

PGA "POINTS WITH PRIDE"

*Progress of Association
Recounted at Convention*

By HERB GRAFFIS

INTENSE and in good balance, like making love in a canoe, PGA delegates from all 26 sections met for their 1935 annual convention at the customary spot, Morrison hotel, Chicago and made syllables ring throughout November 18, 19 and 20. A session of the PGA executive committee held Monday prior to the general meetings set the schedule for action.

The box score:

A new PGA ball deal equalizing discounts between pros, stores and jobbers, introducing a 50c PGA ball as a companion to the regular 75c PGA ball and assurance that wholesale price structure will be maintained by reason of license rights attached to vulcanized cover patents;

Re-election of officials;

Refusal of George Jacobus, president, to consider the dictator resolution proposed in convention preliminaries;

A new major annual champion—the PGA seniors' championship—;

Decision to continue association's promotion and publicity of golf on a basis of greater coordination.

Of most immediate significance was the new ball deal which has the effect of reversing a situation that long existed in PGA ranks. Now instead of the privates in the pro regular army yelling to the GHQ staff, "What is the PGA doing for us?", the completion of the ball deal puts the ball profit situation strictly up to the individual members.

**Must Hold
Fine Ball Market**

Introduction of the 50c ball is expected to provide at a reasonable price a high value ball to build up the 25c and 35c store ball buyers into the 50c class of ball customers at the pro shops. But where the delicate handling has to be done by individual pros is in getting this new business without reducing the 75c market which has been mainly the property of the pros, and in selling the 75c ball in a manner that will meet competitive situations but not ruin the prevailing pro retail price-structure.

Where the peril comes in, of course, is handling the PGA balls under the new

margins, without being stamped by violent cut-price, loss-leader policies of stores. The new PGA ball deal calls for careful, foresighted price coordination between sections of pros. However, it's the deal the individual pros wanted and the PGA officials got for them. Pro leaders of various sections expressed confidence that merchandising judgment among the majority of pros would keep things under control with the new PGA price arrangement.

**Association
Is Prosperous**

Reports of officials revealed the organization in the best condition of its history, both in membership and finances. The Jacobus boy has been prodigal of his time, effort and money in the service of the PGA and in a detailed report summarized his activities. So earnestly active in behalf of the cause has been Jacobus that he has blown his own dough for expenses to the extent that association delegates insisted he put in an expense account. Treasurer Mackie presented a detailed report, copies of which were given to the delegates. As the boys looked over the figures they found opulent proof that the association's business affairs had been receiving expert care from an experienced, canny citizen. Mackie is the guy who has the unpleasant job of negating some of the sweet dreams that are liable to get the association committed in over its scalp financially and in that position is bound to have moments when he would not be nominated as America's sweetheart. However those intermittent ordeals have not rested heavily on him during the entire history of the PGA of America nor has he suffered any other injuries as he has chased nickels for the PGA everywhere except under Sir Malcolm Campbell's speeding Bluebird.

In the report to Secretary Treacy and other remarks of his during the convention

PGA OF AMERICA ELECTS

George Jacobus, Pres.
 R. W. Treacy, Secy.
 Jack Mackie, Treas.
 Tom Boyd, Eastern V.P.
 James Anderson, Midwest V.P.
 George Norrie, Southern V.P.
 Jack Martin, Pacific, V.P.
 Willie McGuire, V.P. at large.
 Charles Hall, Honorary Pres.

reference was made to the sectional boundary problems of the PGA and to conflicts within its ranks which required certain constitutional procedure and deft stepping to protect the interest of association members while, at the same time, keeping the association immune from charges of high-handedness or summary court martials.

Elmer Biggs, reporting for the publicity committee, advocated closer relations between sections and newspapermen, suggesting that sports writers be made welcome and "inside" guests at PGA meetings and all playing events so the writers would get the real picture of the pros' aspirations, work and problems. He detailed some highly successful work of various sections in golf promotion especially at schools and outside among juniors.

'35 Prize Money Close to Boom Years

Bob Harlow's report as tournament bureau manager declared that with the Ryder cup, the Seagram's gold cup, Lakes Australian trophy and victories over the touring Japanese, the world-wide supremacy of American PGA members could not be questioned. He brought out that tournament prize money in 1935 hit \$134,000, a figure that compared very favorably with prize money during the boom years and showed only a slight slump compared with the drop in pro and other outlet sales of golf goods.

One hero came to light during the reading of the reports. This was the solitary individual to whom the PGA had loaned money under its unemployment relief program and who had made a repayment installment on the loan.

In reporting on the work of the manufacturers' relations committee, Chairman Mackie advised that the new PGA 75c ball prices were accompanied by an 80c discount, split evenly between the association and the members selling the balls. No

vulcanized ball is to be sold for less than 50c retail. On the 50c ball the group discount is to be 15c a dozen to the member and 10c to the association. A 100,000 doz. limit for the year was put on the 75c ball discount.

Ball prices to corporations were brought into line so pros now have a good chance to meet this business on price. Mackie emphasized that the leading ball makers had the same serious problem of making money that the pros have and that the present deal to work out soundly had to prove profitable and protecting for both manufacturers and pros while giving the public full measure of value. He counseled continuous and conscientious attention to pro credit so that the pro field would have thorough justification for its ball deal.

Can't See Paid Publicity

The ball discount calls for use of the discounts for advertising and promotion of the game. Pro work in free group lessons for women and children especially has warranted such a promotion award. In some sections the PGA has been doing newspaper advertising. The Michigan section reported on successful use of newspaper space; a delicate problem for a pro association because of the feeling that all local papers should be used because of each paper's treatment of golf as news matter. Due to this phase of the paid newspaper advertising subject the association side-tracked press agent's proposals involving payment for free publicity services of money that, if available, the pros figured should be spent for paid advertising.

The Michigan section also submitted ideas on a rigid investigation and supervision of credit standing and other membership requirements.

With enthusiastic unanimous approval the association adopted the idea of a PGA annual seniors' championship, proposed by Willie Kidd. PGA members 50 years of age or older and having been 20 or more years at work as pros will be eligible for the championship.

This championship should be good for a fine publicity play and chamber of commerce bids that will care—at least to a large extent—for the expenses of the event. Both the older and younger professionals agreed that golf needed to make more of a bid for the play of people who had reached the time of life where they

required the interest of exercise and recreation provided by golf. Numerous tales were told by pros who had developed fine players among men and women who had taken up the game as late as the sixties. Not the least factor in this matter of golf development among the elders was that of many of the older folk who do not now play golf being well supplied with money and time.

Only change in the officials of the association was one made with the earnest approval of the retiring official; the election of George Norrie as vice-president for the southern district in place of Dan Goss who has served long and well.

A touch of fireworks was introduced by discussion of a job-jumping case involving a member and a non-member of the association, non-member being named as the victim. A committee was appointed to investigate and take action, if warranted. The incident brought up a lively reminder of the association's code of ethics each member is expected to observe.

Hold Present Tourney Plan Best

It was suggested that the PGA championship be held in four geographical sections with finalists meeting for the national title but the present method was retained. It was pronounced the best method yet devised for having a national championship in which all PGA sections are represented. The 1936 championship at Pinehurst will qualify the field in two days. Short days in the autumn forced the adoption of this method at Oklahoma City. Only criticism of the PGA championship by the name players was that it is held too late in the year to enable the winner to cash in on his title.

Conflict between California and Florida dates on the winter circuit was brought up by Dewey Longworth. He reviewed the history of California tournaments, noting that the pros started California in the big money—big publicity tournament field. He declared that California wanted to have no wrangle with Florida, the PGA or anyone else—that his home land was strictly for peace and sunshine on earth. Longworth expressed the belief that tournament underwriting by the PGA in California could be satisfactorily discontinued. He made a request for a California schedule from Dec. 19, 1936 to Feb. 1, 1937.

Longworth made a businesslike presentation of the California situation not only on tournament matters but on other sec-

tional PGA affairs. His poise, reasoning and general manner of speaking his piece before the conclave provided a convention incident that PGA veterans considered significant and reassuring. Comparative newcomers to national PGA deliberations, such as Longworth, Myers, McSpaden, Sprogell, Tom Walsh, Ray Hall, Irwin and others did their stuff competently.

Gene Talks on Circuit Problems

Gene Sarazen spoke of tournament players' expenses beginning to rub the players out. He advocated fewer tournaments with larger prize money and suggested as a method of achieving this end that the players pay entry fees equal to the amount of the tournament's guaranteed prize money. Under this arrangement the tournament sponsors would have 100% of the gate but no interest in the entry fees which would be added to the prize money. Prize money would be split so those as low as fiftieth would get back their entry fees. His method, he explained, would curtail the amateur practice of paying entry fees lower than green fees for the duration of the tournament and practice rounds, increasing the field to an unwieldy size and going out for playing lessons while the pros are trying to make tournament expenses.

It was announced that Hillerich and Bradsby in 1936 would again sponsor a \$5,000 Louisville Open providing dates were available. Neil McIntyre reported that Indianapolis business men were planning a \$10,000 cash tournament for 1936 with \$5,000 first prize. Neil assured the boys that this tournament is being promoted by businessmen with currency that the groceryman will take.

John Manion, St. Louis veteran, came up with a hot idea in proposing to the PGA that it employ traveling business counselors to train members in sales methods and policies, along the lines that Jim Gallagher worked for the PGA with his clubmaking clinic. The idea was welcomed by the delegates and is to be taken up for action by the executive committee.

How sectional pro-manufacturer relations have been worked out with mutual satisfaction was detailed by Dewey Longworth who told of the sessions between pros, manufacturers and legitimate sporting goods dealers in northern California. Dewey said at some small courses there were as many as five men claiming to be pros, all of whom were getting pro prices

on balls. This situation was cleared up as was the practice of consigning merchandise to pros. Progress was reported on the bill in the California legislature requiring examination by a state board before a pro license could be secured.

The PGA ball deal helped California pros inasmuch as it was the only ball from which many of the pros could make a profit; other ball sales being handled by the clubs, so Longworth commented.

Grange Alves of the Ohio section stirred the convention with a tribute to Bertie Way, to whom, in grateful appreciation of 32 years of his fine service to golf, its amateurs, pros and clubs, the PGA stood in a vote of thanks. Two other pro veterans, Willie Hoare and Jack Shea, at present under the weather, received honorary memberships as evidences of hearty esteem. Alves told of the letter he and the section's secretary, Capt. Clarke, sent out asking for instructions of the section's plans. Within 30 days after the letter was mailed, the section's membership increased 30%. Capt. Clarke batted up with details of the successful operation of the section, one detail of which was a gate prize which helped to sell enough tickets in advance to get the tournament off the nut. Clarke suggested that a feature of the national meeting be a session of state secretaries at which local programs and details of operation could be coordinated on a national basis and the heavy detail work of the secretaries be eased with ideas developed by various secretaries.

Tillinghast Plenty Busy

A. W. Tillinghast, consulting architect employed for the service of PGA pros' clubs, presented convincing evidence of the eager reception his valuable work had received. Tilly's services are spoken for—with only a few intervals—for almost a year ahead. He made it plain that instead of conflicting with established architects and constructors, his PGA work was for the purpose of cooperating with these men and the clubs. Bill Robertson, Wisconsin delegate, cited the Tillinghast work as showing transition in PGA affairs from the earlier mainly social functions to the present business policies.

Approval was given Ed Dudley's resolution for three nominations to be offered for each office of the association. Among many other ideas submitted by the delegates for action by the executive commit-

tee were: preparation of standard contract forms for pros; cooperation with district amateur organizations and clubs for collection of pro accounts from slow-pay members; solicitation of PGA member jobs at municipal courses; copies of all contracts made by PGA headquarters to be sent to sectional presidents; refusal to allow PGA name to be used on golf schools; extension of contract between sectional president and PGA national vice-presidents and members; and development of golf among university students.

USGA Releases Its OK of Vulcanized Ball

FOR the first time, the USGA lined itself up with a ball merchandising proposition when the USGA commended the vulcanized ball move by manufacturers in a press release late last fall.

Prescott Bush, USGA prexy, and Dr. Wm. C. Greer, inventor of the vulcanized cover, collaborated on a story that emphasized the angle of lower golf cost and the resulting increased activity in the game.

Dr. Greer stated that the cover vulcanization is a chemical mixing with rubber or balata, certain portions of sulphur, that brings about a toughening of the material, resulting in greater elasticity. Consequently, the material so treated is given a flexibility that makes possible the absorption of a blow by it without permanent distortion. A simple illustration of this is that a golf ball will dent less than a ball of steel or rock hit with the same type of blow. According to Dr. Greer, there are several methods used in accomplishing vulcanization. This is fortunate as it will allow manufacturers a choice of several ways in which to accomplish the same result.

It was interesting to note the caution displayed by Dr. Greer in making no statement that would destroy competition among manufacturers. He was careful to point out that the vulcanized cover stock only gave greater durability to the ball, that the performance quality of the ball still depended upon its inner construction and was still a problem for individual manufacturers.

Said Bush: "The USGA looks upon this move by the golf ball manufacturers as one of decided benefit to the game and views with no small amount of appreciation Dr. Greer's work that has made this move possible."