

# Lesson Broadcast Is Booster for Club and Pro Business

By HERB GRAFFIS

**R**ADIO IS working out as a highly profitable medium for the professionals. When a pro can get on the air he is not only doing himself and his club a lot of good but supplying part of a program that's tuned in by a rather large section of the populace. Radio experts say that the golf programs rate high in interest among the all talk programs.

Last year the Cleveland District P. G. A. put on a great schedule of radio programs. This year the Jones and Keeler brother-act for Listerine, the Spalding "Uncle Don" program for the kids and the Grand Slam broadcast of famous match revivals all have been outstanding successes, thus giving the tip-off to how golf stands as an attention getter.

The other night we bumped into the air instruction talk of a young pro friend of ours and, although we winced at the obvious absence of rehearsal and a few flagrant mispronunciations, we had to admit that the kid put on a good show, judging from the reception accorded it by other listeners who were present. The boy undoubtedly is building business for his course by broadcasting.

One of the most successful instances of individual pro broadcasting that we know of is that done by Bill Gordon, pro at Sunnyside C. C., Waterloo, Iowa. When Bill came onto that job the officials and live members of the club were figuring on a way to stir up some more interest in the club and fill the membership roster. Among the members of the club was Harry Shaw, local newspaper publisher and owner of the Waterloo radio station WMT. Shaw came out to the club to indulge in what he referred to as his "annual game," and while there was button-holed by Gordon. Billy told Shaw there was no reason why a business man shouldn't get big dividends in fun and companionship out of the game if he'd give it a small bit of the same kind of attention a man



Gordon, dial target for duffers.

pays to his business. Bill put on a good selling talk, got Shaw to take some lessons and developed him into a pretty good player. This, in itself, is no small achievement as GOLF-DOM'S editor was a running mate of the Shaw boy when the two of us bravely stood up and battled the hated redskins—or was it red-eye?—in the wilds of Chicago's loop before both of us

turned straight.

After a few treatments of Gordon's sovereign remedy, Shaw began to get all steamed up on golf. He told Billy that the interest of pros in their pupils and development of the game had sold him so thoroughly he'd like to pass the good word along. To build golf enthusiasm in the community Shaw put Bill on the air every Tuesday night at 8 o'clock for 15 minutes.

## Launches Radio Schedule.

Gordon figured that the first idea in hooking up with a club for his first season should be to develop more play. With increased play, lessons are bound to come and with lessons come increased sales of playing equipment if the pro is tactful, hustling and knows his business.

Accordingly, the first time Bill went on the air he presented a general talk on the game, the advantages of exercise, social contacts and co-ordination of mind and muscle. He made it plain that being a dub in golf was no disgrace and put in a deft plug for the pros in saying that a painless series of sessions with a pro instructor would rather quickly give the beginners enough proficiency so they could find their way about.

Discussion of suitable equipment was gradually worked into the talks. Bill told them about the lie, loft, length and weight of clubs for various types of players. He also worked in some advice about getting the youngsters started in the game.

On one of the early programs Gordon took his assistant, Harry Cotton, and gave an actual driving lesson before the mike.

Cotton asked questions about the grip, swing, slice, etc. Letters to the station and comment on the street attested to the interest in the lessons.

Requests were made for air instruction on the spoon, midiron, mashie, niblick and run-up shots, so the Gordon instructions to Cotton were broadcast as a steady diet. Favorable comment from the rural districts showed that the program was planting the golf seed even where there were no courses.

Gordon says that broadcasting was great training for him as it taught him to instruct in concise and graphic words. The air spiels also helped him a lot out at the club because the members had confidence in him founded on the belief that he was an authority or he wouldn't be on the air.

One of the benefits Gordon attributes to the radio program was an increase of 1,500 rounds a year at his club, although the broadcasting was done well in advance of the golf season.

### Push the Club Strong.

Gordon believes that one of the basic reasons for the success of the campaign was due to being conscious of the opportunity to benefit his club. Especially outside of the larger metropolitan districts is membership in a golf club considered a sure sign of substantial social rating.

Note how Bill plays up the value of membership in his club in the wind-up of the following message he sent to club members the start of this season. Here is the selling tale Bill told:

#### DEAR CLUB MEMBER:

*I wish to announce that the Golf Shop at Sunnyside Country Club is now open for the season, where repairs for golf equipment can be made promptly, at reasonable prices.*

*You are entitled to certain privileges from the Golf Professional at your Club. My co-operation with you in any golf trouble is at your command and my service is cheerfully offered at any time in the selection of golf equipment that will prove beneficial to your game.*

*The new ball has proven of assistance to some players; and new styled clubs adapted for this large ball make it possible mechanically to improve your game.*

*Your patronage in the past is appreciated and I trust you may feel free to call on me again for any service I can offer.*

*Guaranteed golf instruction, as usual, will be by appointment.*

*A complete new line of equipment and accessories is now on hand in the Golf Shop selected from what in my experience includes the best obtainable for the least money.*

*Come out to your Club this summer and enjoy all the pleasures that Sunnyside Country Club offers.*

BILLY GORDON,  
Golf Professional.

### PERSONAL SURVEY OF PRO FIELD SHOWS VAST ADVANCE

**C**ONCLUDING the 1930-1931 trouping with the "Pros, Players and Profits" talking picture and pro business lectures, E. C. Conlin, sales manager, Golf Ball division of the United States Rubber Co., and his assistant, John Sproul, hung up a total of 47 pro sessions. The last showing was held at Providence-Biltmore hotel, Providence, R. I., before a record crowd of 700. Conlin travelled 18,698 miles and spent 106 days with the pro-U. S. show and Sproul, 12,600 miles in 61 days.

The talker feature and the "Pro, Players and Profits" plan, together with the P. G. A. membership selling talk that Conlin and Sproul presented, made a substantial contribution to pro merchandising education and was given a welcome reception by professionals and their assistants.

In commenting on the survey of pro merchandising made during the course of the tour, Conlin remarks: "The astounding improvement in pro selling and service made during the 1930 season has, I believe, no counterpart in other fields of retailing. Most impressive was the alert and receptive attitude toward sprightly selling ideas that the professionals now manifest. The great improvement in pro shop appearance, arrangement and display of goods was plainly responsible for a good part of the increase in pro business during 1930. Probably the most significant detail of our winter and spring tour with the current edition of "Pros, Players and Profits" was hearing so many professionals and assistants say that they had not begun to do more than scratch the surface of their potential markets despite the expansion of their business during the 1930 season.

"It was especially cheering to one who has spent considerable time at meetings of men in other lines to observe the sober and serious air of study that featured each of the sessions we presented. It is evident from the improvements we noted in pro shops and pro methods since the previous tour with "Pros, Players and Profits" that the most substantial part of pro merchandising progress has just begun."