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Golf Labors Hopefully on Its Code Problems

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IT'S STILL anybody's guess what the details of the golf club code will be.

The USGA, on advice of its general counsel took the position that inasmuch as private golf clubs were not operated for profit these clubs did not come under the act. The association took this position not alone because of a strictly legal interpretation of the National Industrial Recovery Act, but because of a belief that if the operating costs of some of the smaller, hard-pressed golf clubs were increased, these clubs would be forced to suspend. Such suspension would throw their present employees out of work, consequently react adversely to the President's plan for re-employment.

Clubs in a position to do so would aid the recovery movement by signing the voluntary agreement, the USGA advised. It is to the credit of club officials and members that many clubs have signed the voluntary agreement as the reduction of operating costs by heavy slashes in employees salaries in some instances came dangerously near to taking unfair advantage of the labor situation in depression times.

However, the initial position of the USGA can not be maintained, according to latest advices. The government insists on specific codes covering (a) minimum wages and hours and (b) unfair competition, in the cases of businesses not sub-

scribing to the general code.

What complicates the situation in the golf field is the diversity of conditions. Golf has:

- 1—private clubs in hopeful or good financial shape;
- 2—private clubs on the ragged edge;
- 3—daily fee courses;
- 4—public courses.

Need Unity and Power

The greater part of the golf club field, so far as number of employees and investment is concerned, are in the first class. Most of these are members of the USGA. But the USGA has only around 1,000 member clubs out of the 5,700 in the United States. There are 700 daily fee courses in the country, with no national organization. The Professional Golfers' association has about 800 members of pro and assistant classification out of the approximately 8,000 personnel of pros and assistant. The National Association of Greenkeepers has around 400 greenkeepers as its members although there are almost 4,000 men in charge of the maintenance of the country's courses. The Club Managers' Association of America has less than 10% of the golf club managers in its membership.

In the above evidence of the lack of or-

ganization in the golf field you have another reason why it is going to be difficult to get a satisfactory golf club code. What may come out of the present situation is a vast extension of USGA membership so this body will be financed into a position to be of greater help and influence in the golf field. The way it has been, though, the USGA has had plenty of troubles trying to get money for conducting its Green Section. The popular idea in the golf field has been to ride on a pass and let someone else finance the USGA's necessary operation.

Is Fee-Course Body Due?

This code business already has done the golf field considerable good as it has impressed on golf clubs and associations the necessity of having an organization big enough in membership and strength to act for the entire field. The fee-course owners' plight is especially regrettable, inasmuch as it shows a sadly unorganized situation, which is no one's fault but that of the course owners. There is no national fee course organization, despite efforts having been made to form one in this business of 700 establishments and a property valuation, even in these times, of approximately \$30,000,000. On that account the various local fee-course owners associations, altogether embracing less than 10% of the country's fee-courses, must attempt to secure local codes as is being done in the Chicago case.

Chances are that no governmental action will be taken on these sectional cases in a way that would be as generally helpful as the action that could be solicited by a national group.

To the USGA statement about code dangers of increased operating expenses there could be no argument save that of the same situation prevailing in many industries, but there was plenty of rebuttal to another statement in the same letter about there being "no possibility of business competition between such (private) clubs" and consequently no need for a protecting code. Competition for members between private clubs in certain localities has been extremely keen this year, and in a number of cases daily-fee course owners complain that certain private courses, which are at present cut-price competitors on trade tournament and individual play, would be given an unfair advantage in competition

with fee-courses, if the fee-courses are compelled to operate under a minimum wage and hour code and the private clubs be permitted to make their own minimum under the "not for profit" interpretation.

Chicago Fee Code

What with the competition of private courses that take daily-fee play and the municipal courses that have no tax bills, fee-course owners have been in a tough spot for several years. Some of the excess, second-grade fee-courses may be put out of business by the enforcement of a minimum wage and hour code, but that purging may be a healthy thing for the business if it can be effected in such a manner as the Chicago Daily Fee Golf association suggests in proposing uniform rates for play, in its letter to the NRA about a fee course code.

The Chicago Daily Fee G. A. proposes the following code for public golf business within an area of 50 miles from the center of the city:

On and after the effective date of this Code, no individual or organization operating a golf course—selling golf to the general public—shall work any clubhouse employee (except executives whose salaries exceed Thirty-five Dollars (\$35.00) per week, or professional persons employed in their profession, or outside salesmen) for more than forty-eight (48) hours of actual work per week during the operating season:

And, not to reduce the hours of operation to below fifty-six (56) hours in any one week during the golfing season:

And, not to employ outside course maintenance and grounds employees more than a maximum week of forty (40) hours; but with the right to work a maximum week of forty-eight (48) hours for any six (6) weeks in a six (6) month period.

On and after the effective date of this Code, said golf courses shall establish minimum weekly rates of wages for the golfing trade of Twelve Dollars (\$12.00) for all clubhouse employees and thirty-five cents (35c) per hour for all course maintenance and grounds employees.

On and after the effective date of this Code, no individual or organization operating a golf course—selling golf to the general public—shall have a week day rate from Monday to Friday, inclusive, of less than One Dollar (\$1.00) per player, on



Governor Charles W. Bryan of Nebraska drives to help make a fixture of the Nebraska Open, which will be played at the Shrine Club of Lincoln, September 22, 23, 24. Ranged back of him, left to right, are: Hal Bowers, Eastridge country club pro; Charles Koontz, Shrine club pro and tournament chairman; Charles Stuart, finance chairman; Johnny Morris, Country club pro; Arch Dillman, general chairman; and Frank Reeve, underwriting chairman. Prize money for the first Nebraska Open is \$2,000. Lincoln people hope, with pro co-operation, to make it an annual fixture with a \$5,000 purse.

Saturdays of less than One Dollar and a Half (\$1.50) per player, and on Sundays and Holidays of less than Two Dollars (\$2.00) per player, or season playing memberships of less than Seventy-five Dollars (\$75) per player:

And, further, it shall be deemed a violation of this Code of Fair Competition for any such golf club to give away premiums, offer cut-rates, or in any manner set up discounts, etc., in order to attract business through lowering the prices set forth herein. Any merchandise other than golf sold on the premises of these golf courses shall be at a fair market price, and not below a fair price, for the purpose of securing golf business.

In submitting its code, the Chicago Daily Fee organization estimated that the golf business in the Chicago area has a payroll of between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000.

The Club Managers' Association of America has gone to more effort than any other association in attempting to learn what code may be acceptable for private clubs of all kinds. There are two reasons; the

first being that many of the city clubs are in spots where the close similarity between hotel and restaurant operations has made the adoption of a satisfactory club code urgently necessary. The second reason is that the pros and greenkeepers have been scared to death to look into the code business since the USGA expressed its original belief that the private golf clubs do not come under code regulations. The pros, more than the greenkeepers, have been able to express the opinion that when times are good "they get theirs." The way it has been for several years is that the pro gets the greater part of his income from his merchandising efforts. With the new code agreed on by the golf goods makers, the pro has a vastly improved chance for reward as a business man as he will be protected against unfair competition and trade practices that have given him a rough road.

The pros and greenkeepers have refrained from taking any action on code formulation because they have feared that they might be endangering their jobs. In

the case of most of the club department heads, they are lucky to be able to live through the winter. The majority of them already are on the minimum for active executives in expensive plants.

Undoubtedly the lowest wages in the golf business are those of course laborers. Although many of these men must be carefully trained for delicate work, there is an amazingly large number of them in metropolitan districts who are compelled to live on charity during the winter.

The code proposed by the Club Managers' association now is being circulated together with a questionnaire. There is a possibility that if the USGA is compelled to submit a code for the golf clubs the questionnaire work will have to be duplicated as additional information may be solicited for the grounds.

It seems likely that the USGA will have to propose a code for the entire industry as the general policy of the NRA is to make all departments of business submit one code covering the entire business, as was done by the athletic goods industry instead of the government accepting codes from the club makers, the ball makers, the tennis goods makers, etc.

Managers Shape Code

Highlights of the Club Managers' proposed code:

Caddie boys over 14 years of age at country clubs permitted to work not to exceed 5 hours in any one day.

Maximum hours of labor for employees are to be 56 hours per week for male employees, and for female employees not more than 48 hours per week.

Maximum hours fixed in the foregoing paragraph shall not apply to employees in a managerial or executive capacity, who receive more than \$35.00 per week, nor to employees on emergency maintenance and repair work, nor to very special cases where restriction of hours of highly skilled workers on continuous processes would unavoidably handicap the continuous operation of a club. In any such emergency or special case, at least time and one-third shall be paid for hours in excess of the maximum hours per week hereinbefore provided.

"Actual Working Hours" are defined as the periods during which an employee is required to be on duty; time out for meals and/or for the interval of time between

split shifts is not to be considered as time on duty.

Split shifts are essential to successful operation and are therefore permitted. Split shifts, however, shall not involve more than two periods of active working hours; the total time involved in such working periods plus the interval of inactivity between them shall not exceed twelve hours in any one working day.

The minimum rates of pay shall be as follows: All classes of employees shall be paid not less than \$15.00 per week in any city of over 500,000 population, or in the immediate trade area of such city; nor less than \$14.50 per week in any city of between 250,000 and 500,000 population, or in the immediate trade area of such city; nor less than \$14.00 per week in any city of between 2,500 and 250,000 population, or in the immediate trade area of such city; and in towns of less than 2,500 population to increase all wages by not less than 20 per cent; provided that this shall not require wages in excess of \$12.00 per week, with the exception in the above where meals are served, a credit of 30 cents per meal shall be allowed, and/or where rooms are included a further credit of \$2.00 per week shall be allowed.

Minimum rates of hourly pay for all classes of employees shall be as follows:

- 1. Cities of 500,000 and over, 30c per hour, minimum wage for men and women.*
- 2. Cities of 250,000 to 500,000, 29c per hour minimum wage for men and women.*
- 3. 2,500 to 250,000, 28c per hour, minimum wage for men and women.*
- 4. Less than 2,500, 25c per hour, minimum wage for men and women.*
- 5. Caddie boys at country clubs, 20c per hour, minimum wage.*

A reduction of \$1.00 per week from the weekly basis, or 2c per hour from the hourly basis is allowed in the following states: Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.

To effectuate further the policies of the Act, a Club Industry Committee is hereby designated to cooperate with the Administrator as a Planning and Fair Practice Agency for the Club Industry. This Committee shall consist of five representatives of the Clubs elected by a fair method of selection, to be approved by the Administrator and three members without vote appointed by the President of the United

States. Such agency may from time to time present to the Administrator recommendations based on conditions in their industry as they may develop from time to time which will tend to effectuate the operation of the provisions of this Code and the policy of the National Industrial Recovery Act.

The Club Managers' association points out that the working hours, rates of pay and allowances for meals and board as asked for in its code will not be granted unless clubs can show that under these conditions the clubs are increasing pay-rolls and employment.

Code Covers Pros

The PGA had an opportunity to present its case as the athletic goods manufacturers were preparing their code. This code reveals a number of interesting phases that should help the pros to regain undisputed command of golf goods retailing.

The subsidy and free ball deals are ruled out for pros and other athletic coaches as an unfair trade practice influencing the ultimate purchases of the merchandise. Free ball and club deals to amateurs also are abandoned.

When a pro is paid to play merchandise, disclosure of such payment must be made, according to the Athletic Goods code submitted.

Use of prominent athletes' names on merchandise when the notables have not designed or do not bona fide endorse or do not themselves use the athletic merchandise thus labeled, is ruled illegal by the new code.

One section of the Athletic Goods Code that the pros hope will give them an even break is Section 8. It reads, substantially: *"It is an unfair trade practice * * * to discriminate in price between different purchasers of commodities, where the effect of such discrimination may be to substantially lessen competition."*

A qualifying clause follows this statement. The pros hope it will not allow such leeway that the pros who make the market will continue to suffer cut-price competition from those who come in with tempting offers to manufacturers after the market already is established. This qualifying clause: *"provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent discrimination in price between purchasers of the same class on account of difference in the*

grade, quality or quantity of the commodity sold, or that makes only due allowance for differences in the cost of selling or transportation, or discrimination in price in the same or different communities made in good faith to meet competition."

This qualifying clause, especially in its latter part, seems to leave the way open for the smart department store buyer to play one manufacturer against the other in the good old-fashioned way which has come so near to busting some of the manufacturers. Incidentally, before the pros grunt and gripe and groan about this clause, it must be remembered that credit losses are part of "the cost of selling."

No secret rebates are permitted by the code.

All remade, renewed or rebuilt golf balls must be so marked, as must be the boxes and cartons containing them. No first class merchandise marked "seconds" is to be sold.

Other sections of the code deal with false advertising, anti-monopoly regulations and dumping of merchandise at less than reasonable cost.

Pros will be especially interested in one of the general provisions of this code which states that *"no provision of this code shall be interpreted or applied in such a manner as to * * * discriminate against small enterprises."*

Invoices to Tell All

What especially interests the pros in the Athletic Goods code is Section 14 which reads: *"Withholding from or inserting in the invoice facts which make the invoice a false record, wholly or in part, of the transaction represented on the face thereof, and/or the payment or allowance of secret rebates, refunds, credits, unearned discounts, whether in the form of money or otherwise, are unfair methods of competition."*

As near as the pros can make out, this section of the code, if enforced, should eliminate the "buy it wholesale" and corporation employee discount practice that has been burning the pros and other retailers. When the pros discussed what their association was to ask in the way of code consideration, the elimination of this trick discount unfair competition was an early thought.

The Athletic Goods code at present looks like a grand job and one that gives the

pros the even break they have been seeking. Now the matter of cashing in on this even break is strictly up to the professionals with energy and ability.

GOLFDOM ventures the opinion that much of the alarm expressed about adverse effect of a code on the golf business is unwarranted. In the first place, if the general idea of the National Recovery Administration gets across, people will have more time to play and more money to play with. Certainly that will help golf. Repeal of prohibition legislation will help the club-houses to compete with cafes and road-houses for restaurant business. Beer has done well, in this respect already.

On the courses from 60% to 75% of the expense is labor, and even if the labor wage is hiked and working hours reduced it may be a good thing in encouraging the replacement of slow and expensively-operated obsolete equipment with swift and thrifty equipment, enabling the present staff to do far more work in less time. Golf clubs have done their share in adding to the vicious cycle that has kept the depression from departing by adopting the popular policy of not buying anything other than the bare necessities.

Golf, if the general idea of the code works out, ought to be one of the favored beneficiaries.

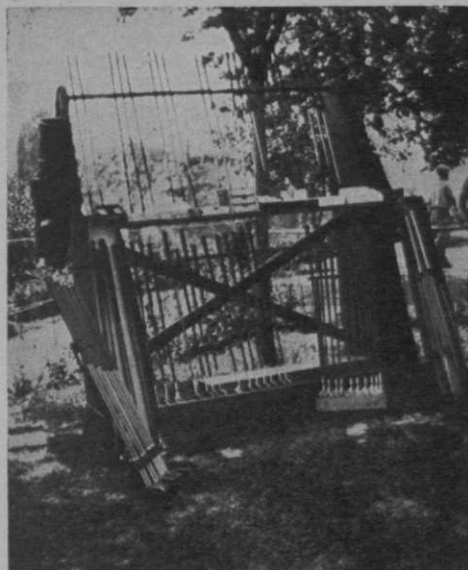
OUTDOOR DISPLAY

Clubs and Balls at First Tee Catch Business for Omaha Pro

STANLEY DAVIES, able pro at the Omaha (Neb.) Field club, had the outdoor display rack shown in the accompanying illustration, built for use at the first tee.

On Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, women's days and at tournaments, Davies has a display of new clubs and a good variety of balls on this rack, handy for the crowd that always is awaiting turn at the tee. He picks up many ball sales that he otherwise would not secure and by giving the prospective customers tempting opportunities to swing clubs and discuss them with other players, he gets an "in" on club sales that he ordinarily would miss.

Seldom does this first tee display idea fail to prove highly satisfactory as a serv-



ice to the members and a great sales help for the pro. The mystery is why more pros don't use it, especially in cases where the pro shop is poorly located. The first one we ever heard of was one put up many years ago by Willie Hoare, now with Wilson-Western. Willie then was at Tedesco. The first tee display rack worked there and has proved a sales tonic for every pro who has tried it since Willie gave it the initial try-out.

Webworms Continue to Damage Courses in Mid-West

ACCORDING to a warning by J. H. Bigger, assistant entomologist of the Illinois State Biological Survey, striped sod webworms, which caused so much damage during 1931 to lawns and golf courses, will be present in sufficient numbers to seriously affect turf areas this fall. He bases his warning on the fact that adults of the insect have been flying in large numbers recently and it will be the worms from the eggs laid by these adults that will do the damage.

The scientist recommends preventive measures be taken at once against this early invasion and suggests application of arsenate of lead, sprayed or dusted onto the turf. "Damage from the webworms is most likely to be severe," he says, "if hot, dry weather prevails to reduce the natural vitality of the grass."