

Pros to Be Honored as Partners in the Cause by U. S. G. A.?

By HERB GRAFFIS



A. D. Lasker, Chicago capitalist, and Alex Pirie talk over prospects of a tournament on Lasker's private course next year for first 30 qualifiers in the National Open

INTERESTING rumors begin to circulate concerning the prospects of the pros being glorified by the title of "Mister," or at least being granted deserved recognition to the extent that there will be none of the somewhat laughable mock distinction that is a throw-back to those jolly days when the serfs were casually but soundly larruped across the bunkers by feudal barons, and minstrels were inclined to sing of an English king. But this is the U. S. A. and 1929.

You can pay your money and have your guess on what has been responsible for golf's growth to acknowledged leadership as the American sport. One of the contributory factors, according to our belief, has been the U. S. G. A. It has not been immune to human frailties, but beyond all question has identified itself as the ranking governing body in popular American sports by its knowledge of conditions in golf and its earnest devotion to advancement of the game. However, in those two respects the P. G. A. splits 50-50 with the U. S. G. A.

Acting in advisory capacities P. G. A. officials often have been called into conference with various U. S. G. A. committees and officers. Doubtless the pros' intimacy with the playing of the game qualified their representatives to supply the U. S. G. A. valuable assistance. Unofficial recognition of the pros' services to the game have abounded, but wouldn't it be a gracious and logical act for the game's advancement to have a representative of the P. G. A. on the executive committee of the U. S. G. A.?

The pros have demonstrated their un-

ceasing and able faithfulness to the game. Their achievement as business men also entitles them to official recognition by the U. S. G. A. The big business men who are high in its councils willingly concede no small degree of business ability to men who have put a new business on a good solid basis in ten years as the pros have done.

Much use could be made of pro help in the smooth management of such events as the National Open and in various other important activities of the U. S. G. A. In the manner in which golf is governed and conducted in this country it seems to be entirely reasonable and right that there be a close and mutually helpful official liaison between the U. S. G. A. and the P. G. A.

Some of the professionals' best friends are high and active officials of the U. S. G. A. so it may be that the rumor of intended pro recognition is not as groundless as a lot of the other stories that crop up in golf.

Pros Plan Atlanta Action

Sectional bodies of the P. G. A. are electing their two delegates each to the annual meeting of the organization which will be held in Atlanta during the first week in November. There are 24 of the sections of the P. G. A. of America whose representatives will be confronted at their annual conclave with the necessity of decision on many vitally important matters.

As in the activities of all organizations it is difficult to get the issues and plans sharply defined, but the pros are going

at the task with intense earnestness. The matter of collective buying, nationally or by sections, continues to be in the pro headlines. Just how this is to be handled is still, apparently, a dilemma to the pro chiefs although several plans that are interesting and sound in many details have been proposed.

The Atlanta meeting probably will be unusually productive in definite action for the golf club, and manufacturers will be holding sessions of their own while the pros are in conclave. The opportunity for both factors going into a huddle and coming out with the signal for the right play never has been afforded before. It is the main plank in the pro platform that since they do the majority of the country's golf business they can't see why they can't get their buying arranged in some way that gives them an even break with the store buyers who may buy in larger quantities individually, but who are decidedly in the minority when the totals on golf goods sales are added up.

It is high time that each pro who has any problem that he believes is in line for action at the Atlanta meeting so advise the representatives of his section. GOLFDOM will be glad to devote all editorial space necessary to putting forth pro ideas in order that they will get the benefit of the entire field's thought prior to the session at Atlanta.

Boys, if you have an idea for the good of the cause or something to get off your chest, now is the time to bring it before your fellow workers.

Ironing Out a Credit Matter

In the course of a year we do a lot of business with pros. A good part of the business is in the shape of classified advertising for fellows who are looking for jobs. A man out of a job might be considered a bum credit risk but GOLFDOM'S losses in this respect during the magazine's entire history have been less than the cost of a box of cigars. We cite that fact in nailing the lid on the coffin of the dead dope that the pro is a questionable credit risk.

We are actually sold on the idea that the average pro is immeasurably a better credit risk than any other class of small business operator that can be called to mind. For this we take some of the credit along with the P. G. A., as we have con-

stantly been pounding away on the importance of good credit to the pro.

The manufacturers have some plain duties in helping the pros make the credit situation as near 100 per cent perfect as humanly possible. The other night at a pro meeting a young pro, a good, bright, ambitious one, delivered himself of this statement:

"Why pick on pros about credit when we hear tales of manufacturers who help a pro who is into them get a good job so he can square up his account? The fellow who keeps his bills discounted doesn't get a fair deal, so what incentive has he to be A1 credit?"

We doubt that anything like this has happened for some few years past, but the evil that men do lives after them, etc., and it's strictly up to all manufacturers to make their positions in this respect perfectly clear to the pros.

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Here's a stunt that it wouldn't hurt pros to adopt. The idea has good merchandise advertising value and in addition, for the pro, the more of his members he can get practicing, the more of them he will get for instruction. The idea shows how anxious stores are to get business that should be the pros'.

The premium idea, as set forth by *Sporting Goods Dealer*, is set forth thus.

"An inexpensive stunt which has pulled in sales for Volk's, Inc., a sporting goods firm of Miami, Fla., is the distribution of 300 golf ball bags. These were attractive canvas sacks, seamed at the sides and made nine by six inches in size. They were closed by a draw-string at the top. These bags were made by an awning company in Miami at a cost of 15 cents each.

"The bags were not given out at the store. Instead, they were distributed to every member of the Miami G. & C. C., thus reaching many prospects who might not come into the store.

"The little bags were stenciled by O. C. York, partner in Volk's, Inc., with a cartoon figure of a golfer making a bad drive and a caption, "Improve your drive." Then, in an unobtrusive way which in no wise destroyed the attractiveness of the bag, the name "Volk's" was stenciled in.

"The bags are especially handy in practice as they hold two dozen golf balls and the golfer can bring them up to a tee and empty them there while he practices. The bags also were useful to hold the balls in a locker. They keep the balls together and save the annoyance of balls rolling off

and becoming lost.

"Because the bags were so useful they were constantly in evidence at the country club all during the golf season and Volk's noticed an increased business from country club members."

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Joe Roseman, a past president of the Illinois P. G. A., handed out a good bit of advice to the boys at a recent meeting of that organization when he counseled the pros to exercise more care in the replacement of divots. Joe pointed out that clubs are not as cordial toward tournaments as they used to be, and advanced as a leading reason for this ice on the welcome mat the indifference of many pros and star amateurs to the preservation of good course condition.

The pro, Joe maintained, should set the example for all the rest of the players for he has more of an interest in the excellence of course condition. The admonition was received with lively applause by the pros, many of whom frankly acknowledged the impeachment.

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Editor and Publisher, the business journal that goes to newspaper men, hands out the following idea to editors. It's something that gives pros a tip on how they can get some good publicity for their clubs and members. The hunch says:

"Golf is rapidly becoming our national pastime. Considering the interest taken in the game and the number who participate in it, I don't think that most sport pages give it enough attention. Why not arrange with the pro or manager at each course in your section to notify you once a week as to the best score made that week and the name of the player? It would make an interesting feature."—Don J. Wellenkamp.

Flop of "Trojan Horse" Worries Its Rider

DISCLAIMING that the ambition is to take the golf goods business away from the pro and have it go to the sporting goods dealer, *Sporting Goods Illustrated*, whose attack on the pro as "a dirty competitor" was commented on in last month's GOLFDOM, now comes to the tee with the statement that the *Illustrated's* story had the object of bringing outfitters and pros into closer harmony.

May be so, but if references to the pro as a "dirty competitor," who "is kept poor

by gambling" and who "must drink with every member," are friendly words and give evidence of a noble intent of a rosy future planned for the pros, then we are all wrong in our understanding of English.

The *Illustrated* headlines its comment on GOLFDOM's defense of the professionals "Pro Paper Objects to Co-Operative Plan." Then follows a second-deck head, "Brands Dealers Price-Cutters; Says Pros Are Best Credit Risk," to which it adds the display comment, "Other Humorous Claims."

Let GOLFDOM again make itself perfectly clear in this matter. We are suspicious of any attempt to work the old Trojan horse trick on the pros, and that's what the *Illustrated's* suggestion amounted to. Why shouldn't the dealers want the pros to go out of the golf goods market, as the pros have made and control this market right now and are getting stronger all the time? Why shouldn't anyone desire to lure a commanding competitor out of his rightful business and leave it to the man who didn't build it? We can't blame the dealers for wanting to do this, for it is elemental human nature. But just as long as we are speaking for the vast majority of the really representative professionals we are going to warn against this invitation to give up the shop profits and become content only with what a pro gets out of instruction. If that is co-operation, as the *Illustrated* plainly maintained it so considered such a surrender, then it looks like the thinking professionals can't be expected to co-operate.

Pro's Pride in Course Pays Greenkeeper

CO-OPERATION between the pro and the greenkeeper is very essential. The pro, with his usual superior knowledge of how the course plays, is usually able to give many suggestions of help to the greenkeeper, and wise is the greenkeeper who can take these suggestions and appreciate them. Too often does the greenkeeper act as if he thinks the pro is attempting to "boss." Too little does he realize that all good pros are proud of the courses with which they are connected, and desire to have them free from criticism. The best greenkeepers are true diplomats, and can listen with interest to all suggestions and advice and use what is helpful, with thanks for the giver.—New England Greenkeepers' Newsletter.