

# P. G. A. Tourney Chief Sees Big International Money Ahead

By HERB GRAFFIS

**P**ROFESSIONAL tournament golf at this time is in tranquil mid-channel. The remainder of the route in sight presents only routine technical problems of piloting. Those playing pro treasure ports beyond the ken of the advance schedule as it stands today may or may not be reached—the success of the entire cruise being completely up to some pros who have not, to date, given any great evidence of being able to ship as co-operating members of the crew. Unless the stellar performers among the pros can unite on a basis that considers the good of the game as well as for their own foresighted welfare, the opulent potentialities of exhibition golf probably will present themselves only in the dim, distant future. And that will be long after the present crop of club swingers is past their playing prime.

The temperamental and highly individualistic athletes on the playing roster put forth the usual unwelcome problems of managing a band of prima donnas. Hal Sharkey's brow was furrowed like an Oakmont trap after a season as impresario for the pro troupers and when the gentlemen of the fairway ensemble signed off on contributing 10 per cent of the tournament chest toward the operations of the tournament bureau of the P. G. A., Sharkey's sigh of relief could be heard from coast to coast.

To the veteran Bob Harlow then was entrusted the delicate mission of getting the 10 per cent necessary for tournament promotion and operation directly from the sponsors of the tournaments. At the beginning Harlow was put on the spot in a merciless manner and bore the brunt of cross-fire from chamber of commerce officials and sport writers mainly because he was following the policy dictated by pros. The time was auspicious for some beefing. General business conditions made it rather tough for the tournament sponsors to raise money and the sport writers sought surcease from ennui with a reverse English slant on tournament golf. Shooting at the trained seals of the golf show

was great, novel sport and Bob in protean capacity as the bull seal balancing the gilded ball, caught a perfect game of criticism at the start of the winter season. When Harlow turned and barked back at the herd's tormentors and the critics stopped to think things over, they came to the same conclusion as the majority of the golfing public; tournament golf is a great act. The conclusion was confirmed by excellent gates at the winter circuit stops.

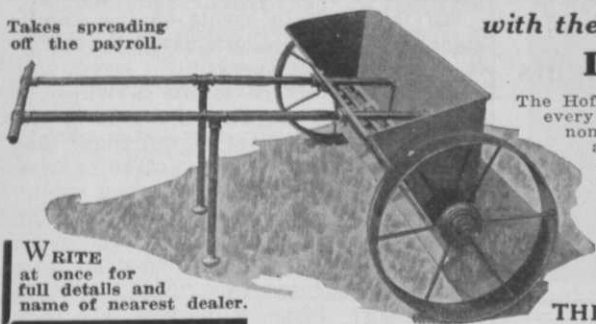
## Players Propaganda Agents.

It will be freely admitted by anyone who knows the golf business that tournament and exhibition play is one of the vitally important factors in promotion of the game. Star performers from the other side had much to do with arousing interest in golf during its adolescence in the United States. Barnstorming by the colorful Hagen, his contemporaries, and luminaries of the younger school have brought thousands into the game as enthusiasts and students. Shifting the scenes, handling the spotlight, writing the script, selling and collecting the tickets, billing the town and peddling testimonials, was the job of the versatile Harlow. For the sufficient reason that no other man has had such extensive and successful experience in building tournament golf or is in such close touch with that angle of the game today, Harlow's views are deserving of pro thought.

"With Jones stepping aside," says Harlow, "pro playing has its great chance to benefit. Interest in the successor to the Jones crown can be made to mean cash for the professionals if they let it be known by word and action that the good of the game is their foremost thought of pro golf. The field can be built up to international dimensions for the American professionals. It is very fortunate that the Ryder cup matches will be held this first year of Jones' retirement and that the Argentine professionals will play here this year. That lively element of international competition will produce a gallery interest far in excess of the degree that would attach

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to competition between the resident players. There are excellent prospects that we may have some Japanese professionals in some of our tournaments in the near future. Hagen, Kirkwood, Cruickshank and Mehlhorn can testify that the orientals put forth a brand of golf that will increase galleries.

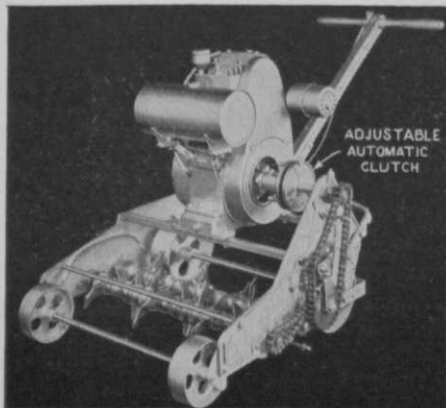
### Who Succeeds Jones?

"During the winter itinerary there was much gallery speculation as to who would be Jones' successor. I am convinced that this had no little to do with the large galleries around the circuit. Starting with Salt Lake City the last week in October and ending with Augusta, late in March, the recent tournament schedule presented 19 events, with a prize total of \$111,300. Success of these tournaments and contacts made at them assure a more extensive and richer campaign next winter. New Orleans is tentatively slated for the week after the Mardi Gras, Mexico City is definitely committed to an Open, and approximately 20 additional events are in

prospect, among them being opens at Phoenix, El Paso, Beaumont, Brownsville, Vancouver, Seattle, Charleston, S. C., and Charlotte, N. C. At Charlotte it is hoped to have the tournament a feature of the formal opening of a \$150,000 clubhouse.

"New tournaments slated for the summer are at Omaha, Kansas City, St. Cloud, Minn., Wheeling, and possibly Chicago. Chicago's Junior Chamber of Commerce hopes to inaugurate this year a \$10,000 Open and make it an annual event, with \$50,000 being offered in 1933, which is World's Fair year in the Windy City.

"During last season the largest entry at an Open was at Los Angeles, with a field of 425. The smallest field was at Harlingen, Texas, with 80 players. The Harlingen tournament definitely put that flourishing and promising spot in the publicity map and presented an excellent example of what rich rewards come to a community conducting an Open. The average field for the tournaments was around 200. Of this number from 20 to 50 were traveling on the circuit. Al Espinosa and Horton Smith



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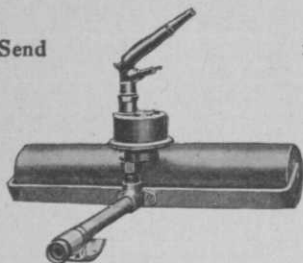
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were the only two who made the complete tour.

"Of the 19 Open events on the circuit, eight of them were originated by the P. G. A. tournament bureau."

Harlow's reference to the activities of the tournament bureau in building up the playing pro tournament payroll shows that it is very much to pro advantage to have this work prosecuted to the fullest extent. The pros get more money, the communities get more publicity and golf gets more advertising and sales development from these tournaments. How, then, to finance the bureau? Some of the pros who compete in the tournaments are not P. G. A. members, certain men in this group being unable to qualify under P. G. A. business practice requirements. But at that, President Hall of the P. G. A. is keenly aware of the advertising possibilities of the tournaments and wants to work out a plan that will make effective use of the tournament bureau in extending the market for the game and pro service. Just what can be worked out in balancing these two elements still is problematical.

The manufacturers who benefit from the direct advertising and market development of the tournaments also have an interest in the matter. Most of all, though, the playing pros themselves have—or should have—star roles in the operation of the tournament bureau. Either they will get together quickly in establishing a sound and far-reaching platform upon which the tournament bureau can work or run a serious risk of being identified eventually as eggs that slayed the golden goose.

## Mid-West Greensmen Hold First Outdoor Meeting

**F**IRST 1931 outdoor meeting of the Mid-West Greenkeepers' Ass'n was held April 27 at St. Andrews, 36-hole layout in the Chicago district, where L. L. Lowe has just taken over the grounds superintendent job.

The morning was devoted to an inspection of the St. Andrews courses, after which the greenkeepers met for discussion of several important association matters around the lunch tables. An informal tournament was played in the afternoon.

Most important of the matters taken up was the question of whether or not to change the name of the organization from "Mid-West Greenkeepers' Ass'n."