

# Plan to Protect Golf As Postwar Career

Pro and Greenkeeper Shortage Possible in Game's Postwar Boom, Amateurs Advise Pros.

By **HERB GRAFFIS**

**P**ROS and greenkeepers who have taken full-time or part-time war jobs are, in numerous instances doubtful that they'll return to golf jobs if their present employment can be retained after the war. That is not a promising prospect for golf. Many of these war workers are regarded by their colleagues and club officials as among the best workers in the game.

It will surprise club officials and members to learn that pros in factory jobs often regard these jobs as easier than pro work. The hours are shorter, the duties are clearly defined and simple, the temperamental demands of employers less confusing and exacting, and even with the threat of postwar employment slump, the job looks more stable than a pro job which frequently is dependent on changes in club administrations. Those factors and the steady income offset the monotony and confinement of industrial employment, according to some pros who thought they'd find wartime work in essential industry hard to stand.

And as for the greenkeepers in war factory work they almost invariably find their jobs easier than they had on golf courses. They feel great relief at not being at the mercy of conditions which, when adverse, stir public sympathy for the farmer but mean only trouble, mystery and criticism for the greenkeeper.

Now, with the discovery of the comparative ease of supposedly tough industrial jobs and the wartime revelation that competent pro and greenkeeper services have value higher than even the most knowing club officials suspected, golf begins to see possibility of a postwar manpower shortage.

All signs point to a great growth of golf after the war. But there are not many signs pointing to the availability of manpower of the standard now set by first class pros and greenkeepers. In the possible unemployment situation following the return of millions of men from the armed services there'll undoubtedly be many candidates for jobs at golf clubs. But there are two problems going to be present; one is, will the earnings and job stability attract the type of men needed to maintain the standards the present greenkeeping and pro leaders have established? The other problem is that of training the newcomers.

The greenkeeper short courses have established a successful pattern for training. The pros have depended on the apprentice system. That depends on the ability and character of the man who takes assistants for training. Golf has been very lucky in having a conscientious group of old masters who love the game, know the business, and have implanted these qualities in their proteges.

However, there certainly aren't enough of these qualified veterans and not enough need of assistants to these men, to supply the pro training required to satisfactorily fill the postwar pro jobs.

The PGA began to tackle that postwar problem with measures that took form at its 1943 annual meeting. Undoubtedly one of the most important moves the pro organization ever made was the organization of its National Advisory committee. The committee consists mainly of prominent tournament "angels." It effectively put its capacities to work in virtually saving the 1943-44 tournament schedule by underwriting key tournaments. The committee's judgment and confidence has been justified by the public and financial showing of tournaments that probably would have been abandoned had it not been for these Advisory committee amateurs guaranteeing money required to put on the tournaments.

The committee also arranged for the financing of the PGA tournament bureau by manufacturers' contributions, thus solving a problem that had caused long and heated controversy among tourney and non-tourney pros.

On the committee are Lt. Adolph Bremer, St. Paul; Bing Crosby, Hollywood; Maynard Fessenden, Chicago; Russell Gnau, Detroit; Cloyd Haas, Toledo; Bob Hope, Hollywood; Henry Hurst, Philadelphia; John C. Jester, Dallas; John B. Kelly, Philadelphia; Clifford Roberts, New York; Elmer Ward, Boston; and, as chairman, Thomas G. McMahon, Chicago. McMahon is former president of the Chicago District GA. All except Kelly, who is head of the national physical fitness committee, have been bulkwarks of the pros' tournament business. Crosby and Hope, playing in affairs arranged by the PGA, have been by far the strongest attraction in the pros' highly successful bond sales events.

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None of the advisory committee members are officially prominent in USGA affairs, which to some, plainly shows that there is room for expansion of the committee.

Having worked out the major problems of tournament preservation in a critical time the advisory committee has begun to struggle with another problem, long and often cited by GOLFDOM as a major need of pro golf.

In the booklet "Golf's Professional Man," the advisory committee presents a primer for educating club officials in what qualifications a pro should have. In some details the booklet also is valuably informative to pros.

Nobody knows any better than the advisory committee members the high annual turnover rate of club officials, hence the necessity for constantly hammering away at this educational program, directed primarily at club officials. The thoughtful businessman, on reading pro qualifications and duties as set forth in the booklet, will be inclined to think that a man of comparable qualifications employed in the businesses of members of the advisory committee, probably would have a salary guarantee of \$10,000 a year.

But, as the book reminds pros; "the club professional should not permit his pride to fan the flames of any delusion that his efforts are more remunerative than they actually are. "This error has occurred much too often."

The booklet is an excellent one as the initial shot of a campaign that should be a contribution to the solution of golf's probably postwar shortage of qualified manpower. However it merely touches in a brief, incomplete reference, the first and most brutal fact of life in the pro business. That is that the pro is expected to make a 12 month living for himself and family out of a business that is active about six months of a year in a market limited by a club's membership (some of which is rather inactive and part of which buys downtown), that doesn't have a merchandise mark-up near that of other specialty goods, and which has many generally unregarded expenses of overhead and operation.

It has been this writer's observation during years of close association with pros and club officials that club officials and members generally expect to get a \$10,000 man for operating a vital department of a business having from \$500,000 to a \$1,250,000 investment and a \$75,000 to \$140,000 annual income, by paying a guarantee of \$2,000 a year plus whatever the man can make in a very tough merchandising situation.

And the funny thing is that the clubs very often get that amazing bargain! One reason the game has kept solid as a wartime service for a nation that needs physi-

cal and mental conditioning is because it has this type of pros. Love is wonderful.

Do you think that the prevailing facts of finance in a pro career are going to attract highly desirable ambitious and otherwise qualified young men golf will need as pros for postwar expansion of golf? Either the financial inducements have to be made brighter and more solid or other aspects of pro golf as a pleasant career will have to be emphasized to provide the game with manpower it'll need after the war.

Leon Kranz, noted physical education authority of Northwestern university, suggested at the PGA annual meeting that the pros give more of their expert attention to the welfare of caddies. The Kranz angle was that much of the physical disability of youngsters disclosed by selective service examinations might have been discovered and corrected by a proper and nation-wide caddie program. The Western Golf Assn. has pioneered in an extensive caddie welfare promotion campaign as an extension of its Chick Evans university scholarship activities.

The Western campaign hasn't had the response it should have in view of the golf clubs' possibilities for helping the kids. Now that the caddie shortage has made it necessary for golf clubs to pay more attention to the kids it may be that the Western campaign, if revived and persisted in energetically, will catch hold. The PGA's caddie committee, under the able chairmanship of Ernie Shave, is qualified to give the caddie welfare campaign the push that it should have to become a substantial factor in national youth aid.

As Kranz has pointed out, a primary and serious defect in caddie operations at most clubs is the kids lurching on a couple of bottles of a soft drink and a candy bar, where it shouldn't be difficult to supply proper feeding for caddies, at low prices.

How far the pros' closer and studied development of caddies will go in training pros for years to come is anybody's guess. It's also entirely a guess how far the veteran's rehabilitation ideas of the PGA will go in training men to fill pro jobs in an expanded market for pro services. Well-intentioned meetings and discussions won't do much. It's a very tough job the pro and greenkeeper national associations have ahead of them in protecting the game and their own memberships against a rush of incompetent men eager to work for low wages, after the war's over.

Due to the performance and personnel of the National Advisory committee to date, the PGA has hopes of establishing and implementing long range foresighted planning. By the engagement of Thomas W. Crane as executive secretary the pro organization is confident that it now can do considerably more to assist its members who in wartime must plan for the game and for their future.