

New Deal for Pros to Bring Reward for Member Service

By CARL HORN

TO WHAT extent the world will be remade by codes you can guess as well as I, but you at least have to say that codes are doing *some* good by presenting definite objectives in black and white.

The athletic goods code has made it clear that a playing pro must be so good that he will be in demand for exhibition dates or so prominent that his name will be bought for a brand mark on golf goods. If the pro isn't of that high playing ability, then he has to be a business man at a golf club.

It looks like the end of the days when a young fellow can get a pro job simply by shooting a good game, knowing some influential members and being willing to work cheap.

Unless such young fellows quickly demonstrate to the manufacturers that they are good business men by keeping their bills paid up, they won't get merchandise of a type and quantity satisfactory to their members. The club will take over the shop. Even though only a few club shops break even or give members the high class instruction and service they have a right to expect, clubs continue to take over pro shops because some pro errors have given club officials the wrong idea that good business men pros are so few and far between it's not worth while trying to find them.

That such a situation is the result of mistakes made by comparatively few pros, doesn't help matters. Nor does it help things to point out that club officials and members have done much to mess up the pro business by hiring pros lacking proper qualifications.

Correcting the situation is strictly up to the pros and is possible now, if the athletic goods code is adhered to by the manufacturers.

Cites Successful Pros

Let's see what makes pros successful.

Take the case of the most successful older pros—fellows who have been at their clubs for a number of years. To name a few off-hand, I'll say Jack Mackie, John

Inglis, Al Naylor, Bertie Way, Jim Wilson, Jock Hutchison, the Harrison brothers, Alex Pirie and Mike Brady. All of them have two big merits in common; they think of their club members first, and they keep up-to-date. When general business conditions are off, their income naturally falls, but when business picks up they still are secure in profitable jobs. They don't figure that a pro must be pampered to the point where he can escape the rap of hard times.

They are with good solid clubs where the frequent turn-over of members doesn't subject them to the dangers of club politics, because they are good, solid men themselves.

But what about the younger fellows who also are good, solid business men? Quite a few of them are at clubs where each new set of officials is elected on a policy of changing everything. Unfortunately at many private clubs the pro who stays on the job at the lesson tee, sees that his members are fitted with the best in new equipment, runs the club tournaments smoothly and co-operates quietly and effectively with the greenkeeper and manager, is often so unobtrusively efficient that a loud group of members clamors for a go-getter as a pro.

A Membership Builder

I have studied the plight of these younger professionals for several years while I have shared in one of GOLFDOM's labors: that of trying to get pros into jobs that they will fill satisfactorily.

At last I believe I have found the answer to the younger pro's problem of making himself invaluable to a club. The answer lies in the younger pro making himself an active, helpful element in membership solicitation. This answer will hold good in 90 per cent of the cases where a professional has a chance to get or keep a job.

The greenkeeper's job is the course.

The manager's job is the clubhouse.

The pro's job is the members!

The pro who handles the business of

his members and their wives in a way that makes the pro department operation register pleasantly every time a member, his wife, children or guests come to the club is worth too much for any club to let go. From such a pro's performance the guests get the idea of becoming members.

In many clubs the pro can be, and should be, the busiest and most valuable member of the membership committee. A pro who is a well-mannered, neatly dressed, earnest business man can easily make contacts among prospective members by taking part in service club, Legion, chamber of commerce or fraternal club meetings.

At times he can accompany one of his members to some trade tournament in which the member is taking part and meet prospective members there. This, however, is something that must be done with discretion, for no wise pro will risk censure by staying away from the service of the entire membership to accommodate only one of the members.

The less the job amounts to at present, the more work there is for the pro in building up the membership, and he doesn't need to fear, unless his is a quite exclusive club, that his efforts to increase the membership will be criticized by his officials and members.

Public Course Pros Awake

At the public courses where there is a most painfully close relation between the volume of play and the pros' income, there are some great pro business-getters. Several of these boys are beginning to advertise themselves into bigger incomes as a result of making and seizing opportunities.

One of the shining specimens of a younger pro building himself up is that brought to the front by James J. D'Angelo, pro at the Baederwood GC, a public course at Noble, Pa.

In early spring Jimmy got a letter asking him to join up in a campaign to push the Bobby Jones films. The Warner Brothers' gang left this promotion pretty much to fate. Although the pro tie-up was a natural the film people have done no advertising in the golf magazines, hoping to ride on a pass with free publicity.

D'Angelo learned that the theater showing the Jones picture would do the advertising that the Warner Brothers wouldn't, so he hooked up with one of the largest theaters in Philadelphia.

The set-up was a putting green in the lobby, with a display of Jones life-size cut-outs and Jones clubs. Now where Jimmy starts coming in, is with a life-size picture of himself in the lobby. Jim is in the lobby four nights a week, answering golf questions. He is a hard, affable worker. Other theater managers heard how the lobby show was going across and got Jim to work for them. He was able to take engagements at two more theaters; one about 20 minutes from his club and the other in his home town. One of the theaters ran a screen advertisement announcing Jim's presence in the lobby for answering golf questions.

At one theater Jim follows up the Jones picture with a supplementary demonstration in a net in the parking lot by the side of the picture. In the theater program there is an advertisement telling that D'Angelo will give lessons to the theater's patrons at a reduced rate.

No Code on This Job

Understand, that this theater work is at night. Jim does his full job at the club in the daytime.

This extra-hour work and its publicity is beginning to materialize. Being at a public course and not having time to devote to tournament golf, D'Angelo might not become widely known, but with this theater work, a weekly broadcast and a newspaper instruction series, running 3 times a week, Jim has enough advertising to bring him pupils that take up all of his lesson calendar. He has as many as 14 lessons a day.

This break Jim has made for himself this summer isn't going to be permitted to fade out. He is opening a winter school in Philadelphia.

Competition in the metropolitan districts is keener than in the smaller cities, so ordinarily a fellow like D'Angelo might just plug along for years without getting anywhere. However, instead of waiting until the golfers come to him, he goes out after the golfers. He sells them on golf, on D'Angelo and on Baederwood, which is the task to which every young fellow in pro golf must apply himself to stay in the game and get ahead.

WHEN PLACING drain plugs back in water lines, put some hard oil on the threads to eliminate rusting and any trouble unscrewing them next time.