

Publinks Officials Study Etiquette Education plan

By HERB GRAFFIS

ONE OF golf's assets is its tradition of being "a gentleman's game." The 10 clauses of "the etiquette of the game" always are printed with the rules and form part of the code to which the player is expected to conform in fair competition.

This particularly pleasant phase of the sport which has been so definitely accountable for the great growth of golf's popularity is having the spotlight thrown on it by the misconduct of some who never have realized that in golf they are expected to observe standards of behavior possibly alien to their natures, nevertheless of considerable importance to the majority of golfers.

Private clubs to which thousands of fee and public course players recently have graduated are, in numerous instances, reflecting the oversight of etiquette education. Littering of the courses with papers and bottles, loud and careless talk, unkempt attire, failure to observe playing courtesies, and heedless behavior in clubhouses have given private clubs problems they never thought they'd have when they filled wartime membership vacancies.

Firm though embarrassing discipline has been required.

The private club phase of the problem is minor compared to the job that confronts officials of public and daily-fee courses. Approximately 65% of golf play is on a pay-as-you-play basis today. Considerable of that volume is made up of players who do not appreciate that the formalities of golf, worked out during centuries of experience, demands that each player have some respect for the rights of all other players on the course.

Need Etiquette Education

Not many of the offenders are so hopelessly ill-bred they are beyond the reach of persistent and discreet education. However the job of teaching them and policing them is a difficult and constant one. A few chronic offenders can lower the tone of the entire field by making others feel it's necessary to fight the devils with fire in self-defense or stay away.

Shortage of policing personnel and failure to educate public course players in what's expected of them has brought numerous public courses against problems of hoodlumism that the Public Links committee of the USGA plans to tackle boldly. Its study and recommendations undoubtedly will be welcomed by public course officials and fee course owners as urgently needed action.

The situation was brought into sharp focus by the communications of Capt. Charles Clark, mgr., Willowick Golf Course, Willoughby, O., to USGA officials. Clark called attention to isolated cases of public and fee course officials endeavoring to halt the wave of contempt for golf etiquette that was to be expected in view of the arrival of vast numbers of new golfers with no idea of the details of conduct expected of them.

Very few, Clark declared, are deliberately ignorant and unruly. Yet so little is done to inform the new players and the misbehaving older pay-play players of what conduct standards they're expected to live up to on a golf course, there's grave danger of a general breakdown in pay-play course morale and establishment of a stigma that will seriously retard the growth of the game.

Suggests Nation-Wide Program

Clark suggested compilation of educational material and rules which would have the official endorsement of the USGA public links committee, and which could be publicized in every possible manner by public course officials and fee course owners. The USGA sponsorship of such regulations would give force to local enforcement, Clark maintains.

Greenkeepers also are found to be interested in the proposed educational campaign. Expense of caddies, or inability to get them, account for damaging putting surfaces of many pay-play courses that otherwise might be close to the best private club standard. The players lean the flag against the sides of the cup, or lift it out and prod it into the green or slam it down, or drop their golf bags on the green. At private clubs where new members haven't been exposed to correct procedure long enough for it to sink in, the same damage occurs.

Primarily, though, the problem is that the USGA public links committee circulate to public course officials and fee course owners copy for small cards, about the size of a scorecard, which could be distributed to players twice a month with the scorecard. The copy also would appear on enlarged signs in the clubhouse and on a few bulletins around the course.

It would seem at the present stage that such cards, unless attached to scorecards or golf fee cards, might be just so much more litter for the sloppy to scatter around the course. Printing brief quotes

from the USGA recommendations on the scorecards probably would be the better way.

Clark suggested that this educational material include:

Rules most frequently broken.

Not halting on the green to mark scores or practice putting after holing out. Asking others through when a ball is lost.

Replacing divots.

No more than four players in any group at any time.

Each player must have a bag and clubs. Dress as one would for a private club.

No one allowed on course without green-fee ticket. (Liability insurance regulations often make this mandatory.)

Clubhouse conduct must be that of a home or private club, and not that of a low saloon.

"Restricted to Ladies and Gentlemen"

One daily fee course, Willow Grove in Cleveland, has demonstrated that advertising it desires ONLY the play of ladies and gentlemen is a most profitable factor in business development.

Willow Grove is a short 9-hole course of 2950 yards. Its rates are fairly high for a 9-hole fee course in a district of much good competition. But by playing up the fact that its patronage is restricted to ladies and gentlemen it gets all the business it can comfortably handle.

In each of Willow Grove's advertisements in Cleveland newspapers there appeared the bold-face line "Golf Etiquette Enforced."

Some of the other lines of Willow Grove's advertising campaign show how the course's owners have built up play on the basis of pastiming in the company of pleasant sports people. During the National Open at Canterbury Willow Grove advertised:

"Many fine public golf courses are near you. Play them all. Willow Grove, too, if you like a sporty 9-hole layout that tries to cater to decent, refined people like yourself."

Another Willow Grove ad said: "We'll guarantee golfing pleasure to a couple hundred only. Ladies and gentlemen, that is. Profane roughnecks and mongrels we invite to stay away."

In one piece of ad copy Willow Grove said:

"Some so-called golfers are so dumb they think ETIQUETTE is the name of a new breakfast food.

"Out here at Willow Grove our prices scare such trash away. Then decent, refined people, like yourself, can enjoy their game and get their money's worth."

The accent on good manners as an assurance of pleasant golf has been not only profitable for Willow Grove but has virtually eliminated the headaches fee course operators and public course offi-



The fancy pros are at Canterbury this week end and they make golf look easy. But the game is their work, while for you it's fun. Cleveland's summer is short. Don't waste any of it. For your good health's sake, soak up the sunshine while you can. Many fine public golf courses are near you. Play them all. Willow Grove, too, if you like a sporty 9-hole layout that tries to cater to decent, refined people like yourself. We'll do our best to please you.

WILLOW GROVE GOLF COURSE

Cleveland's Sportiest 9 Holes, 2950 Yds.—Par 34
Golf Etiquette Enforced—No Weekend Tournaments
Aurora Rd. (Rt. 43), 2 miles south of SOM Center Rd. 15 Minutes From Shaker Square
In Beautiful Solon Village Where Living Is Better
Safe Golf: No Parallel Fairways
Sociale Best Greens, the Finest



Some so-called golfers are so dumb and uncouth they think ETIQUETTE is the name of a new breakfast food.

Out here at Willow Grove our prices scare away such trash. Then decent, refined people, like yourself, can enjoy their game and get their money's worth.

Golf Etiquette Enforced

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CLEVELAND'S SPORTIEST 9 HOLES
2950 YARDS—PAR 34
Aurora Rd. (Rt. 43), 2 miles south of SOM Center Rd. in Solon.
15 minutes from Shaker Square.
Safe Golf: No Parallel Fairways.
Sociale Best Greens, the Finest.

Summer Rates Now
Saturday, Sunday & Holidays
9 Holes—\$1.00
18 Holes—\$1.75
Week Days
\$1.00—Unlimited Play

WILLIE GROVE sez—



Of the more than 25,000 weekend golfers who will try to tee off at the 16 golf courses this year, we'll guarantee golfing pleasure to a select couple hundred only. Ladies and gentlemen, that is. Profane roughnecks and mongrels we invite to stay away.

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CHAGRIN FALLS 8722



For the past two weeks out here at Willow Grove we gladly tolled long and hard to insure that your Sunday golfing would be pleasurable. Then on the weekends — it rained.

That ain't fair. Strictly against Free Enterprise. Unconstitutional.

And if it happens again, we're gonna write a letter to our congress-men.

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These fee course ads attract the higher type of daily fee golfers

cial's experience in trying to maintain their courses and clubhouses as places for first class people, and free from the dirtiness and disturbances of two-legged hogs.