

TELLS GOLF'S FUTURE IN SCHOOLS

By HERB GRAFFIS

HIGH school golf instruction provides an ideal answer to the problems of character-building and physical development with which the modern high schools' athletic directors have to contend, says Forrester W. (Pop) Pierce, veteran authority in New York state inter-scholastic athletics. Pierce has enlisted expert pro services for years in getting his own school golf teams to keep the Long Island high school competitive situation well under control.

Helen Hicks was one of the youngsters who first broke into golf prominence as a member of a high school golf team hailing from Pop's bailiwick. The amateur boy stars that first took a keen interest in competitive golf as a result of Pop's push, are legion. Many of them now are members of first grade private clubs.

He Pioneered High School Instruction

Pioneering high school golf in his section was a job that Pierce found tougher than the promotion of any other division of school athletics. He attributes the success of his teams and the great growth of golf interest to the whole-hearted cooperation of certain Long Island professionals. Other high school sports have had their coaching developed by athletic directors and faculty members until the general standard of high school football, basketball, baseball and track coaching now is higher than was the collegiate standard fifteen years ago.

But golf had to depend for its introduction into high schools on the vision and energy of professionals who were enlisted by school physical educators.

Jack Mackie, who has been Pierce's golf confidant and chief counselor for years, introduced us to this high school golf enthusiast and authority.

For three hours we listened to Pop pop-off about the function, operation and possibilities for golf in high schools, and the guy never repeated himself. Any pro who has the slightest doubt about golf being due for a tremendous future via the high school promotion route ought to listen to Pierce, who is a fellow who knows what he's talking about. He also knows the pro

side of the situation because of his frequent and long acquaintance with a number of the soundest professionals on Long Island.

Pop, when he was an active competitor in athletics and in the earlier stages of his coaching career, was known as Pep. His husky family roster accounts for the change in the nick-name. Pop knows kids, he knows physical education and he knows the golf problem in high schools. He is positively of the conviction that golf in high schools, if properly attended to by professionals, will mean an extension of revenue that pros now would consider only a beautiful dream.

"But," Pierce reminds, "it's something that the pros will have to plan and work out instead of leaving the development entirely to the school authorities. If the pros miss this and the schools take the initiative in hiring pros, it shouldn't be a surprise to professional golfers when the pro group wakes up and finds that schools have established the habit of getting merely a reasonably good pro instructor for as little money as possible. The pros have to step into the present situation and establish the principle of employing recognized pro tutors at fitting salaries, for this sport.

Golf Teaching Is Different

"Golf instruction differs from the educational work in most other sports. In golf the instruction has to be general because every kid who is not seriously handicapped physically can, and should, have golf tuition. In other sports the candidates quickly make evident natural and somewhat rare physical qualifications. Therefore the coach begins with some promising material. After a good many years of high school athletic coaching I know what a coaching problem the golf pro has with his adult and junior pupils.

ASK OLD CLUBS FOR KIDS

In May, pros will receive a poster for shop display inviting members to contribute their old clubs for use by youngsters.

Clubs turned in will be reconditioned by the pros and given free to school kids who are in golf classes, or to caddies who do not have golf clubs.

This detail of the PROMotion plan has been suggested and approved by pro authorities who see in the campaign a definite impetus to more golf by youngsters, and pulling out of the market old clubs that are getting to be used too much as bargaining levers for trade-in allowances.

The old clubs in most cases are so obsolete and well-used that they have no actual trade-in value. However, the trade-in allowance evil in some sectors has been growing to the extent that pros recognize it must be retarded or net profit will slump from club sales.

"Any pro who is afraid to take part in high school golf promotion because he fears the high school athletic directors may eventually cut into his field, or that new pros may be developed from the ranks of high school students, implies that his profession is easy to master. Reluctance to take part in high school golf development, on that basis, doesn't identify such a professional as one who can do the kids much good, if he feels that his kind of golf tuition is something that could be learned by high school coaches or faculty members, quickly and competently, as an addition to the other duties of the school man or woman.

"Such an attitude does not show the intellectual calibre necessary to make a success of golf instruction in schools.

"I have watched the pros who have trained high school kids really take these youngsters, and through the grace of golf solve problems in behavior and attitude that have baffled many educators and parents.

For Show-Offs Golf Is Great

"Take the youngster who is a show-off at wild driving or drinking, for instance. In most cases this youngster is physically deficient. His impertinences and exhibitionism are reflexes of an inferiority complex. He never gets the tingle of applause or even of wholesome and limited notoriety that comes to the high school athlete. He doesn't compete because he is afraid of invidious comparisons.

"You can't get that kid into football,

baseball, basketball, swimming, boxing, wrestling, track or field sports, but you can get him into golf and because of golf's handicap system and its requirement of disciplined, coordinated exercise of muscle rather than a demand for weight, strength and speed, that kid gets a chance to shine and win something, even if it's a match in a tenth flight team match.

"Physical education authorities all over the country have seen hundreds of thousands of cases of youngsters such as the typical instance I have described. Men and women in our field probably have a keener appreciation of what golf can do for the younger generation than do the pros, although in my own experience I have been extremely fortunate in having been associated with a pro group having foresight and a clear conception of golf's physical and mental education values.

"To the professional golfers who have taken an interest in putting golf into high schools, the thanks of leaders in physical education, and, in fact in every phase of junior education is due.

"Eventually, if the pro group as a whole arises to the opportunities in this field, we will see an expansion of golf never before considered possible in the United States, and a consequent increase of qualified professional employment opportunities and earnings. There is a very logical possibility of pro golfer earnings and employment security, far ahead of that now seen in college football, but it is the professionals' job to see that school authorities themselves are educated to the job that golf can do for the youngsters and the nation.

Sarazen to Visit Schools—Gene Sarazen this year is continuing golf lectures and demonstrations at prep schools and universities. The Roving Roman began this work in earnest about four years ago and now is in keen demand at institutions of the higher learning. He opens at the Taft school, May 7, and will be at Colgate May 7, Swarthmore May 11 and Princeton May 12, in getting his school schedule under way.

Metro. GA Cans Stymie—With the sanction of the USGA, the Metropolitan Golf Assn. this season will not play stymies in its events. At the end of the year a report on the effect of the temporary ruling will be sent the USGA to assist the latter body in its current investigation regarding the stymie.