

What Changes Are Ahead for Pro Golf?

WHAT CHANGES do the pros believe may take place at clubs after the war?

Replies GOLFDOM has received from pros to whom this query was addressed indicate that the pros don't expect drastic changes in the sort of a job to be handled at the larger clubs other than possibly a development in teaching, but that at the moderate-sized clubs there will be a considerable extension of pros' duties, and in the smaller towns many opportunities for pros to make good jobs for themselves.

At the larger and more active clubs it is necessary, as Alex B. McIntyre, pro of the Edison CC, Rexford, N.Y., points out, to devote full time of an experienced man in handling the pro job properly. "If the fellow knows this business and has the interests of his club at heart, there's always more to do than there are working hours in the day and evening," Alex says.

McIntyre, in looking forward to the market for golf playing equipment after the war, believes that the canny and alert pro will more than be able to hold his own despite the sharp competition there is bound to be from stores. "To get this big post-war golf business a pro will have to learn that he has to spend a dollar to make dollars. The pro will have to have a good range of stock at all times, and a complete showing of golfer's equipment including considerable apparel. The pro to get the big business after the war will have to be able to sell the customer what the customer wants and not what the pro himself happens to like. In that way the pro will be able to get better results without applying high-pressure salesmanship," Alex maintains.

He adds: "A set of clubs sold by high pressure salesmanship often backfires on the pro. The member may not play well with the clubs. He blames the pro. But if the member buys a set that looks good to him he will blame himself and take some lessons if he isn't scoring with his new set."

"There is more money to be made in the wisely and energetically conducted pro department than many pros realize," declares Alex in expressing the opinion that pros are liable to chase a will-of-the-wisp in trying to get combination jobs at larger salaries when concentration on their

pro department selling chances would yield them larger incomes and fewer troubles.

During the war and after the war the pro should do his darnedest to do all he can for his members. It will pay him ten-fold, is McIntyre's conviction. Instead of wondering about what conditions will be after the war the pro should always be thinking of how he can do more to make his job important to his members, Alex states.

Bud Carroll, pro at Chattanooga (Tenn.) G&CC is of the opinion that the golf manufacturers will not be able to make enough balls, clubs and bags to supply the market the first year after the war. Bud is convinced that golf interest has been extended among young men in the Army and Navy although many of them have not had opportunities to play. "They'll want plenty of outdoor exercise when they get back. They'd go nutty making a drastic change back to a steady grind of indoor work relieved mainly by indoor recreation," believes the Chattanooga pro.

"The job of handling this great after-the-war demand for golf will be beyond the capacity of unpaid club officials," Bud continues. "It will call for a substantial and able class of pro golf businessmen who will have to handle more than the pro department for the simple reason that their clubs won't be able to get, at the price they can afford to pay, special heads for the three major departments of the average-sized golf club.

"Those clubs that probably will have the greatest influx of golfers after the war will have difficulty in getting pros competent to handle the general management of the club without neglecting the first job of preparing the new play to get full enjoyment from the game," Carroll says.

"It is a big task for the PGA and undoubtedly the most important the association ever has had, to help men get qualified to handle these post-war jobs at the clubs that will expand, or be started from scratch after the fighting men come home. That preparation will require several years. Furthermore a lot of work will have to be done in getting golfers to regard PGA membership as indication of training that qualifies a man to handle

the sort of golf jobs that will be available in rather large numbers after the war.

"The merchandising problem for the pro after the war, I believe," says Carroll, "will be solved to a considerable extent by offering his players something that he can't get downtown. But that offering of stock will have to include a wise price range in order to get the pros' good share of business on a basis of probably cheaper golf than we knew in days before the war, and to prevent building up a general public idea that pro shops always charge more than downtown stores. The latter misconception cost the pros millions in sales and gave the stores an opening for cut-price sales that they balanced by selling other merchandise at long profits to the golfers drawn into the stores."

A conservative, but hopeful view of the post-war situation for pro golf is taken by the veteran Alex G. McKay, Edgewood CC, Charleston, W. Va., who's well known as a pro, greenkeeper and course architect. McKay says:

"At the present time there is a tendency toward employing a general manager at many clubs. This may be due in part to the help shortage. I believe that many pros are fully qualified to serve as general managers. However, a great deal depends on the help that is available. A good chef is an asset to any club and can be of great help to any manager. I do not think that there will be any large increase in salaries, except that the general man-

ager is furnished living quarters and food by the club.

"Post-war will probably attract many pros who are not qualified as such, but I do not think that this will harm the pro business since an experienced pro can give the club much better service than one who is not qualified. The objection to inexperienced newcomers is that they generally accept positions at cut rate salaries and by the time deficiencies are discovered the job is established as a cheap one.

"Post-war expansion will undoubtedly bring in many new players. I do not think that there will be any big rush of players, but rather a general increase over a period of two or three years. It will take that time for servicemen to establish themselves in business and the community. My experience in merchandising of clubs is that the players who play a fair game buy their supplies from the pros. Old players can help pros a great deal by suggesting to the newcomers that it pays in the end to get clubs and other supplies at the pro shop. Any pro whose members spread this feeling among new members will have no worries about holding his own with the stores."

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Otto G. Hackbarth, veteran of the Cincinnati CC, believes that the postwar period won't involve much of a change for the pros at the leading established clubs. The competent solid men will ad-

SAFETY FIRST BY THE RIVER BANK



To keep from losing golf balls in the Chicago river, at the Tam O'Shanter CC, these maidens have the ball on a fish-line and reel. The reel's held by Ruth Geduldig. Nancy Dreesen holds the line and Dorothy May, daughter of George S. May, club president, prepares to whack the ball in confidence.

just themselves to changing conditions as they have previously, and those who don't want to think and work will be out of luck, just as they always have been.

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Gene Root, pro at the Ross Rogers munny course, Amarillo, Texas, reckons that there's going to be a great development in municipal golf after the war and that wartime public golf already is pointing out the possibilities. Root believes that the surge of servicemen and war worker golfers to public courses and the livelier local tournament promotion of munny courses during wartime has so firmly established the well-run public courses on the sports pages that they're now really set to go ahead in expansion after the war far beyond what might be normal development.

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In the matter of wartime promotion of public golf, Ed Livingston, pro at Elmwood Park GC, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota, also expresses Root's opinion. Ed always has scheduled a fine tournament program for his club, but during the war years the schedule has been better than ever before and with greater participation of local merchants in giving prizes. War bonds, shotgun shells, bottles of soft and hard drinks, and many other prizes are put up for the Sioux Falls munny course players. Ed says that there are many entries from the personnel of the Sioux Falls Army air field in the Elmwood Park tournaments.

Root refers to the wartime discontinuance of golf goods manufacturing as providing an opportunity for a fresh start in golf goods distribution that should eliminate costly mistakes of the past. He

points out that many pros now in service will expect to come back to their jobs and not find themselves frozen out of the profits of the expected postwar boom. However, there'll have to be a lot of planning done to prevent that, Gene points out.

He says that in the past there have been mistakes by manufacturers and pros. The greatest mistake made by the pro was a careless attitude toward credit rating, is Root's belief. Then there is the mistake of ordering too much, then firing it back to the manufacturer at the end of the season instead of paying for it. That merchandise figures in the next season's cut-price sales by the stores, against which the pros complain bitterly.

Gene says that wartime has weeded out of pro golf most of the fellows of poor credit and who think the pro job consists of playing golf, drinking and gambling. The war has made golf a very serious business. Consequently the war has cleaned house in pro golf and made the pros a more desirable retail outlet for manufacturers. Root admits that there are many golf clubs without pros, hence a necessity for the manufacturers to seek store outlets for selling to these people who play at courses where there are no pros.

Root maintains that pros haven't had protection and reward due them for establishing brand name popularity. He says something will have to be worked out to give the pro a better deal than he has received in return for making the market. He is firm in the opinion that one of the deals that will have to be changed is that of using stars' names on store clubs which, he says is essentially a dishonest practice, inasmuch as the stars seldom use the clubs that are sold as their

Clubhouse of Patty Jewett Golf Club. Colorado Springs munny course, celebrates its 25th year this month.



models and the buyer is conned into believing that he gets a duplicate of some hot-shot's set. That is a situation requiring positive action by the PGA, Root declares.

Gene, as chairman of the manufacturers' relations committee of the Texas PGA section, maintains that the basic strength of the pro position is that the pro has the most intimate authoritative status with the player. He adds that most golfers quit playing when they become disgusted with their scores, and if the pro isn't around to treat these ailing golfers the market for golf goods diminishes.

He urges that the pros and manufacturers devote considerable time now planning for the postwar set-up and that the two factors immediately get together in inaugurating an educational program that

will qualify the men now in pro golf to exercise the most informed and firmest control on postwar golf business development for the good of player, club and the commercial interests involved.

Gene O'Brien, pro at the Wilshire many course at Hutchinson, Kan., also is of Root's opinion that the expansion of golf after the war will have to find the pros prepared by a joint educational program conducted by the PGA and manufacturers. O'Brien believes that there are too many pros who have operated in the red because of lack of sufficient training rather than because of lack of earning possibilities that could be nursed along. He hopes that one of the big points in pro golf development after the war will be the formation of a pro pool from which clubs could select men who have been trained to conduct a business for a club.

Lack of Pupil Control is Golf Teachers' Handicap

★ Voters in a recent sports poll conducted by *Esquire* magazine registered a substantial majority opinion that golf instruction lagged behind other sports teaching in effectiveness. There was considerable sports column reference to this vote in newspapers and *GOLFDOM* referred to the result as emphasizing the importance of the PGA instruction committee work headed by Joe Novak.

Obviously golf instruction needs a build-up in publicity and research if pros are going to get the postwar golfers to go strong for lessons.

Among the very successful golf instructors of the country is Al Lesperance, pro at Shaker Heights CC, Cleveland, Ohio. Al has some interesting comments to make on the status and future of golf instruction. He says:

"It is true that before the use of the slow motion camera a great deal of the instruction in golf was by trying to help a player to get rid of a slice or hook by changing the position of his hands or feet, thereby correcting one error with another. I do not believe that there is much of this done now. This method of instruction in my judgment never did the pupil any permanent good and certainly did not help reputations of golf professionals.

"In comparing present golf instruction with instruction in other sports however I am afraid there is one point that has not been given proper consideration. The instruction in other sports that I know of is at schools where coaches are employed by the school, and paid by it, for the training and instruction of players, to form teams.

"When the pupil enrolls to play on

any of these teams he or she is under complete control of the coach. They are told when to report for instruction and they are told how long to practice. If the proper amount of attendance, or the proper effect is not put forth the coach has the right to keep the pupil off the team. If the golf instructors could have the same control I am sure those who wish to learn would show considerable improvement, and would have a good deal more pleasure.

"I have experienced no trouble improving the scores and therefore the pleasure of those pupils who have been willing to give the time to instruction and practice necessary to lay the foundation of a sound swing. These pupils are the reason I have been busy giving lessons.

"The greatest problem has been to convince the pupils when they start that if they will do what they are told and keep away at first from scoring until the swing has been practiced long enough to become more or less automatic, to swing the same way a great many times, they are certain to improve.

"I do not mean that this practice should all be done on the practice tee. In fact after a short time much more practice should be done on the course than on the practice tee. Many professionals I am sure have experienced this also. It is easier to get a pupil who has never played to agree to try this method. The only trouble I have had is keeping his friends away so that he will not be drawn into the scoring urge too soon.

"I have proved to myself also that improvement can be made with people who have played for some time if you can get them to agree to do only what they are told.

"I do not wish to convey the impression that I think every player should