

HARLOW OUT

Conflict and Mystery Confuse Firing of PGA Tournament Bureau Head

WHY was Bob Harlow, for many years the lone and always the prime promoter of professional golfers' tournament interests, fired as Tournament Bureau manager of the PGA?

George Jacobus, president of the PGA in December announced officially Harlow was receiving the bum's rush from his position, although he had been repeatedly lauded during the annual convention of the PGA a few weeks prior to the notification he was through. Harlow's record in keeping the tournament money up during the years of acute depression was regarded as a miraculous achievement in sports promotion. When the news was tossed in that Harlow was tossed out, a gale of queries swept golf.

Jacobus and Harlow tangled promptly, with Jacobus taking the position "a good professional may be let out and given absolutely no reason at all." Harlow maintains that regardless of this being a bad principle for the PGA to endorse, his record of performance for the PGA and agreement to re-engage him did not warrant his abrupt and mysterious discharge.

Jacobus Says He Can't Dodge Abuse

Jacobus says he is in the affair as the fall guy because he is president of the PGA—that he is "not at liberty to quote the opinions or feelings of the officers or sections" and as far as the Executive committee (of the PGA) is concerned this is a closed issue."

Jacobus and Harlow clash bluntly on one point. Harlow states that the Tournament committee headed by Ed Dudley offered him a new contract permitting him to carry on a newspaper syndicate of his golf notes but at a reduced salary from the PGA. After that offer was made on the independent volition of the Tournament committee, says Harlow, Jacobus hurriedly got into a session with the committee, whereupon, as a result of the second session the PGA executive committee was advised that the Tournament committee did not recommend renewal of Har-

low's contract because of his newspaper syndicate work and because of vague charges. Jacobus states that the Executive committee never received recommendation from the Tournament committee for Harlow's re-engagement.

Harlow charges that the calculated nature of the letter sent to the PGA Executive committee was such that no course other than that of canning him was open.

Harlow Brings Up Sportsmanship Issue

Probably around this point the entire Jacobus-Harlow controversy will revolve if it is brought to a show-down. Jacobus says the issue is settled; Harlow is canned, and that's that. Harlow maintains that beyond his personal connection, the standing of the PGA as an organization of fair-minded sportsmen is involved. He says he is determined to carry his fight for vindication to a finish in the conviction that the PGA can have no technicalities denying a man who has served golf well, a fair and full hearing.

When the newspaper stories broke and the sports columnists began wondering why Harlow was discharged, members of the PGA Executive committee also began to wonder what the whole story was.

The alleged conflict of newspaper work obviously wasn't the reason for Harlow's discharge. Hal Sharkey and Francis Powers, former managers of the Tournament bureau, both were working newspapermen and handled the Tournament bureau on the side. A "malicious gossip" rap of course was not detailed.

After the "malicious gossip" and "outside interests" charges were presented against Harlow another slug was tossed at the tournament bureau manager. The rap set forth was that John Jackson, president of the USGA, had officially foamed at the mouth and protested against

Harlow having mentioned that pros want more prize money out of the National Open inasmuch as the gate at Baltusrol showed signs of returning opulence.

The good taste as well as the judgment involved in dragging the USGA into what is strictly a back-stairs brawl so far as the USGA concerned, are wide open to question. Jackson, a judicial and genial gentleman sportsman, is not the type to ask that any PGA man be discharged because of the suggestion of some tournament pros about increasing the Open prize money. That cry is persistent and Harlow as an employee of the pros, maintains he was in duty bound to report the noise.

Why Drag USGA In?

It is inconceivable that the USGA should deal itself a hand in the PGA family brawl and to those acquainted with the dignity and excellent judgment of the USGA official family it appears that Jackson's official interest in the Harlow-Jacobus argument would be, at most, a casual and formal comment.

Twenty of the leading sponsors of Open golf tournaments and amateur association officials wired Harlow hearty endorsement of his work and more than 70 of the foremost tournament players including all the 1935 Ryder cup team signed a petition to the PGA to re-instate Harlow in his position. Among the signers of the petition were Paul Runyan, Horton Smith, John Revolta, Bobby Cruickshank, Billy Burke, Mortie Dutra, Willie Macfarlane, Neil Christian, Jimmy Hines, Harry Cooper, Tony Manero, Joe Turnesa. Harlow takes the position that the PGA cannot disregard such a petition signed by members close to the situation. The St. Petersburg (Fla.) Chamber of Commerce announced a \$3,000 open match play best ball tournament, Feb. 26, 27, 28 as an endorsement of Harlow.

Newspaper comment on the discharge of Harlow gives the PGA more publicity than it has had on any of its affairs other than a national tournament, and has stirred up the mystery of firing Harlow until PGA politics for the first time become a matter outside the family circle. Sport writers, long acquainted with Harlow's activities in playing-pro promotion, are sharply critical of the method and the action especially since many of them know that Harlow turned down an attractive offer to head the promotion of a new sports plant in Chicago, understanding that he was to be re-engaged by the PGA. James Kearns,

Chicago Daily News expert, wrote, "No one has, to date, explained any reason for such a bite at the hand that has fed more than one golf pro. . . . The decision on the hiring and firing of Harlow is supposed to rest with the PGA Tournament committee of which Ed Dudley is chairman. But neither Dudley nor the committee has yet offered any public comment." Pete Norton, sports columnist of the Tampa Tribune, who should be in a location to get the inside from both Jacobus and Harlow, writes in his column he "frankly admits ignorance of the reasons for the summary dismissal of Bob Harlow, veteran manager of the Tournament Bureau of the PGA."

Fred Corcoran, hired as Harlow's assistant prior to Harlow's dismissal, now is Tournament Bureau Manager. Harlow never had an assistant before Corcoran was employed, nor did any of the other Tournament bureau managers, so the "I told you so" boys are pointing to the engagement of the innocent Corcoran in November as a planned preliminary to greasing the skids for Harlow.

What is especially mystifying from the strictly business angle is that Harlow should be fired with the Ryder Cup team trip to England coming up this year. Harlow has been business manager for every Ryder Cup team the PGA has sent abroad and has handled the booking for the visiting Ryder Cup teams here. Abroad he has arranged for thousands of dollars of extra income for the American PGA members in exhibitions, store appearances, testimonials and newspaper articles, and this is not money that can be picked up for the boys by any inexperienced hand.

Harlow is carrying his side of the story to the Pacific Coast pros and Jacobus is standing pat in Florida. Jacobus says that Harlow has been canned in due order by executive committee members who "have minds of their own and act as they see fit for the good of the PGA and its members:" and who "are not being prompted or dominated by me." "Nothing further will be done," declares Jacobus.

With Jacobus asserting that there is definite finality in discharging Harlow and Harlow insisting that he and others having deep and long-standing interests in the PGA be advised concerning the whys and the wherefores of his discharge and be given a sporting chance to present his case to the Executive Committee of the PGA, you can make your own guess as to how far the Harlow case will get toward judgment.