

WE NEED MORE GOLFERS

By C. V. ANDERSON, Byrnes Park, Waterloo, Iowa

GOLF isn't growing as fast as it should. For some time I have been trying to figure out the trouble. The reason is, I believe, that there is not enough new golfers developed; too many people connected financially with the game are working on the golfers we now have.

The fee course officials are busy trying to get their courses in tip-top shape thinking that alone may bring golfers out; pros are working on their game for the next big tournament thinking if they make good showings that it will bring players to their clubs. Park officials are improving the swimming pool, trimming the lilac bushes and working on the golf course. Private club officials in some places still are figuring how to cut club dues, believing that is the secret to an increased membership; and manufacturers are busying trying to outwit each other in selling equipment to the present crop of golfers.

It's just like a bunch of farmers all trying to get milk out of the same cow; the cow naturally can't give enough to supply them all. What they need is more cows. What golf needs is not more cows but more golfers to sell to.

Pros Used to Sell Plenty of Golf

I believe, in this particular phase of the game, the golf pro does by far the most effective work. Ten or fifteen years ago the pros sold more golf than they are selling today, simply because they worked harder to interest people in playing. They knew a new prospect was sure to purchase the clubs, etc., from him.

Today this is not so much the case. If the pro does interest a person in taking up the game, he may be on the short end of the odds in selling the outfit. The equipment may be from some cut price dealer on a price or thru some wholesale "connection". This has been going on for quite some time but it has slowly but surely discouraged the seller and developer of golf.

There are about 20% of the pros who have good jobs and are making a good living. Thirty-five to 40% are getting by; about 25% living in hope and another 20% going in the red worse as each winter slips by. I believe that the 25% living in

A pro looks at an urgent problem in golf and then refers to the days of the last boom in golf to point out that pros at that time did a successful job of promoting play because they realized the more players there were, the more the pro profited.

With economic conditions favorable again and the marketing situation improving so the pro can cash in on the business he builds, this pro author advocates a strong, well-planned golf development campaign.

hope interest as many of the new players as any other of the four classes.

I merely mention this to show that sometimes those who put in the most get the least.

The last boom we had was in 1919-1920-1921 when the public course began to be popular. It took the game out of the class known as "the rich man's game." That boom developed a tremendous bunch of new players; in fact, more than could be cared for comfortably for four or five years, and we have not had a similar golf boom since.

All municipalities, manufacturers, companies and individuals making a profit from the game now are at a point where they must take an active part in developing new golfers.

This group could get together with the pros who stay home during the winter and rent some kind of a reasonably-priced building or room, get 2 to 3 golf nets and give golf lessons absolutely free to people who have never played before. Give each person at least 10 or 12 lessons and the use of the nets for practice until they get interested in the game. This could be followed up by lectures by playing stars. I am sure in every town of 50,000 people 200 to 300 new golfers could be started in a couple of months. For a start do that in a couple hundred cities and figure for yourself the number of new golfers started. It will require a little publicity, and I am sure the sports editors of the various newspapers would be more than

glad to cooperate. The pros could do their part by giving their services at a reasonable rate. They would donate in services what the others would put up in cash. With shorter working hours and more machinery humming, people simply must have exercise and something to do in spare time. We should go after them, get them started playing golf before they get started at some other sport. I believe the plan should go as far as having a developing committee in each state. There are a lot of chislers making money on the sale of golf goods who do nothing toward its development. Its time they kick in and do something toward this end.

There are a number of membership chairmen, club officials and club members who have worked hard at getting new members to join their club and this has been a big help in golf development. This class has worked hand in hand with the pro. For a continuous growth of the game we simply have to sell more golf, get more people started playing, and devise ways and means to do so.

Everybody who is now getting an income from golf or any part of the game

and expects to continue in the golf business must do a share in developing new customers, and I don't mean their participation should be limited to letting the other fellow do it.

A SUCCESSFUL method of financing a \$17,000 swimming pool was employed by the Audubon CC, Louisville, Ky. Basis of the financing was the sale of \$100 subscriptions, the subscribers being given coupon books for swims. Prices for use of the pool were 25 cents for subscribers, 35 cents for others and 70 cents for guests.

Officials of the club estimate that 40 members at \$200 initiation fee joined because of the pool. Dinner and bar revenue has been increased substantially by the pool, which keeps the club active until 10 p. m.

Most of the pool use is by children and a few mothers up to 4 p. m., after which time adults take over the place. Audubon officials estimate that about a third of the adults using the pool cannot swim, but merely splash around in the ample space of safe depth.



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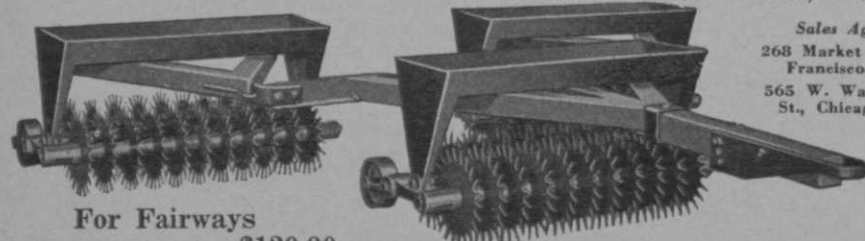
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