

IN THE ROUGH

with **HERB GRAFFIS**

LA TE winter usually brings around the most important detail of golf club operation, that of appointment of committees. More attention than ever before will be paid to the appointment of women's committees for 1935. It is now recognized that the women's activities and interest are vital points in club success.

Getting the right men to head committees is the hardest job in golf. The committee heads have to learn at club expense, in the last analysis. Their jobs are thankless for the most part. Consequently it takes a superior sort of a fellow to do a good job of heading a golf club committee. If he handles the job conscientiously it means that he probably will take some valuable time away from his private business affairs unless they happen to be especially well organized.

The extent of such sacrifices was impressed on GOLFDOM's editor by a comment recently made concerning Gus Posner, veteran green-chairman of the Bryn Mawr (Chicago district) CC. Said a man who knows Posner well and who is acquainted with the transformation of the Bryn Mawr property from a dumping ground into a beautiful golf course: "If Posner had devoted to his own business the time he has given to the building and conditioning of the Bryn Mawr course, he would be a quarter of a million dollars richer." Fortunately in this case the green chairman is contentedly well to do. He is beloved by his fellow club members but the chances are only two or three of his comrades realize the value of the sacrificial work he and other committee men of his nature do for clubs.

JACK O'BRIEN in his lively column "No Foolin'" in the San Antonio (Tex.) *Evening News* bounces the PGA around for not putting up 50% of the \$3,000 guarantee for the San Antonio Open, February 22-24. Jack can rap a typewriter like a tommygun and he writes "damn" when the O'Brien blood boils.

The earnest and irate O'Brien is a guy that the pros, the PGA and especially the PGA tournament bureau manager would like to please because, way back in 1921 Jack called attention to the fact that

Battling Siki the colored fighter was getting big dough while the tournament pros were on a diet in the winter. Jack's campaign resulted in the first San Antonio open. Since then, the Battling Shine has been bumped off after a short life of vicious and depraved fury, and pro winter tournament golf has grown big. But in all his wild life Siki didn't get crazy enough to put up 50% of the dough he fought for, which is what Jack believes the tournament pros should do!

In all the past year, spring, summer, autumn and winter not over 36 tournament pros won more than \$1,000 apiece. Several times Battling Siki got paid for a single fight more money than the \$6,767.91 won by Paul Runyan as leading prize winner of all the pros in 1934.

Then Jack will be relieved to know that the tournament pros do not get the money allotted to their work by the PGA without some complaint by professionals who do not play tournaments.

FELLOWS who are trying to put early indications together to forecast a great year in golf have begun to call attention to Walter Hagen's return to form in California as an early season sign of an interesting and active 1935.

Walter came only two shots away from winning the Sacramento open from the likeable and proficient young "Jug" McSpaden. With the old High Flying Dutchman under a full head of scoring steam this summer, with Sarazen, Armour and others of the older guard bearing out scoring promises make thus far in the year, and with a good bunch of youngsters of the McSpaden type coming along this ought to be a competitive year to stir up lively interest.

BOB JONES has been conducting revival meetings for the Atlanta charity in which he is interested. This winter, teamed with Horton Smith, Jones has played to galleries ranging from 2,500 to 5,000 on the Pacific coast and along the Gulf.

Jones has shot some magnificent golf in these exhibitions and demonstrates that he still has his former cunning as a shot-

maker. The winter performances may be an indication that Bob is doing some road work in preparation for the Masters' tournament at Augusta, Ga. this spring.

AN OFFICIAL of a prominent metropolitan district club recently explained why his club changed professionals. He explained:

"Competition among clubs is getting so that nowadays a club must have a good teaching professional constantly on the job looking to see what he can do for the members.

"In our own case, some members were going to professionals at other clubs for lessons and ended by joining the other clubs. Last year we lost more than a dozen of our most active members, whose defection could be traced primarily to lack of pro interest at our own club and satisfactory pro reception at the clubs they joined. I'd figure that each of these members was worth at least \$300 a year to our club and when you see something that's costing your club about \$4,000 a year, you have to take action. That's what the members and the board thought about it and although we kept from firing our former pro for three years, he never seemed to get the idea that we expected our pro to be active in holding and increasing member interest. So we had to let him go, although he was a nice fellow and never did any harm just staying around, which was about the main thing he did."

The tale was tough on the fellow who got canned but in one way it wasn't bad to hear, because it indicated that clubs may be getting the idea that alert, energetic and proficient pros are worth a good salary to any wisely operated club.

PRO RELATIONS with the USGA have been getting intimate and mutually helpful to the extent it seems now improbable that the pros may soon have representation on the USGA executive board. The USGA in naming practical operators to the advisory board of its Green Section most certainly extended the usefulness of this phase of its work.

In naming one of the well balanced, substantial and informed older or younger professionals to its executive board the USGA would avail itself of expert and extensive help in control of the play of the game and get closer to the operating aspects of golf.

In these days tradition is being sub-

jected to critical examination. The personnel of USGA administrations for several years past has not been inclined to bump lowly brows in veneration of the dead past; instead it has stepped out in some timely service.

Prescott Bush, nominee for president, is an experienced and open-minded gentleman. He will not fall dead with surprise and have horror-glazed eyes pointed toward St. Andrew's when it is suggested that the valuable knowledge and contacts of the professionals be employed officially to the fullest extent, in furthering the USGA's work for golfers and golf.

THE Hicks girl is doing all right. It may be regarded as a good indication of women's interest in golf to learn that since Helen signed with Wilson-Western and turned business-woman golfer, she has appeared in advertisements of cigarettes, tooth-paste, hats, dresses and golf shoes.

JOHAN HACKBARTH, veteran pro at Madison, Wis., had an idea broiled out by the Southland's winter sun. Hackbarth suggests a senior pro championship held under the auspices of the PGA for its members who have been in pro golf 15 years or more.

John says that something along this line might be run in connection with an anniversary of the PGA's founding. He also suggests that a pro-senior team matched against the USGA senior team would be an event of considerable public interest. Hackbarth believes such events would be good business for golf, inasmuch as it would draw attention to the fact that golf's span of interest and playing ability reaches from childhood to the greybeard days.

IT APPEARS highly probable that several sections of the PGA will take action early this spring in promoting sectional championships for boys and girls, although the idea of national junior championships which came up at the national pro meeting is out.

The USGA frowns on national junior championships because of a conviction that the expense angles and the emphasis of big-time all-important competition are not good for the kids. On this account the USGA has refused to approve American Legion and newspaper chain ideas for national junior tournaments. The ruling body's attitude has been based on the be-

lief that the individual character of golf competition is liable to put too much temptation before some impressionable kids.

To support this contention there could be related incidents of caddie championships and Western Junior boys championships that indicate some kids are liable to take an edge unless pretty completely supervised. On the other hand, I don't know of a championship in which there is more complete regard for sportsmanship and the rules than the Women's Western Junior championship.

This is a championship that should have the most enthusiastic co-operation of the pros. The pro who doesn't try to develop talent and interest for this event is passing up one of his excellent sales-building and advertising opportunities.

GEOERGE JACOBUS, in explaining the new PGA ball deal at the Miami-Biltmore meeting said:

"One object of the rebate is to enable pros to pay for their own balls which have been a considerable item of pro operating expense since the code went into effect and sample balls to pros were discontinued."

PLAY in the fourth annual Gasparilla Open, scheduled for the Palma Ceia GC, Tampa, late in February or early in March, will be restricted to members of the PGA and amateurs.

This is the first tournament outside of the PGA's own affairs in which the field has been limited to PGA pros, points out Bob Harlow, tournament bureau manager of the PGA who has been working on this idea for several years and finally put it over when he and George Jacobus conferred with the Gasparilla officials late in December.

JIMMY HINES, recently engaged as pro by the Garden City (NY) CC, brings out a few more good points about the winter circuit as a training school for aspiring young professionals.

Says this competent and progressing youth:

"Playing and learning how to play and what to teach your members isn't all the value there is to the winter circuit by a long way. The young fellow learns to go to bed before 11 and get up before 8 because that's what he sees the successful tournament players doing. When he's got that habit he comes back to his club in

the summer and is out at the club early, seeing what he can do for himself in his shop or out on the course or lesson tee. His members get more value out of him.

"The young fellow who makes the tournament circuit also learns he has to develop a business head. If he goes on the circuit leaving bills unpaid or doesn't handle his expense while he's on the circuit, he is out of luck. This, too, helps him when he is back on the job at his club."

AMONG the early signs of good times was the offer made to Willie Macfarlane in Florida last month. A prominent New Yorker propositioned Willie to stay in Florida and give him a playing lesson every day for 30 days, at a price of \$750.

It will be a bargain for the man with money for the chances are he will win back the Macfarlane tuition fee quickly on what Willie teaches him about approaching and putting—to say nothing of the other fine points of the game.

Some up-and-coming youngsters may wonder how these big shots get the heavy dough for lessons. One of the tip-offs seems to be passing out samples to the trade.

The successful Macfarlane fellow, for instance, believes that many pros beat themselves out of possible profits by hanging around the shop when there is nothing doing. Willie takes a few clubs out and wanders around the course. He plays a couple of holes with one foursome, visits and drops helpful hints and then goes on to see that some other foursome is enjoying the round and getting some golf improvement out of it. In this manner he keeps close watch on his members' needs and likes and on course conditions.

Because he hates to loaf when he can be doing his members some good and enjoying himself too, Macfarlane is one of the wealthiest pros in the game.

MOST of the pros reporting an increase in 1934 sales over those of 1933 tell me they have a lot of women's play at their clubs.

Thoughtful pros do everything they can to encourage women's play. A regular Monday feature at the Savannah G&CC, where that fine young fellow Fairley Clark is pro, is a foursome of three women members and Fairley. Each Monday he plays a round with three different women. It means giving up part of his off day, but it's been good business for the boy.