

Officials Say Pro Collection Problem Is Club Weakness

E. B. YOAKUM, secretary of the Southern California GA, and H. H. Bandy, secretary of the Cleveland District GA, in commenting on GOLFDOM articles concerning the difficulty pros have in collecting accounts from members when collections are not handled by the club, both point out that this trouble may be an indication of poor financial management on the part of the club officials.

Mr. Yoakum remarks:

"I fully agree that the pros are in a tough spot, for at no time can they refuse to extend credit to a regular club member. Anyone holding such a membership is entitled to credit, so therefore, I think that the club should be responsible for a professional's collections.

Fair Policy Is Club's Job

"I believe I am safe in saying that many of the clubs in this district take this responsibility. Of course, it is up to the directors of the club to see that they have the proper management.

"I believe Mr. Mudd's article in June GOLFDOM refers more to the semi-public golf clubs, which are being operated as real estate promotion schemes or purely commercial. I know that some clubs in this district started out as private clubs but have drifted into pay-as-you-play courses where an individual or a corporation has taken over the management. These semi-public clubs issue all kinds of memberships and have more or less of a transient membership which are very poor credit risks for the pro. I think these clubs should operate on a cash basis.

"I would further say that all private clubs issuing regular participating memberships should be responsible for professional's commissions. I would suggest that the club and golf shop operate as one unit, that is, all charges made at the golf shop should be entered on club tickets. These charges to be billed to the members, together with dues, on the first of the month—the club paying the pro for his charges and they in turn collecting from the members. At no time should the club be responsible for pro purchases.

"The semi-public clubs that issue different kinds of membership, should be operated on a cash basis, but if they desire to extend credit to their members, the club should endeavor to make the collections for the professional—that is, the professional should give all his monthly statements of charges made by members to the club, these statements to be mailed out with the club statement at

the first of each month, and in this way the club will have a check on all collections."

Pro Can Collect Through Club

Mr. Bandy brings out the point that every club should make strong efforts at least at the end of the season to see that its pro gets money due him from members. Bandy comments:

"Having been formerly connected with Spaldings, and dealing directly with the professionals for a period of years, I am inclined to think no definite rule can be made that will govern the collection of accounts by golf clubs. I believe that you will find that most of this trouble is with the weaker clubs. A golf pro who is doing the job will have no trouble in getting the club to aid him in the collection of accounts.

"In a great many cases, I know of clubs that take over the professional's accounts at the close of the season. This however, is mostly with those pros who have other connections during the winter, and do not have an opportunity to follow up delinquent accounts properly.

"I read Mr. Mudd's article with a great deal of interest and it is quite educational in pointing out the way the pro's business should be conducted. I believe that every professional who is firmly established in his own club will have little difficulty in gaining the co-operation of club officials. With the weaker clubs, it is my thought that no general rule could be recommended that would in any way obligate the club, outside of their contract with the professional.

"I am strongly in favor of the professional getting all he can in the way of a salary consideration, but believe that any further concession is purely a matter for him and club officials to work out. The right man who is doing his job in a business-like way and is fully in sympathy with the club's interest will be justly protected in any reasonable request."

JULIUS ACKERBLOOM, pro at Colonial CC, Memphis, had company drop in for a game and showed the guests how this golf stuff is supposed to be done by hammering out a 63 on the Colonial par 71 course.

The guests were Al Link of Link-Lyon, Inc., and C. F. Work, president of the Golf Shaft & Block Co. Work is vice-president of the Colonial club.

Link, no stranger to watching great golf, says Ackerbloom's 30 on the par 37 incoming nine, is the most marvelous golf he's seen.