of the flag should always be visible so that a golfer can play for the "pin," and not merely for the green.—*From the Journal of the Golf Grnkprs. Assn., England.*