

# Golfdom

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## Course Superintendents Lead in Modernizing Golf Glossary

TO describe more clearly the work of their members, the Minnesota and Western Pennsylvania associations of greenkeepers have changed the organizations' names to the district associations of Golf Course Superintendents. The term *golf course superintendent* is getting wider circulation, and to GOLFDOM'S way of thinking is doing some valuable propaganda work for today's greenkeepers. The Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents gave the term official status when the men in the Brotherly Love belt organized. At that time there was some criticism of the Philadelphians throwing on the ritz, but the more the objectors considered the matter, the more convinced they were that the Philadelphia association was starting off right. Golf course superintendent does a good job of selling the greenkeeper's functions and responsibilities to club officials and members. The term identifies the head of golf course maintenance work as a man who is a plant operating chief, and this is as it should be, with golf playing plants having capital investments of \$50,000 to \$1,000,000.

The Midwest Association of Greenkeepers also is considering changing its name so it will take advantage of the superintendent implications.

Some greenkeepers point out that *grounds superintendent* would be more completely and properly descriptive, as the greenkeeper usually has charge of landscaping and additional areas other than the course.

Undoubtedly one of the handicaps to fuller recognition of the greenkeepers' advance is that he is casually considered by many of his members about in the class of a sublimated plow jockey. It is forgotten that the greenkeeper today must be an agricultural expert, a scientist, a landscape artist, a labor management authority, a hydraulic engineer, a drainage expert, a civil engineer, and heaven knows what all else.

To get this idea of the scope and importance of the work done by the man who is held accountable for course maintenance is a real selling job, so the right sort of a label on the product being sold—a man's service—is the real beginning of effective selling.

There are a number of foresighted men in the course maintenance field who are willing to forecast, for the near future, changes in names for several more of the greenkeepers' organizations in order that the correct idea of the greenkeepers' work be given wide circulation.

### Pros Have Name Problem

At the 1930 P. G. A. convention there was some talk about getting a title that would plainly mark the good professionals. *Pro*, many of the boys conceded, was an all-embracing term that the public used in tagging the just and unjust alike. *Class-A pro* is not a phrase that is designed to pierce the public consciousness quickly. Some of the fellows suggested *master pro*, and the term has much to recommend it

as a popular label of the Class-A member of the P. G. A. As it is today, about everyone who doesn't come under the U. S. G. A. definition of an amateur falls into the class for which the P. G. A. is responsible. It's too much territory for the P. G. A. to cover and for that reason quite a few of the P. G. A. members are looking for a term that will place them rightly in the public mind. The pros note that the vast expansion of professional duties in the last decade make the man who bears the title *pro*, not only one who makes his living out of the game, but in closer analysis, an instructor, merchant, club-maker, player, club "public relations" representative and frequently, official host for the club.

It is rumored that the U. S. G. A. is thinking about some further and drastic work on that perplexing matter of handling today's so-called amateurs who use their golf as a masquerade for commercial work. If this policy gets into full swing there are going to be many of the sharpshooters in purgatory, and the P. G. A. will have still more of a problem in acquainting the public with the brand mark of a sure-enough *pro*.

Change in golf nomenclature has plenty of precedent. A book on golf, written by John Doyle in 1893, refers to the *play club*, the *grassed driver*, the *bafling spoon*, the *wooden niblick*, the *brassie niblick* and the *driving putter*. These names have vanished into limbo and the terms *greenkeeper* and *pro* may follow them, although today's volume of golf publicity has rather firmly set the names.

However, there are signs that an effort is being made. A recent Associated Press story quoted Ernest Ryall, professional at Forest Hills-Ricker course at Augusta, Ga., suggesting *golfologist* as the suitable title. Ernie came to the front with the criticism that "the golf instructor of today is every bit as much of a technical expert in his line as a lawyer in his, or a doctor, engineer or college professor. Why then," queried Ryall, "should he be referred to by the undignified title of *pro* or even the complete word, *professional*?"

### What Change in "Daily Fee"?

J. Franklin Meehan of Philadelphia, course builder, is the source of the pertinent suggestion that commercial golf courses would benefit from a change in name from *daily fee*, *semi-public* or *pay-as-you-play*. Meehan's notion is that these terms have outgrown their primary pur-

pose of putting across the message of cheap price for play. The development of these courses is such that they are attracting a class of people who want better playing facilities than the usual public course but want to buy their entertainment on the same dignified proportionate charge basis as they buy theater tickets.

One interesting slant on these commercial courses is the title hung on the 20-acre illuminated West Wilmette (Ill.) course having holes from 95 yards to 200 yards long and regular grass greens. Instead of calling this by the trite title of *pitch-and-putt*, Bob Cunningham and Joe Roseman, owners of the establishment, have called it a *matched iron* course.

### How About Manager?

The house department is not immune from this need of a change in nomenclature. The term *manager* has rather generally replaced *steward* as the title of the man in charge of house operations, but with the trend toward general management of golf clubs it is not remotely possible that today's use of *manager* will become confusing.

A number of close observers of the golf field's change during the past decade see in this tendency to revise the titles of department heads so that the terms will be accurately descriptive, one of the sure signs of golf's continual advance toward a satisfactory basis of business operation.

Shakespeare may minimize "what's in a name" but the greenkeepers, managers and professionals are inclined to take issue with the Bard before outgrown nomenclature of the golf business becomes incorrectly set by usage.

### Dealers' Golf Week Scheduled for May 4 to 11

National Golf Week, a spring sales drive inaugurated by *Sporting Goods Dealer*, is scheduled for this year May 4-11. The event is popular with dealers and results in a concerted opening push for golf business on the part of many of the liveliest sporting goods dealers.

Pros who are planning vigorous sales efforts to initiate their 1931 seasons might well bear this date in mind and see that they are prepared to get their due share of business during this week.