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Pro Body Decides to Tell Players the Pro's Story

By HERB GRAFFIS

"SELLING the pro to the player" was the theme song of the Professional Golfers' association annual meeting held at Hotel Statler, Boston, Nov. 16-18. Forty delegates from various sections of the pro federation chimed in the chorus led by the husky tones of President Charley Hall's voice, and he it said there's maturity in the notes uttered by the solid sage of Birmingham.

Being the pros' pilot ages one, but Charley might as well get used to the job as he was unanimously re-elected at the Hub session. He has done a masterly job of steering the pro bark through some stormy and uncharted seas. And what a bark the boys have! To switch the simile, the laddies in solemn session assembled barked in good lusty fashion about every angle of the pro business.

But what an advance in spirit was apparent from the departed days when this reporter first was permitted to cover pro executive sessions as a result of the decision made by the corps' dean, Alex Pirie, and other veterans that the pros had a story other folks ought to hear.

Only a few years ago difference of opinion involved a 50-50 risk of a lively personal engagement. Alex Pirie's happy blend of toughness, humor and psychic talent was the major factor in keeping peace. Now the boys handle their problems in a calm, detached way that is rather

seldom observed at any convention of business men.

P. G. A. Progress Marked

Routine reports showed the association in the best shape of its history. More members and an obese bank-roll revealed that the group insurance, the ball refunds and other developments which a central operating force has put at the command of the various sections, all have had an effect in bringing boys under the banner.

Starting the fireworks was the report of the tournament bureau headed by Bob Harlow. Much to yip gladly about was found in this report as the tournament activities had put 11 new events on the calendar during the past season and slated enough play during the coming winter season to closely approximate last winter's record high money mark. This, with golf play and playing equipment business off around 15%, is correctly regarded as considerable achievement. Financing the tournament bureau provided a problem for the master minds, as the original basis on which Harlow was told to operate was jerked from under after the complaints registered on the west coast.

Tourney Players Offer Suggestions

Gene Sarazen, appearing for the tournament players, came up with the financing idea of having leading exhibition players stage 5 shows, one at Los Angeles, one at

San Antonio, one at Atlanta and the other two prior to the National Open and P. G. A. championships. The players would contribute their services. Matches would be held under the auspices of the local Junior league, this being the society young women's organization. The Junior leaguers would take 25% for their charity coffers; the tournament bureau would get the rest. The tournament players want a man to stay with the show and one ahead, per the legitimate theatrical practice, but on the dough now available, no can do.

All the pros realize the value of keeping the tournament spotlight burning bright, for they're conscious of how the public got reconciled to paying pros some real money after Harlow had ballyhooed and argued the talents of his original duo of Hagen and Kirkwood into opulent lumps of legal tender. But how to raise the money necessary for today's emergency requirements of exhibition golf is something that had the boys fairly well baffled at the Boston meeting.

Sarazen presented another interesting idea from the tournament players when he suggested the appointment of a secret committee of three players to report to headquarters any cases of conduct unbecoming a gentleman and professional so the association could discipline offenders by fines or by withholding their names as contestants for which the association would stand responsible. In making this recommendation Sarazen voiced the hope of club officials who have vigorously protested and threatened cancellation of future tournaments because of the conduct of some tournament players who have bellyached loud and ludicrously about conditions at courses where the whiners were unable to score.

Put Younger Pros on Committees

The serious young faces of George Jacobus, Ridgewood (N. J.) C. C., and Elmer Biggs, Peoria (Ill.) C. C., together with the thoughtful countenance of veteran John Inglis, president of the Metropolitan district P. G. A., were introduced into the pro executive picture via appointment to the ways and means committee. Jacobus was named chairman of this committee. The seasoned old stagers, Willie Ogg and Jack Shea, remain as advisory members of this important committee. Willie and Jack drew deep sighs of relief at the lightening of their burdens as appointment to this committee means constant struggle, lots

of toil and as the only reward, a starry crown in the kingdom beyond.

Biggs and Jacobus are two outstanding examples of successful young pro business men and Hall, in coupling recognition of this valuable element in pro golf with the steady wheelhorse, John Inglis, indicated that the old masters in the business now believe their proteges are qualified to sit in on an equal basis with the mighty. Picking some youngsters for feature spots in the show has been under consideration for some time by the weather-beaten pilots who have managed the pro ship of state through the tumult of mid-channel. The work Jacobus and Biggs did on the merchandising committee tagged them as bright, active, and dependable candidates.

Incidentally, the expiring act of the merchandising committee for 1931, represented by Biggs, Jacobus and Harbert was to propose an agreement with the manufacturers whereby the granting of dealers' prices to golf goods buyers who were not legitimately entitled to dealers' prices was to be discontinued. It is hoped that this step will help to curtail the "buy it wholesale" evil.

Further indication of a change in the P. G. A. official line-up was forthcoming in the appointment of John Madden as chairman of a committee to revise the boundaries of P. G. A. territory governing the allotment of vice presidents. The mid-continent section, so Madden pointed out in a blunt logical demand, had about an eighth of the P. G. A. membership without any representation in the national body. Hall, in effect, told Johnny to write his own ticket and the executive committee would O. K. it. That's the good news the cowboy takes home to the pals in the pampas.

Ask 5-Year Ball Holiday

It was not to be expected that the golf ball would escape attention at the meeting. Jay Patterson, emissary of the sunkist sons, introduced a resolution asking that the U. S. G. A. please, pour le amour de Allah, leave the size and weight of the golf ball alone for five years so the golf ball market and play would have a chance to get on an even keel. One of the other laddies suggested that the U. S. G. A. issue official balls to each contestant in championships under its jurisdiction to put an end to the suspicion among the untutored that the big shots get selected balls that give them an edge.

Some interesting speculation was rife when Bob Jones was made an honorary



New England pro organization entertains delegates to P. G. A. convention

vice-president of the organization. Some of the boys considered the gate the P. G. A. championship might draw with the retired monarch of the meadows trading shots with top sergeants of the regular troops. With the 1931 P. G. A. championship outdrawing all other golf events as a result of the efforts of Messrs. Schulze of Wannamoisset, and Harlow and Shea of the P. G. A., the pro event seems tagged as the money top of the golf years until another ace amateur comes along. Chances are that the P. G. A. championship in 1932 will be held much earlier in the year to give the champion a chance to cash in. The west coast advanced the suggestion that the National Open and P. G. A. championships be held within two weeks of each other so the west coast big time troupers wouldn't be compelled to spend most of their golden childhoods in the arms of mother Pullman. The dope seems to run that the Open date will be advanced by the U. S. G. A. as the last two Opens have been "suffered" in weather hotter than a Spanish honeymoon.

Quietly and deftly, George Sargent, Scioto's maestro, lofted a pineapple into the meeting by telling the boys to do a little looking around at the financial and membership plight of golf clubs and coming away with the conviction that the pro needed to sell himself as a valuable factor to the clubs. George dated the advent of American pro golf supremacy in the job line from the time when the P. G. A. and *Golf Illustrated* sent over a team of American pros that took the English and Scotch comrades into camp and among its trophies of the hunt brought back the British Open championship honors dangling from the famous ribbed pitching tools of Jock Hutchison. Before that time a good

American golf club that wanted a pro imported its talent, George reminded the gang. Jock and six other of the nomads who placed in the money ended that spell.

Sargent Asks for Publicity Man

Now another era is on the pros, Sargent said. The pro has to identify his duties and so discharge them that he will be recognized as vital to club welfare. For that purpose Sargent recommended a publicity fund not to exceed \$5,000 a year and employment of a publicity man to keep pro propaganda hot. Answering inquiries as to whether or not the five grand would be acceptable in the association's budget, doughty Mr. Mackie, celebrated as the Cerebus of the P. G. A. exchequer, advised the boys not to worry as there would be no money spent that the pros didn't have.

The Sargent suggestion elicited sprightly comment. Young Jacobus, who is no yearling, at that, in the master pro class, told how he started his career as a master pro by borrowing money to advertise to his members. "You've got to spend some money to make some money in any business," George stated. Others told of enterprises they had found effective in making themselves useful to their clubs.

Chairman Puts Boyd on Spot

Tom Boyd came through with a terse and telling remark about how carefully club officials are studying the pro situation today. Tom, old pal, old pal, cited the case of his chairman picking up a copy of GOLFDOM in which there was an article showing a pro bookkeeping system Doc Treacy had worked out. The figures, which were by way of wild example rather than of fact, indicated a pro profit of 125% on the sale of a golf club. Tom's chairman

P. G. A. OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEES NAMED AT BOSTON

Charles Hall, president.

Alex Pirie, honorary president.

Jack Pirie, secretary.

J. B. Mackie, treasurer.

Jack Shea, W. H. Way, Dan Goss, Harold Sampson, J. J. Martin and Thomas Boyd, vice presidents.

Robert T. Jones, Jr., honorary vice president.

Finance committee—J. B. Mackie, George Jacobus, James Anderson.

Publicity committee—George Sargent, W. H. Way, Charles Lorms.

Ways and means committee—George Jacobus, Elmer Biggs, John Inglis, and Willie Ogg and Jack Shea as advisory members.

National headquarters committee—Alex Pirie.

Internal boundaries committee—John Madden.

Educational committee—George Sargent, Fred Brand, Willie Ogg.

Tournament bureau committee—Alex Pirie, James Wilson and R. W. Treacy.

accepted the figures as representative of the pro profit, or kidded Tom into believing the idea was entertained. Tom passed the punch to GOLFDOM's white slave, who being a disciple of all that is good and true and beautiful in literary art rather than a public speaker, mumbled a frightened reply that our fondest hope would be to find a club official interested enough in the pro boosting we have done to figure out percentages on a bookkeeping form.

However, with spirit refreshed that our pro hope is being so carefully read by officials, we will gleefully admit that the figures in the unrevised specimen we printed were slightly out of line, but only about 95% and that should not mean the end of a beautiful friendship between Tom, his chairman and us.

Much of a confidential nature on manufacturer relations was said at the meetings but the pros have no apologies to make for the executive character of these sessions as they were frankly concerned with the delicate and defiant problem of reducing cost of good golf to the player and at the same time keeping the business attractive to first class manufacturers and professionals as dealers in dependable pro merchandise.

An interesting demonstration of assembling the P. G. A. steel shafted bench-made clubs was presented. It is a simple job of glueing and riveting that makes club-making look so easy the player might

further carry out the theme by getting himself a spinning wheel, squatting down like Gandhi, spinning himself a pair of knickers and be all set. The bench-made assembly has staunch champions among some of the pros, however, and was responsible for peppery and thoughtful debate.

Business Administrator Gates, at the end of his first year, found reason for gratification in the status of the association after his efforts had borne fruit and in the expression made by the executive committee relative to the progress made by the organization during the administrator's regime.

True Temper Sponsors \$5,000 Open at New Orleans

AMERICAN FORK AND HOE CO., makers of True Temper steel shafts, has put up \$5,000 prize money for an open golf tournament to be played at Metairie G. C., New Orleans, Feb. 12-13. Preceding the True Temper Open there will be a pro-amateur 18-hole event. The tournament will be at 72 holes, with the low 60 and ties playing the last day.

Tournament Bureau of the P. G. A. is managing the affair and is receiving lively assistance from officials of the Metairie club, the New Orleans Golf association, the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce and city officials.

This event made an extremely welcome addition to the winter tournament calendar as Harlow, bureau manager, was pretty much up against it trying to get spots for the boys to work along the jump from Agua Caliente to Florida.

True Temper put up the prize money as substantial evidence of the appreciation of support of their shaft by the professionals. Following the True Temper move, members of the associations of club and ball manufacturers also approved a \$5,000 contribution to the P. G. A. tournament fund. This fund will further aid in locating events so long and expensive jumps between tournaments may be avoided. It is believed that gate money at such tournaments will be sufficient to keep the fund substantially at its original figure.

IN ADDITION to sub-surface drainage, greens should have perfect surface runoff. To make sure there are no hollows where water can gather on your greens, make a tour of inspection some day when rain is falling heavily.