

Pro Sells Himself in Playing a Business Stymie

By EARLE H. MACLEOD

THE fine art of turning obstacles into advantages—of “licking” a difficult and perplexing situation—is the theme which this story will concern itself in a recital of conditions under which a certain pro operates at a hotel daily fee club in the region of lower Michigan.

The club mentioned is the Grand Beach (Mich.) G. C., located some 60 miles east of Chicago along the Dunes highway and the Lake Michigan shore—a club having two courses, an 18-hole course and a nine-hole course, both of which are operated by a well patronized resort retreat, the Golfmore hotel.

The professional is Dave Brown; and it is the notworthiness of his ability to challenge and overcome a difficult situation that furnishes this text.

The Grand Beach G. C. is semi-private, having an exclusive membership, representative chiefly of leading Chicagoans, while at the same time it is operated as a daily fee course.

It is quite natural that the heavy play at Grand Beach should come on week ends when club members and their families together with hundreds of transient and hotel guests are out to enjoy the undulating fairways and rich, carpet-like greens, which, in age, date back nearly 20 years and are firm and true.

Thus, it is that we arrive at the meat of our story; for by the very fact that the Grand Beach club and the Golfmore hotel are ever-attracting magnets for resorters, tourists and week-end pleasure seekers, Dave Brown found himself with a luscious plum dangling before him and yet tantalizingly out of reach!

The fact is, that in the strictly private club, members are, of course, loyal to the last degree to the pro. They want to be. They buy his stock, rent his rack space, depend on him to keep their clubs buffed and in repair and faithfully and regularly seek his guidance and coaching. To a certain extent, this was wholly true of Grand Beach, but only to an extent not justified

by the amount of business that was actually there for the pro.

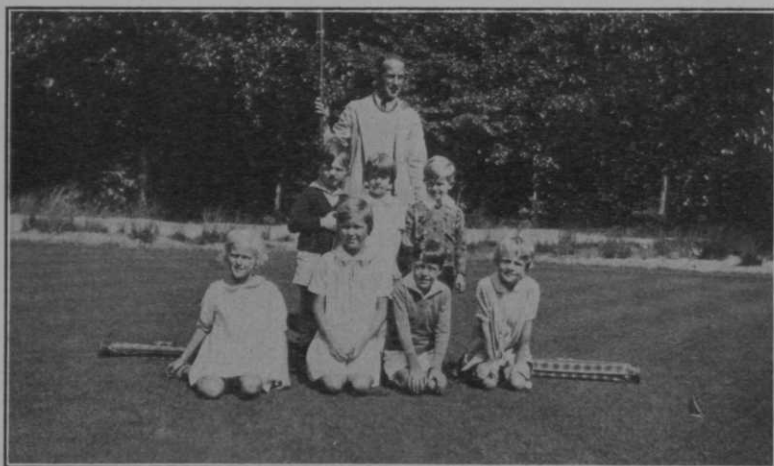
A Two-Day Job

The reason, of course, was, that members, being so close to Chicago were prone to take their clubs into the city with them, play at various clubs during the week, then return to Grand Beach for the week end. The result of this was that the home pro was more or less forgotten. He was forced to face city purchasing and teaching competition, a condition that bid fair to steal his livelihood. Coupled with this was the rich transient trade swarming out each week-end, yet fully equipped in advance with balls, clubs, bags and all the other necessaries for play. Here again, was oodles of business all going to the wrong place, so far as Dave was concerned.

Dave Brown soon saw that this condition was all wrong, so deciding that either he must beat or eventually be beaten, he set himself to correct and become master of this situation. How he did it was simple. In his determination, he decided to put forth that of which every pro can give to the utmost if he wants to—*himself*, and the best that is in him. Dave's best was in his teaching ability.

Dave is a keen player, a master with his irons, particularly on his approaches, and as with all things, there's a reason.

As a kid, Dave caddied at Carnoustie for many renowned players among whom were MacDonald Smith and Stewart Maiden, tutor of Bobby Jones. As a result of this early training, he became a close observer of form and developed, besides a mastery of the art of the game, an ability as a trick shot player. He participated in the Professional Footballers Golf Open Championship, losing in the finals to Jimmy Lawson now pro at Indianapolis C. C. By way of versatility, he played professional soccer in London for seven years, however, not neglecting to play golf all summer every year. Upon coming to this country in 1914, he was for a time as-



Dave Brown
and some of
his young
pupils

sistant pro at Flint (Mich.); pro at Long Beach (Ind.) for four years, and is now beginning his fifth season at Grand Beach.

Instruction Dave's Business Basis

So Dave Brown has a background that has made him an excellent instructor. He makes a deliberate analysis of his pupil and has a distinct faculty for imparting knowledge to the one receiving instruction.

He will take the greenest of the green, stand them in the hot sun for half an hour making them like it, and at the end of that time they have really learned something. They know it, too, and are impatient for the next lesson. Dave will just as easily take a seasoned player and in a few moments' time tell him what his fault is that has raised his score of late. Then he'll iron out the trouble.

So it wasn't long before Dave had his hands full as an instructor. From morning till night he would stand giving lessons, one after another, his eagle eye catching every false move of the pupil, his inimitable Scotch-accented instructions voiced with sincere, understandable authority, "sinking in" and imbuing the pupil with an ability to grasp and put into effect his teaching.

Free Lessons to Kids

Soon Dave was giving *free* lessons to the kiddies, every Monday morning, and it was a remarkable sight to see youngsters of seven, eight and nine years, using woods and irons with actual ability.

Every Tuesday, the Grand Beach Ladies' Golf and Social club would run a tournament of different nature. Here, again,

Dave was Johnny-on-the-spot, officiating and showing a genuine interest in the progress of the players.

What, then, was the effect of all this?

It was this: the creating of a sound confidence, appreciation and admiration on the part of the club members for their pro, which led them to more faithfully support him; to believe in his judgment; to see the advisability of allowing *him* to outfit them with properly sized and balanced equipment rather than to haphazardly purchase here and there.

And Dave's methods double-clicked. The renown of his popularity became widespread and rapidly, transient and hotel players came to depend on him, too. They now know the economy of forsaking the cut-rate, "sale price" equipment in the stores and they allow Dave to equip them with the proper tools.

After all, Dave Brown simply sold himself. Using good business judgment and common sense tactics, he went after a situation that, while showering the club and Golfmore hotel with plenty of business, threatened to starve *him* out.

But he whipped it!

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