

PICKED UP IN THE ROUGH

By HERB GRAFFIS

TOMMY ARMOUR, at a meeting introducing him to the members of Medinah C. C., made the best spiel we ever have heard from a pro.

Don't let anyone kid you into believing Armour is one of the big-shot muggs who is so deeply intrigued by the act of patting and petting the ego that he doesn't figure the customer as the party of the first part. Tommy set forth a pro policy which if we'd had any idea of what was coming, would have been taken down verbatim as the new testament for pro business operations.

Tommy told the nobles, among other things, that he was the employe of no special group in the club—not even of the officials who hired him—but was available to the entire membership. He made it perfectly clear that the customer who shot over 100 was just as much a club member as the scratch man, and that he never could figure out why it involved a sacrifice of pro standing to play with the punks, since their dough was scratch currency. He also clarified one situation that has ruined some of the boys in good jobs by advising the Medinah members that Armour was hired as a professional golfer and not as a professional gambler.

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BILL KLISH, an assistant pro who makes his job-hunting headquarters at 130 Congress ave., Waterbury, Conn., calls attention to the plight of the forgotten kid.

Klish says the pros are inconsistent when they moan to high heaven about clubs not giving them a chance to make a living, hiring instead false alarms just because these f. a.'s will work for next to nothing, and then . . . turn right around and hire, as an assistant, any sort of a lad who will work for a bunk and a bun instead of paying some dough for a boy with qualifications.

Which provides a chance for an interesting argument.

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OF ALL THE go-getters we have seen lately, this lanky kid, "Speck" Hammond deserves high rating. Speck is a graduate travelling caddie who took to legitimate golf labors instead of burglary when he got his caddie diploma.

Harry Cooper, his former employer, couldn't use him this year as Harry's dad is with Harry at Glen Oak, so Speck started out on a brisk job hunt for himself.

Plenty of leg work and lots of writing, never discouraged and always putting up his story brief and to the point, finally landed Speck as the muscle-man and all-around detail guy of the Sarazen-Kirkwood circus now making America in Uncle Henry Doherty's gypsy wagon de-luxe.

About a quarter of the time of GOLF-DOM'S staff during the winter is spent in trying to get jobs for fellows. What a bright spot Speck was in coming into the office and digging up the dope for his own job hunt without taking the time of the mob in our padded cells.

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WEATHER HAS been terrible for an early start of the golf season. Up to April 21, 1932, there had been 3,700 rounds of golf played at Olympia Fields (Chicago district). Up to the same day this year there were less than 600 rounds. About the same week-end weather conditions prevailed through the rest of the central states and east.

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THE APRIL issue of *Golfing*, sent free to 300,000 club members, helped pro sales on the merchandise advertised. Club members hailed the new magazine as an entertaining, interesting and welcome item and marvelled that they got it mailed without cost to their home address. Even the ritziest of the clubs sent complimentary letters.

Are your members getting *Golfing*? Send in their names and addresses. Your club officials will be glad to approve this, for the lists never are to be used for any purpose other than mailing *Golfing*.

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ANNUAL MEETING of the sporting goods manufacturers was held at Hotel Sherman, Chicago, this year, with some sessions being held on Sundays. This was quite a change from the usual annual meetings held at White Sulphur Springs, where the gentlemen sat in the lap of luxury and gave the glad and hopeful eye to that fickle jade, Fortune.

An indication that it is possible to elimi-

nate some of the foolish profit sacrifices in the sporting goods business was evident in an improvement in the golf bag situation. Formerly that was beyond all doubt the saddest, sourest spot in the golf goods business. Now it is being cleared up by some elementary blackboard lessons on what happens to a dollar when it is pushed around thoughtlessly by some bird whose idea is to give his competitors a hell of a scolding rather than to make some money.

L. B. Icely, president of Wilson-Western, is credited with being the Moses who put up direction signs marking exit from this wilderness.

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GOLF CLUB manufacturing business is still in tearful shape with liquidation and delay of some makers in realizing what they have to get for merchandise to stay in business. But the gentlemen are seeing the light.

Keen and agile young Robbins, president of Spaldings, presented to the sporting goods manufacturers an analysis of what happens to the dollar the manufacturer gets for his goods. This analysis shows how very, very little the price-cutting manufacturer can trim the prices and still have a chance to get by. The way it is now, much of the market disturbance is the result of fellows working by hunch instead of by arithmetic.

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AND IF YOU have heard pro credit smells, you haven't heard a whisper compared to the blast against school and college credit. It is murder to some of the manufacturers.

The business-men pros have proved that it is possible to maintain first class credit even in tough times. The others are going to have a hard job to get merchandise, as the manufacturers simply can't afford to take any more chances with them. This same policy goes for schools, dealers and everybody else. There ought to be some faces missing from the sporting goods retailing field at the end of this year if this policy is kept staunch, as the manufacturers swear it will be.

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BOB MAC DONALD, by anybody's rating one of the best golf teachers in the world, has a feature concession at the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago.

Bob has a 50-tee driving range where the golfers among the millions of visitors to this world's fair can shake the kinks out of their muscles and absorb some able instruction.

The driving range is located on a shore of a lagoon and floaters will be driven out into the water. Boatmen with nets will pick up the line drives, flies and bunts.

This spot ought to be a gold mine with any sort of a break in the weather. It took a big piece of dough to swing the deal.

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FINALLY THE pros are getting hep to the fact that a handled municipal course job is a better answer than inflation to financial problems. Wiffy Cox at Dyker Beach in Brooklyn has had that spot clinking the cash register like a machine gun. Ralph Trost, golf writer for the Brooklyn *Eagle* and easily one of the stars in this field, has been putting on the build-up for Wiffy in publicity so the smiling, slugging Cox guy stands as one of the leading citizens of the village. Now Bill Meihorn has joined forces with Wiffy and the Brooklynites have a team of big-name pros that no private club can tie.

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JOHNNY CONNELL, fine little Irishman, picked off one of the biggest pro jobs in the country when he landed the Lincoln Park municipal job in Chicago. The course handles about 1,300 players a day all through the season. With Johnnie is Neil Christian, who has broken camp on the Pacific Coast. Charley Radditz, who in our opinion is one of the greatest inside pro shop men in the business, will have charge of playing one-note arias on the shop's Scotch piano and otherwise seeing that the spot is operated as big business.

In picking off the Lincoln Park job Connell has put himself in a place to do the pro cause a lot of good. This course never has had pro services and if Johnny and his gang prove to the park players and the course that competent, conscientious pro service is something that adds to the player's pleasure, other park systems should get wise and provide other openings on a basis that will attract first class men.

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WHILE LINCOLN PARK'S board was building a fine pro-shop, the West Park board in Chicago was considering

renting its courses out because of a previous inability to make expenses.

Politics must be the answer because anyone who couldn't show a profit with the play the West Park courses get, and legitimate operating expenses, could be given some very uncomfortable moments during cross-examination by people who know something about park course operation.

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MAC SMITH, being in a position where he can speak his mind without club politics kicking him out of a job, has started them arguing and chattering on the Pacific Coast. Mac maintains there are not enough first class golf instructors to do the clubs much good. He gives as a reason the unwillingness of clubs to pay instructors the money that will arouse and warrant a man's ambition to be a master instructor.

With more people playing better golf, the clubs will be in better shape because of increased interest in the game, so Mac reasons. It listens logical.

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CONFLICT between St. Paul Open and National Driving Championship dates at Keller Course, June 1, 2, 3 and 4, and a driving contest scheduled for Soldier Field at Chicago, June 4, puts some of the star pros in a tight spot.

The St. Paul people, who have put up \$29,000 in the last three years for Open tournaments and taken beatings ranging from \$3,500 to \$5,700 on each of the tournaments, figure they must have the gate of a Sunday finish to warrant the expense of this year's tournament. The PGA is promised a percentage of the gate on the event at Soldier Field which comes on the first Sunday of the Century of Progress exposition.

St. Paul date was announced first and was fixed to give some of the field at the National Open an extra chance to pick up expenses.

Efforts of the PGA to get the Chicago event promoters to switch to some date around the Western Open when a big field of name players would be available or to get St. Paul to relinquish the Sunday date originally granted have been unsuccessful to date.

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SECTIONAL difficulties of the PGA seem to be clearing away. The main reason for the withdrawals of sections, and

threatened withdrawals, has been the abandonment of the PGA brands of merchandise confined to pro-shop distribution.

Undoubtedly, practically all of this misunderstanding could have been avoided if the members had been acquainted with complete details of the deal prior to the Chicago meeting between the PGA officials and manufacturers.

There has been more battling and misunderstanding follow in the wake of the closed sessions of pro gatherings or their confabs with manufacturers than from any other source. What the gentlemen discuss could be broadcast over a national hook-up, with benefit to the pro cause, practically all of the time. However, so long as these matters are handled with the slightest inference that there is something very secretive and so important the ordinary muggs can't be trusted with the inside dope, there will be a bad backfire.

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SOME OF THE clubs that are having hard going are getting kids for pro jobs at no salary at all. The clubs figure there is enough in pro-shop profits and lessons to make the spot a good one for the pro. On the other hand, if the shop looks like it is making good money, the hard-up club wants to take it over.

Clubs and pros who have been through these experiences have learned that it takes smart merchandising by a well trained, substantial operator to make a fair living out of pro-shop operation.

It is our observation that after all costs of shop operation and instruction are figured up, most pros are lucky to end ahead by the sum of the club-cleaning charges.

It looks like a good, live, competent pro this year will be more of an asset than ever before to a club because of the effect first class pro department operation will have in the membership competitive situation. On this account, the club that tries to get by with a pro who lacks qualifications is neglecting one of the important details in membership solicitation.

WHERE A portion of a fairway near a green is higher than the surface of the green, weed seeds from the higher ground are certain to be washed onto the putting surface with every rain unless steps are taken to divert this run-off water. The simplest way to eliminate this source of weeds is to construct a depression between the green and the higher fairway.