

Caddie Problems Are Discussed at Meetings

CADDIE training and supervision received attention at the March meeting of the N. J. Assn. of Golf Course Supts. and at the meeting of the Golf Course Supervisors of the New York City Park Dept., March 13.

Caddie-masters Michael Sesso of Montclair GC and his brother Gerald of Essex County GC brought out in the discussion at New Jersey that the pleasures of excellent course and clubhouse facilities are minimized if caddie service is poor.

John A. Wiesing, chairman of the special caddie committee of the N. Y. Metropolitan GA, was principal speaker at the New Jersey meeting. A number of caddie-masters from leading N. J. courses attended. "Caddie training, conduct, and character-building, should begin with caddie-masters and golfers setting a good example," Wiesing said.

Concerned About Caddies' Future

Wiesing's caddie committee is not primarily concerned with local matters of course privileges, pay, uniforms, annual banquets, and the like, but in a broad sense with caddies as future citizens. Due to unemployment, with older men displacing boys, the kids don't see much encouragement or immediate future ahead for them in caddying.

About 50,000 boys caddie in the New York area. The home environment is not always good, parental interest is lacking, and some boys definitely are not right. These get the better boys into mischief, usually waiting between rounds. Unless all the boys get proper coaching at the golf course, they may come to grief later in life, Wiesing noted.

In April, Wiesing's committee plans to meet with caddie-masters and club officials of the New York district. Discussions and surveys will be made to see what can be done to help caddies. Experts on psychology, social and character guidance from the New York universities will address the meetings. It is hoped that men from the Y.M.C.A., the National Youth Administration and other organizations will cooperate and coach caddies. Quiet games, citizenship and sport talks, and even hand-crafts will be among the things encouraged. It is a large order to fill and considerable

groundwork needs be done, but the prospects of achievement are bright.

Kent Bradley, in talking before the N. Y. Park Dept. golf supervisors, remarked:

"It is not good policy to reprimand a kid in loudmouthed lingo, any more than to do this to a greensman. If either needs correction, it is best to speak in normal conversational tones. About half the greensmen I have employed on various courses in the Northeast section were drawn from the older caddie ranks.

"On caddie day at the Passaic County public course, the kids get the same regard by greensmen as a regular golfer who pays his greens fee to the till. Loud-talking kids are asked to behave like gentlemen, and rarely need be told a second time. Often the kid who will duck divot replacement if he thinks he's not watched, at work, is careful to replace those he takes when playing. Some even check up on their teammates when they play.

"To encourage caddies to pick up course litter, and keep things neat, point out to them that the better the course condition, the more golf will be played. Discarded paper from a distance looks like a golf ball. The easier a ball is located, the faster the round, and thus gives better chance to get another job bag-toting that day. To most caddies, the course superintendent is an "all right guy"—but they sometimes forget this when they mess up his greens, as vengeance to others.

"Let's adopt better terms than caddie-'corral', 'yard' or 'pen'. Don't get the kids feeling used to being herded a la reform school. My preference is to say "caddie section"—or better yet, the caddie department. And as to "caddie control"—there's enough turf disease, insect and even player pest in need of control—so with caddies, let's co-operate."

ALERT pros and club managers are planning to observe Father's Day, June 18, at their clubs this year. On tentative plans for the Sunday afternoon are father-son events, with family dinners featuring the Father's Day theme being scheduled for the evening.

Pro merchandising plans should take the Father's Day idea into consideration, as it will get a strong ballyhoo from newspapers, magazine and radio advertising, and affords a chance for the family to get together and buy the Old Man some new golf equipment.