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## Pro Training Schools Planned as Aid to P. G. A. Men

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**P**RESIDENT CHARLES HALL'S ambition of a training school for professionals and assistants, conducted by the Professional Golfers' association, is being given serious thought by golf club and association officials as well as by the pros.

The school idea has made good in football coaching and undoubtedly has been instrumental in strengthening football as a gate magnet by producing a more interesting and finished game. There is no denying that the business and tutoring ability of the master professionals has witnessed a development keeping pace with the growth of the game but the veteran master professionals themselves are leaders in endorsing this suggestion for a pro school. Their experience reveals to them the constantly changing conditions governing pro shop operations. Furthermore, professional golf is fortunate in having leaders who do not let themselves get into the comical and unstable position of "know it alls."

In view of this attitude by the substantial professionals, whose positions and earning powers are secure, it is apparent that the fellows whom schools will help most are due for some definite, favorable reaction to the Hall suggestion. Especially do some of the promising younger professionals and assistants need the instruction the proposed schools will provide.

### Greenkeepers in Training

The pros have been treated to a close-up of the value of such schools in seeing

the results of the greenkeeping short courses conducted by such institutions as Massachusetts Agricultural college, Rutgers, Penn State, Wisconsin and Michigan. No doubt of the course superintendents' position, future and earning power being promoted by the work done in these schools. The pros need such a build-up for the betterment of their relations with club officials and members. Unfortunately many members consider the pro is a fellow who makes a lot of money simply because he is lucky in having a lot of fun playing golf. This ignorance of the extent and importance of a pro's duties in serving his club to mutual profit is at the base of the pro employment problem.

George Sargent's article in October GOLFDOM referred to the importance of a well qualified, active assistant in pro shop operation. It's greatly to the credit of these kids that the assistants these days are making themselves big factors in pro success, but it is impossible for the master pros to devote the time really required to the proper training of the boys. The value of the proposed Hall schools would be tremendous to the pros and clubs if such schools were solely for the purpose of assistant training.

But the greatest value would be to the master pros who really have one of the toughest of small retailing situations. This retailing calls not only for the retailing of instruction and of merchandise, but also

for a constant, penetrating quality of service not demanded of other small retailers.

### An Expanding Opportunity

The pros' opportunity as a golf service-station operator for his players came to the writer's mind recently in reading a yarn in *Advertising and Selling* on Bruce Barton, one of the ace boy-wonders of the advertising agency business. The tale told about Barton being a golf enthusiast. It also mentioned, as a human interest item, that his wife bought his ties. Consider how many fellows have been weaned away from retail shopping since women enlarged their work as purchasing agents for the family. When you get down to it, the retailing establishments that are most habitually visited by the active male with money to spend are the cigar counter, the news-stand, the restaurant and the pro shop. That ought to be the tip-off to the pros on the logical foundation they have for expanding their merchandise as a valuable service to club members.

Some of the laddies may wince at the prospect of getting too much of the drug-store scope of selling into pro shop operations, but there's several million miles to go before the pros are confronted with this danger. But, with this expansion apparently logical and imminent as a service the members will appreciate, it is plainly seen that the pros and their assistants could use plenty of instruction, and exchanges of experience, in business operation.

The boost that would be given golf when leading pros would get together and discuss instruction methods, at such a school would be incalculable. Other angles of pro service, such as co-operation between pros and managers, course superintendents and club officials, would certainly advance the efficient operation of golf clubs.

When the P. G. A., at its annual meeting, considers this matter of establishing pro schools, it will do well to bear in mind the timely comment, Alex Pirie, dean of the corps, has made on the matter. The P. G. A. honorary president has said:

"We all have been trying to build up recognition of pro golfers as professional men and we have to put across the idea that training of a competent professional golfer involves time, expense and study just as does the training of a lawyer, a doctor or a dentist. Although we might say the pro is doing this for himself

rather satisfactorily, I believe the only way we can get this thought over to the players is by conducting this training on an organized basis.

"In these times when clubs are looking for every possible source of revenue and good men are wavering in the pro ranks because the true position of the pro among the club's operating assets often may not be appreciated, it behooves the professionals to consider carefully the training school proposal as a valuable factor of information for club officials as well as a definite help to ourselves."

### New Ball Specifications Avoid Dump of Old Stock

**B**RIGHT RAY of hope for ball makers and pros is in the U. S. G. A. preliminary announcement of the 1932 ball standards. A ball of the 1.68 size will be legal so long as its weight does not exceed 1.62. This makes the present ball O. K. according to the new ruling. Pros will rejoice because this means that the market next year will not be flooded with stock of obsolete balls thrown overboard at cut prices.

There are many who consider the 1.68-1.55 ball the best ball the game has seen. They will be able to get the ball of their choice with the reputable manufacturers standing behind their products on the standard price basis. Stocks of the present 1932 balls may be differentiated by identifying stickers, although many state there is such tiny difference between the balls that segregation of the 1.68-1.55 product is unnecessary.

### Pro Shop Bulletins Tell Club News

**P**ROS WHOSE shops are detached from the main building and have the problem of attracting club members can overcome this handicap by using the idea Dick Nelson employs at Meridian Hills C. C., Indianapolis. Details of all club events, announcements, results, etc., are on a bulletin board in Dick's shop. Any club member who wants to know all about what's going on gets the information from this board.

The bulletin attracts many members who otherwise might go from the locker room to the first tee, without being subjected to the sales attractions in Nelson's trim and expertly stocked shop.