

LESSONS BY SEASON CLICK

By LOUIS FRANK ROSENBERG
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ANY DAY IN AUGUST: "Sorry, but the only time open in Mr. Kinney's appointment book is for three o'clock tomorrow. Would you like to have it reserved for you?" No matter what part of the day one enters the pro-shop at Ledgemont CC, you will hear this same old song over the phone or to one of the members in person, the only exception being a difference in time that might be open. All this because Del Kinney, our pro, had a new idea regarding golf instruction.

It was back in April on one of those raw drizzily days when the veterans insisted on going out to limber up for the season instead of a few hours of practice, telling each other how they were going to break eighties with ease this year. The timid boys were hanging around the locker-room with no ambition to start. Del cornered yours truly and asked me to hear his story. Naturally, after serving on every committee known around a golf club

for many years and being the recipient of everyone's woes, I was ready to listen to anybody who had a thought that would be beneficial to all concerned.

In plain words Del's idea and intent was to create greater interest for the beginners and poorer players and a better game for the old timers by selling them their golf instruction for the season under a contract instead of the old method of individual lessons at so much per hour every now and then.

The plan to be offered to a member was that he or she would be entitled to a lesson at any time simply by making an appointment and it was to make no difference how many hours the pupil wished to consume during the year. In addition to instruction on the practice field Del would take them out on the course occasionally, plus taking about 50 feet of movie film showing one how they were progressing as they went along. All this for the price of \$20.

I was very skeptical about this radical plan of Del's but not wishing to discourage him in his efforts I suggested that he give it a trial and then see me four months later for a review of the situation. In less than a week his contract form was ready together with an attractive sign hung in his shop reading as follows:

*Take as Many Lessons as You
Wish During the Season.*

7 Reasons Why.

Golf Instruction by Contract.

1.—Helps the individual to co-operate with the pro. 2.—Promotion of greater improvement in the game; more interest in golf; greater activity in the club. 3.—Better understanding between the pupil and pro; makes the pro an advisor instead of a salesman. 4.—Golfer sees himself or herself in the movies. 5.—Visualizes his motions; helps to concentrate on the swing. 6.—Novel and pleasing to the beginner; corrects the veterans when they go bad; personal satisfaction. 7.—Busy

Too seldom do we get stories from club presidents in which pro ideas are passed on. But here's one from Louis Rosenberg, for the past 10 years Ledgemont's president, that shows the actual working out of an idea that pros have discussed and, in a few cases, applied during the past several years.

Rosenberg is a veteran, successful and valuable club president who knows all the angles from the club viewpoint. He's a strong friend of the pros, too, and a sage business counselor. Besides the performance of Del Kinney's idea at Ledgemont, Rosenberg sees a broad general benefit of the plan to pros.

He envisions an intimacy of contact and a basis of sales counsel that would put the pro in an ideal position to cope with competitive merchandizing. As a long-time golfer Rosenberg can point out to pros that the passing of the hickory-shaft repair business and the ease of cleaning the rustless steel iron club heads has brought a drastic change in conditions governing pro income. Rosenberg further sees in the idea an influence to encourage the selection and retention of thoroughly qualified pros for jobs.

The idea as it worked out for Ledgemont and Del Kinney is something for club officials and pros to think about in making 1938 plans.

pro creates more business; competition brings additional lessons.

It was hardly necessary to wait 4 months to get Del's report, as the record kept by our caddie-master was enough. It showed over 100% increase in playing, particularly by the ladies and so-called dubs who had in the past taken up the game as a matter of obtaining exercise instead of trying to cut down their score. Sales in the shop increased and it was not exceptional to witness sales of complete sets of new clubs to many of his pupils.

Regardless of the fact that Del's idea had taken the members by storm, let's look at the club's end of the situation. We find the dining room doing a big job and as for the membership committee, they just walk around with their heads in the air due to the increased membership, all because John told Jim how Kinney had improved his game at very little cost.

It would be unfair to omit the fact that Del received plenty of criticism from many of his fellow pros, for here he was in a small state where news travels fast and the boys felt that his plan was harmful to the profession because of the low price he had set. But Del held his own by showing his cronies figures and facts. The only difference being that he had increased his income by working a little harder daily instead of hanging around his shop waiting for a member to ask for a lesson now and then.

In final analysis, his figures are as follows: 105 days, deducting 15 Mondays off, 7 rainy days and 5 abnormal days that were so hot he could not teach, left a net of 78 teaching days. His records show 741 lessons in addition to showing movies to all of his pupils. I cannot refrain from expressing a vote of thanks to Del Kinney, not only for what he has done for himself, but for the new golf interest he has brought to the members of our club.

Illinois PGA Elects Biggs—Hears Details of Waldron's Club Sale Plan

ILLINOIS Section PGA elected Elmer Biggs, Peoria CC, pres., and Harry Kinnell, sec., at its recent annual meeting. Biggs and Kinnell also will serve as national PGA convention delegates.

Lew Waldron, Mohawk CC pro, presented to the Section a plan for pro control of cut-price sales of discontinued "pro lines" of clubs. Waldron bases his plan on the statement by pros in numerous

sections that the sorest spot in pro buying and selling activities is sale of "discontinued" models of high grade clubs through stores at the start of the season. The plan involves a co-ordination of PGA and manufacturers in determining amount and character of "discontinued" pro-grade clubs available, purchase of such clubs at sharply reduced prices through PGA financing, and a PGA-manufacturer tie-up in the quick disposal of such stocks.

Cost and credit factors, operating methods and the legal angles possibly involved, are being carefully investigated with an idea to submitting the plan to the 1937 national convention of the PGA. Preliminary figures, says Waldron, indicate a larger profit possibility than that of the 1936 PGA ball deal, a protection of pro merchants against sharp cut-price competition, and the establishment of pro-shop reputation as headquarters for legitimate and sound bargains.

THERE are a lot more chances for profitable and lasting publicity for pros as the result of trade tournaments at their clubs than many of the fellows appreciate.

The annual tournament issue of the Union Printers' International Golf Assn. shows how one hard-working smart pro got himself national publicity as a first class man in his business. Says this bulletin of one feature of its annual competition at the Rodgers Forge club (Baltimore district);

"Special mention of the club's pro, John Flattery, is in order. He worked conscientiously from sun-up to sun-down to help make our tournament a huge success. He won the good will of all our members."

The printers' golf association is the third largest trade golf organization in the U. S.

JOHAN INGLIS, for 30 years pro at Fairview CC (NY Met. district), was given an anniversary party by his members Sept. 9. Charles Green, Fairview's president when Johnny was hired, talked of the old days and Robert Ellis, present chief, brought John through the years before the dinner crowd of 500 members and guests. The guests included Pop Turnesa and his 7 sons, and a galaxy of pro talent that got started as assistants to Inglis.

As pro at Fairview and as president of the NY Metropolitan PGA, Inglis has the warm friendship and respect of thousands who always see in the Little Giant a paragon of the pro as a gentleman sportsman.