

# Pro 1932 Business No Cause for Fears and Tears

By HERB GRAFFIS

**U**NDER THE head "What Causes Golf Professionals to Grumble," Gordon Wallace writes an article in February *Northwest Golfer* that ought to make a lot of the boys stop and think. In the first place that word "grumble" is a danger signal. If the players get the idea that grumbling is a pro keynote, the pros won't benefit any.

The grumbling is done by a minority of all the professionals, but a loud-mouthed minority can do more damage in 10 minutes than a substantial but silent larger group can do in a year. The pros ought to know that from their observation of club politics.

Some of Wallace's yarn we quote:

"During a recent tour to many of the golf courses in the Pacific Northwest we found a large majority of the golf professionals 'down in the mouth' because business conditions 'ain't what they used to be.' And we returned to our office wondering if these 'Down-in-the-Mouth' golf professionals ever give a thought to correcting conditions.

"At the present time the word 'economy' is on every person's lips, whether he belongs to the upper, middle, or lower classes; all have one common ideal, to put that word into practice. During these trying times one hears on all sides how difficult it is to obtain business; indeed, even when matters improve, greater competition will continue to test the powers of salesmen and commercial houses.

"The tremendous popularity of the game today means that many more golfers are playing the game than ever before, and if therefore follows that the professional golfer has more clients than he ever had before. Naturally, when trade is good, the business man spends more on his pleasures, but even at the present time he is quite willing to spend, provided he has sufficient inducement to do so. The difficult part is to make a man spend; professional golfers throughout the country realize, as well as anyone, that that is only too true.

We have heard—in fact we hear practically every week—how badly hit some professionals are by the present business depression. Several golf clubs have received a great number of resignations lately, due to the fact that certain golfers find themselves unable to carry on; others deciding to limit their pleasures.

"But, as we have said, the majority of golfers today are quite willing to spend, willing to purchase new clubs and golfing requisites. Now quite a number of professionals, through one cause or another, have become very slack, have neglected their business, lost interest in it and in the members of their clubs. Their shops have become untidy, they and their assistants quite morose, and what goods are on view are shown in a very unbusinesslike way indeed. This is fatal. Everyone knows what a difference neatness, civility and a ready smile makes. Half the present troubles in the world today would be dispelled if we all looked on the bright side of our affairs and went about our duties happily. If we gave up our pessimistic outlook. What is needed is confidence; confidence in our fellow-beings, in our business associates, in our own capabilities.

"The professional would do well to realize this, to take a new lease of life, as it were. The professional golfer must maintain an interest in each and every member of his club; otherwise they will simply go elsewhere for their repairs and purchases. There are lots of little things such as wrapping or filing the faces of wooden clubs, that could be done (free of charge) to bring to the member's notice that his professional had served him in a thoughtful, valuable and practical way. What happens then? The player is bound to realize that he is receiving an inspection service from his professional which he could not obtain elsewhere.

"Thus he is reminded that his professional's shop is one place where *service* follows the sale of clubs. The golf professional grumbles because the sports

stores have taken a great deal of his business. Well, here is a practical method by which he can retaliate and increase his sales and thus his profits. Nothing pleases a person more than the knowledge that he is being looked after."

### Not All Pros Wilting

There are some serious indictments of the professionals in Wallace's words. The most serious is that of pros wilting and turning yellow in the face of harder competition. It is our observation that these cases of the whining weaklings are not as frequent as the *Northwest Golfer's* writer maintains, but certainly there are too many pros complaining without doing anything to correct their own situations.

The sporting goods dealers have had their troubles to an extent that makes the pros' grief seem comparatively mild. As a matter of fact the pro is experiencing less trouble than might really be expected in a time when general business conditions are not favorable and the violent climb of the game has been replaced by a steady normal business.

The successful pros are using their energies in thinking and acting instead of talking gloom. They are planning for a season that most of them expect will reward workers while the whiners are easing out of the picture.

Let's consider pro 1932 prospects, to see the futility of wasting effort in singing the blues.

In the first place, let's grant that the pros will have trouble in 1932 making the same profits they did in 1929 and 1930. What business won't have, unless there is a decided upturn in general business conditions?

Read elsewhere in this issue, the comment made on the conditions perplexing the sporting goods dealers and the stores. They have heavy investments and rather inflexible operating enterprises. They are dopey from the whipping they took when they got caught with heavy inventories. They were unable to escape the readjustments that every business is having to make in these times. They tried cut-prices until they lost a good part of their anatomy in the region of the checkbook pocket, and the more they cut the more their competitors under-cut them. Other outlets cut into their market.

### Business Grief General

You would think, to hear some of the whining ones sob, that the pro golf busi-

ness had all the commercial trouble of the world rolled into one sad burden and placed on the shoulders of the martyred pros by the deliberate and diabolical plan of sinister forces.

Just by such laments the complainers expose their ignorance of conditions in general business and their incapacity to reach the first point of business thinking—that in tough times the good business man is the one who puts pressure on his thinking and action to outsmart conditions and competition.

These are times when the strong-hearted men come into their own. There even may be good times for the pro business as the plain truth today is that there are too many so-called pros disturbing the job situation. But one glance at the newspapers will show that jobs in many other fields are hard to get and the pay is low.

### Job Situation Distresses

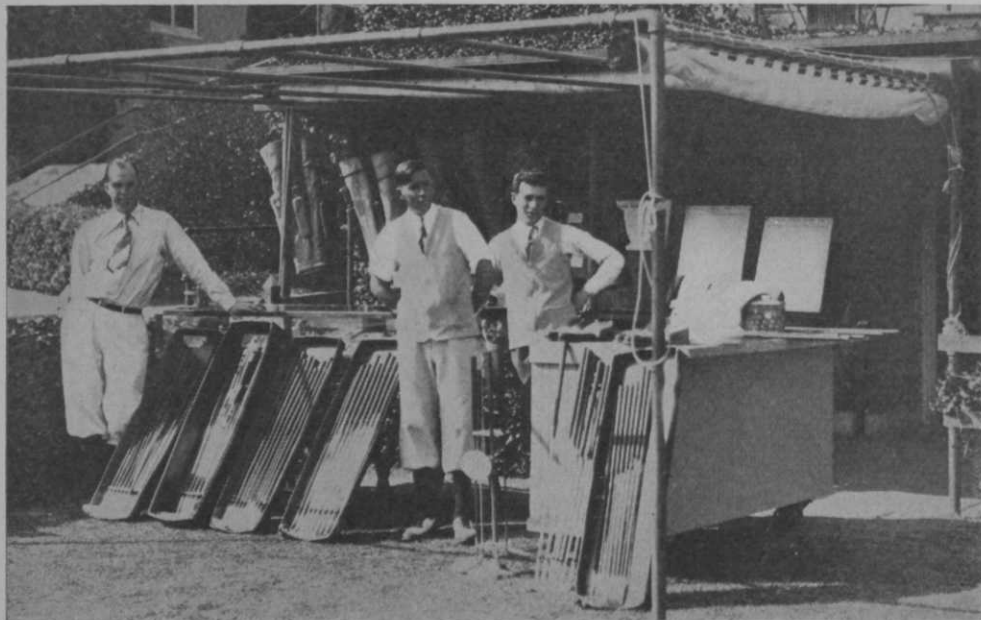
It admittedly is griping to see how many clubs are experimenting on the pro situation and taking inexperienced boys at figures meaning no net income to the so-called pros. But the clubs that are doing this are in financial plights resulting, mainly, from their own lack of foresight. They'll work their ways out and emerge from the morass as good pro spots. Some of the kids being baptized under present conditions probably will develop into first class pros. Jack Mackie, sage pro pioneer, once reminded the writer that the best of them were young once, so there's no use in howling because the kids are picking off some good jobs.

Look at that job situation from another angle; I have seen several fellows, who lost out at the end of last season, step into better jobs. A few of these fellows have bluntly confessed that they had been taking things too matter of fact in the jobs they lost. They took inventory of themselves and went after the new jobs with clear vision of what the pro job calls for these days and readjusted policies.

### No Fault of Pros

The pro is at mid-channel now, and although some of the boys are bewildered and possibly apprehensive, there is no need to blame any inherent defect in the pro's place in golf or in the pro personnel.

There is really much cheer in the fact that so many substantial pros are sitting down and taking a quiet inventory of their



Fred Morrison, pro at Midwick C. C., Pasadena, Cal., is one of those fellows who doesn't believe being a No. 1 player should interfere in the slightest with the same fellow being a first class pro business man. The accompanying photograph of Fred's outdoor display at Midwick should suggest something to fellows who complain that their shops are in out-of-the-way locations. Note that Fred's outdoor shop is on casters so he can spot it conveniently. It makes an especially valuable set-up for fellows who have shops located where women can't patronize them handily or for pros who miss a lot of the week-end sales because their displays don't get to the attention of the members. Such a portable show-room, with the displays changed often, and with prominent display cards on special sales, is going to play a star part in the selling service many of the pros will do this season.

performances, their positions and their possibilities.

Maybe this golf business has reached a point of steady, easy growth instead of the hectic advance it enjoyed in the 10 years from 1920 to 1930. If so, there's no distress to be found in that situation. It points toward a more earnest development of the pros' superior spot in the golf promotion picture. It will call for personal development of the possibilities instead of letting the feverish growth of a craze bring in the new business.

### Golf Looks Solid

Oswald Spengler, one of the foremost philosophers of the day, recently had an article in the *American Mercury* that painted a drab picture for the present civilization. Spengler forecasts that the machine age would bring about its own end. It was a blue view for many businesses,

but for the sport business there were cheering words. The masterly thinker said that the popularity of outdoor life was due to continue because of modern civilization's need for something to compensate for the crushing effect of mechanized living. So, on this basis golf's present and future looks excellent.

The pros are going through some readjustment that is in many cases inevitable. Some of the boys did their own readjusting a year ago, much to the satisfaction of their clubs. Other changes in pro operating policies will have to be made, but for the pro who is competent to handle his job for the good of the club and its members there is every reason for confidence that 1932 will be a first class normal year.

It's a season that begins brightly for the planners and the workers. No others need apply for a cozy corner in the pro field this season.