

PRO SHORT-COURSES NEEDED

By WILLIAM V. HOARE

THOSE who are intensely concerned with the problems of pro golf eventually realize that education is the answer to the majority of our urgent problems. Other businesses, older and larger than ours, have had experiences similar to those that trouble us. They found the adoption of business educational programs tremendously helpful. When we in pro golf sit down calmly to think things over we are bound to come to the conclusion that our failure to collectively tackle the job of education has penalized us heavily.

We might as well frankly admit that many of us, for years, have been hoping for some utopian notion to make our business secure, profitable and simple. Many of us have allowed ourselves to get into the habit of expecting help from the outside instead of relying mainly on our own intelligence and energy.

Friends have told me of the wise remarks made by Austie Claeysens at an Illinois P. G. A. meeting the other night. In discussing the job situation he brought out the point that the best protection for a man in any job was knowing how to handle that job. Even with the frequent changes in club official rosters which expose pros to a bad employment condition, the pro who knows and works every angle of his job is safe. Look at the rather lengthy list of pros who have been at the same jobs for 15 or more years, and you are bound to appreciate that the job problem can be solved. Study those men who have held their pro jobs a long time and you see that they are men who have keen capacity for self-education. They have trained themselves very well.

Self-Education Is Not Easy

Self-education is not an easy task. It requires a certain type of temperament and a patient, diligent application to the job. The greater number of men need teachers because providence has denied them that peculiar blessing of being able to extensively educate themselves. Lack of that knack certainly is nothing to be counted against a man; otherwise there wouldn't be teachers.

Now let us thoughtfully view the educational situation in the golf field. Undoubtedly the greatest advance made by any group of department heads in the golf business is that progress made by the greenkeepers, whether it be by those who are solely greenkeepers or by pro-greenkeepers. Authoritative figures show there have been far fewer job changes among greenkeepers than among pros and club managers. Pro jobs change oftener than any other class of major jobs at golf clubs.

Greens Courses Have Paid

When we look further into this matter and discuss it with club officials we see that the greenkeepers' educational work has been of great benefit in promoting job security. Club officials and members have begun to appreciate that if course maintenance is something that calls for such extensive study at state colleges and monthly meetings and annual conventions, it is work that can not be done by some young man who pushed a mower around in 68 for the course record.

The club managers, in many of the cases of men at the better clubs, have been educated by one of the most thorough business educational systems—the apprentice start and a slow but sound working up through all departments. As is generally known, the continentally-trained managers usually had to pay for their apprentice training. But the payment was worth it. Since immigration laws and other factors curtailed the supply of continentally-trained men in the clubhouse and hotel field, American educational methods have been brought into the picture. At Cornell university there is a hotel and clubhouse four-year course with which the American Hotel Assn. is closely associated. It already has graduated some men who are high in the hotel and club business, and who have earnings



Greenkeepers' organizations had attractive booths at the Massachusetts Recreational conference, as features of the large exhibit of course and park maintenance equipment and supplies. Charts and other display material gave impressive evidence to the big crowd of club and public recreation authorities who attended the conference of the progress and results of greenkeepers' educational work.

that brightly reflect the value of careful education.

We talk about our "professional" standards and compare ourselves with doctors and lawyers. By the collective attention we have given to pro golf education, have we given ourselves justification for this comparison? Being bluntly truthful about it, bricklayers and plumbers with their trade schools and the courses in manual training schools, are well ahead of us in collective recognition of the necessity and value of business and trade education.

Need Schools For Golf Training

We also talk about the influx of untrained amateurs into pro jobs, and rightfully deplore the handicap that inadequately qualified men put on golf clubs and on the game. But, have we done anything to provide formal training or to give evidence to club officials and members that such training is essential to correct handling of a pro job?

You know the answer as well as I do.

There are baseball schools, football and basketball coaches schools, physical educators' courses and bridge teachers' schools, but in pro golf there is absolutely nothing of this sort!

As a pioneer in the P. G. A. I yield to no man in my loyalty and labors for our organization and even during the almost four years I have been compelled to stay close to a sickbed, I have kept myself busy in corresponding and by personal interviews, promoting for the P. G. A. But constructive candor compels me to say

that the P. G. A.—and pros individually—must plead guilty to a serious neglect because a schooling plan for pro golfers has not been put into operation.

Now, instead of being content again with words bewailing the situation, let us get started on something. Obviously, the place to begin is with the beginners. We need to give some serious study right now to the matter of establishing an apprentice system. There are many hundreds of desirable boys who would like to be professionals. Since there is no recognized and established course of training set up, what do many of these boys do? They turn pro right away. A lot of them in their ignorance work for nothing and in the first year of their pro careers get into debt so deep that they never come out. That retards all of pro golf.

Recommend Golf Adopt Apprentice Plans

In connection with the National Youth plans the government has proposed, there have been made some interesting recommendations for apprentice training so that it fits in with the modern social scheme. An adaptation of that plan could be used in pro golf. It would involve some responsibilities on the part of the pros but it would vastly improve the present situation and work out to the profit of pros and their assistants.

This matter should be looked into immediately by the PGA and after a start has been made with the assistants, successfully, the subject of providing busi-

ness educational opportunities for master pros should be handled. Unfortunately, at the start, any master pro educational plan will receive the vigorous support and cooperation of the men who need it least. The smartest men in any business are the men who realize how much there still is for them to learn and who are eager to

continue to improve themselves. The "know it alls" will criticize and retard but eventually a series of pro schools somewhat on the order of the greenkeepers' short courses will come into golf, or pro golf will deeply regret failure to wisely handle its educational obligation that, like charity, begins at home.

BETTER **PAY** FOR PAY-COURSE PROS

By HERB GRAFFIS

IAN MacDONALD, veteran Pacific Coast pro, says he is convinced after 41 years in golf that pay-as-you play golf is going to be a great factor in the future of the game and in the pros' progress. The private clubs, he declares, will always do well in communities large enough to support this type of an organization, but in the small towns when the city puts in courses, the enterprises will have such a broad appeal, under good management, that they will be better than self-supporting.

One condition that has to be overcome before public courses, in numerous places, can do most effective business promotion for themselves and their communities is a re-adjustment in the pro basis of pay. As the situation now exists many pros at public daily-fee courses are going broke, and you need only scan the manufacturers' credit reports to see that statement confirmed. A pro who is worried about going broke is a liability to any golf club—public, semi-public, or private. The privately-owned daily fee courses seem to be in the worst shape in pro employment, notwithstanding the fact that such establishments where pros are making a fair living or better—are making the best of financial showings. Course owners have their troubles, too, with many low-price competition, close in and tax-free. Consequently, every penny looks as big as all the green area on the course and they figure the pro an expense instead of a potential profit. Successful course owners figure that if they can't make a profit out of a pro who is brainy, diligent and encouraged by his own chances for profit, they won't hire the man.

Another side of the case comes from a pro who turned down a fee course job this year because there was only lessons in it. The shop concessions were retained by the

club. It was learned that the shop concessions seldom run as high as \$2,000 a season because, due to lack of smart merchandising at the shop, the players' business was going downtown. What this really amounts to is a net of about \$600 standing between the course owners and the pro. The lessons, at the rate the course's patrons would stand, wouldn't run \$800 a season. So, for \$1,400 a year—all of which the man makes himself without cash outlay on the course owner's part—the course owner gets a man who has the responsibility of getting the major part of the income for a \$100,000 plant. That's only 1.4% for a major item in selling expense, and too low, as any businessman realizes.

The boy who was at this course last year, will require some time to pay off his debts, part of which were the golf playing costs incurred when he paid his caddie fees, ball cost, and when he missed possible lesson income while playing with the owner's friends, at the owner's instructions.

There's a lot of room for education on both sides in such cases. One of the subjects urgently needing treatment in such an educational campaign as Willie Hoare suggests to the PGA in GOLFDOM is that of a pro's effective work in selling the community on the public or daily-fee course with which he is connected, and in the solicitation of group or individual business. Lack of training in these matters is costing golf and pros plenty. There are some outstanding pros who are quali-