

# Make Your Lessons FIT the Pupil

By Al. Hollern



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WITH a new season not far ahead at many clubs, it's high time that the pro begin to think about what he can do to make his members happy. We all are conscious of the job we have to do in making the new member feel at home, but sometimes I suspect that we take the old members too much as matters of course.

The better we do with our old members, the more certain we are of getting new members at our clubs. Out of an experience that embraces more than 10,000 lessons, I've noted some things that I'm recording for whatever good other pros and all our members may get from these observations.

Consider a group of 100 pupils that come to the pro for help during the course of a season. Out of this 100 there are at least 65 who have played for a number of years. The other 35 are made up of about 20 younger pupils and 15 that are along in years; usually all beginners. The 65 old timers come for a spring tune-up, or later in the season to correct a sudden outbreak of slicing, hooking, or some other fault that has put their score above what they have been making in that hot four-some that is assembled by telephone. What do these players want most? They want that bad case of theirs corrected with the least time and effort possible.

## Golf Is Faster Today

And that is just exactly what should be done for them. Golf of today is not that leisurely stroll 'round the course with nobody in front or pressing from behind. This game has developed into more hurry and speed to keep up with the increased number playing.

The average player can hardly take time off to practice let alone take a bunch of lessons. He wants to get out and play along with his friends. This does not even hint that he could not improve his game if he did take time, but after he has played all these years he is satisfied to keep his handicap going down a point or two during the whole season.

The pro should remember that he is the doctor of golf and should accordingly comply with this code when instructing. If

you went to a doctor with a bad ulcer, he would recommend specific treatment to correct the evil. He would not try to remodel your entire form even though it did need a good deal of correction. And so it is with golf.

There are always one or two outstanding faults when you go about correcting an individual case. Work on this obvious fault. Show him how to correct it and always give a good explanation of just why it is necessary.

I once had a golfer, and a fairly good one, come to me all upset about his game. Every long shot not only went to the right but also had a slight fade at the end of the shot. It only took a few minutes to correct this ailment. It was only necessary to have the player pivot a trifle more on the back-swing. This brought his hips and swing into the shot with the proper timing instead of letting his hips in too far ahead of the club. The results were more than satisfying to this player. His form, taken as a model, would not meet with 100 per cent approval, but he had played too long to be made over entirely. He wanted the fade corrected into a shot down the middle and was delighted to be back on his own game. Let's not forget that as soon as this type of player is back in form, he plays more, uses the club more, and that is what both the club and the pro need—a maximum of play.

With this easy method of keeping players happy, why should we, the pros, try to entirely remodel every pupil to a set form or standard? There are only a few that are potential champions, and nearly every one of these is a youngster or beginner who is not too far along in years.

The fact of the matter is that each individual has a certain type of form that fits his own case. Can you get a heavy fellow to pivot like a thin youngster? Absolutely not. Let's look at some of the top-notchers.

Farrell was tall and not heavy. He used

a long sweeping swing with a good turn of the hips for a pivot. Tom Vardon, in his later years, was a trifle heavy around the waist. He used a much more upright swing and the turning of his hips was not so obvious. Jim Barnes was tall and thin. He used a much flatter swing with considerable turning of the hips. Jones was stocky and used more of an intermediate swing with a lot of hip power. All these players were outstanding and yet none of them used the same type of swing or pivot.

Do these facts impress on the mind that the swing must fit the player—not vice versa? Make it easy for the old timers to get back on their game. Develop them into a fair player the easy way by using what they, as an individual, have to offer. You will then have them boasting that golf is not too tough to learn even if their paunch does say 46.

Keep the old timers happy and playing. They are the backbone of any club.

### Chicago Handicap Method Being Tried in Florida

THE Chicago District Golf Association's official handicap system which is combined with a method of rating member courses of the association, is being extended to Florida. David J. Molloy, one of the veterans in Chicago district golf officialdom and an executive at Knollwood (Chicago district) and Indian Creek, Miami Beach, is prime mover in the Florida test.

Chicago's system, devised by a committee headed by Thomas G. MacMahon, began on the basis of the 20 lowest scores. Twenty was found to be too many for practical use so the handicap basis was reduced to the ten lowest scores. This did away with the unfair penalty that one super-hot round put on the ordinary golfer in the former CDGA handicapping system. Formerly the 90-shooter who caught a miracle and happened to shoot one round in the middle seventies carried that burden the rest of the season, if he recorded the miracle on his handicap record card.

Inter-club competition of individuals has been put on a fair and completely satisfactory basis in the Chicago district by use of the present system. Adjustments of district handicaps are made on the basis of course ratings established by yardage, course difficulty and experience. The latter factor has been taken out of the guess category so far as possible by extensive research done on intra-club and

other tournament performances. In establishing its basis of course rating McMahon's committee analyzed yardage and par of 30 outstanding golf clubs outside the Chicago district, as well as of Chicago District clubs. The national examination revealed A. D. Lasker's Mill Road Farm course as having the toughest fractional par in the country—76.32. Oakmont was second with 76.28. Canterbury at Cleveland, where the 1940 National Open will be held, is rated at 75.84. Pine Valley is rated at 73.19.

Molloy believes that adoption of the system by Indian Creek will be instrumental in extending it to other golfing sections, inasmuch as many of Indian Creek's members are active officials of clubs in the northeastern and central states.

### Peace Descends; "Down Under" Squabble Settled

AUSTRALIAN golf has had an unpleasant wrangle between the Victorian Golf Association (the amateur governing body) and the Victorian Section of the PGA. After eight months harmony has been restored and with harmony, the VGA financial support of the Victorian PGA championship.

The mess was started when the PGA disciplined a member for playing at other courses without first receiving permission of PGA member pros at the courses, and for going after a job held by another PGA member. The Victorian Golf Association contended that the disciplined pro had been invited to play by amateur members of the club, and was solicited by club officials to take the job in question.

A threat of a split of the PGA into two organizations developed from the controversy. By a vote of 15 to 10 PGA members agreed to accede to the amateur association's request that the pro organization modify its regulations so the amateurs would have the privilege of running their own clubs.

From this far away, the set-to seemed to have comic opera aspects and American friends of Australian pro and amateur golfers are pleased to learn that the civil war has been called off before casualties have occurred or good friendships wrecked.

KEEP a watch over members who are in the habit of leaving the club in the summer to go for vacations. See that they leave plentifully supplied with golf merchandise out of your shop.