

Pro Tournament Golf Seeks Cures For Growing Pains

Calm after the Metz-Corcoran storm at Carmel, Calif., finds the tournament situation emerging from the talk and clout fog into a clearer picture of a complex problem. The one-punch affair in which Dick Metz threw a fist into the nose of the tournament bureau manager occurred after Metz, Corcoran and Horton Smith had ridden together into Carmel for dinner having apparently amicably agreed to discontinue the debate which had been conducted personally, in meetings and through newspaper sections for some months. Then it flared with embarrassing consequences and for personal causes having no bearing on the broad controversy.

Corcoran's good judgment in suggesting that the fracas be forgotten possibly prevented further development of a trend toward the PGA being divided into home club pro and playing pro divisions. This, in the considered opinion of impartial parties, would have seriously weakened the status of the playing pros without having much effect on the home club pros who care for themselves by service to their members.

Tournament circuit golf is a nerve-fraying business. Nelson in virtually retiring from the tournament swing at the crest of his earning power showed characteristic good common sense. The tournament circuit has grown during the inflation that began with the war into a business of approximately a half million dollars in purses plus another considerable sum in appearance money and foreign tours.

War of Nerves

It's a wearing business on the competitors and it is rather surprising that nerves didn't give way in fistic outbursts some months ago although fighting about any phase of tournament golf wouldn't have been a *causis belli* in view of the more serious warfare in which the nation was engaged. But when the clearing clash did occur here's what was revealed:

1 — Tournament sponsors are irritable because the PGA cannot guarantee appearance of leading stars. Some players lay off to get rested from a practically year-round week-end schedule of events. Others have engagements of assured personal profit. Tournament golf is not a sport in which all participants are certain to be paid.

2 — Opinion of some tournament players that the players themselves rather than the PGA executive committee should control tournament personnel and operations.

The second matter has been partially ironed out by a players' committee approving George Schneider as chairman of the tournament committee. To that job Schneider, a well-informed, competent and thoughtful player already had been appointed by the PGA officials. Hence that item of dispute no longer exists. Who's to boss Corcoran, the tournament bureau manager, is something that Corcoran himself, more than anybody else, wishes would be settled. His job of arranging dates, pairings, starting times and other details without being able to guarantee appearance of star players is no vacation. Gerry Moore, a Boston sports writer, was engaged to be assistant to Corcoran. After three months of contending with the problems Moore quit, the victim of acute nervous indigestion.

Money Worries Too

Financial problems also have added to the woes of tournament bureau operation. Endeavors to get players to voluntarily contribute a percent of their winnings toward the operation of the tournament bureau have been no more effective during Corcoran management for the past 10 years than such efforts were previously when Robert E. Harlow conducted the bureau and got tournament golf into higher financial brackets.

Now it is proposed that sponsors contribute toward tournament bureau expenses. That was tried by Harlow but without success. The Chicago District Golf association of late years has made a voluntary contribution to the PGA tournament bureau for its work in the CDGA events, as an effort to establish a precedent.

Many non-tournament members have questioned the percentage the bureau gets out of the association's dues income. To preserve and encourage tournament golf as a promotion medium, show window and player training school, the manufacturers picked up the tab.

From the sponsors' viewpoint the tournaments have been improving financially. Before the war tournaments were generally not marked financial successes with the exception of the National Open championships. Out of program advertising alone probably more profit has been realized from PGA-sponsored events since Pearl Harbor than was netted by all national, sectional and PGA-sponsored tournaments previously. Galleries have continued to be

large this winter regardless of the absence of several name-players.

Eventually the sponsor troubles will be ironed out, probably by the sponsors refusing to put up prize money unless the players themselves can devise some method of assuring appearance of a fair number of the stars. How the stars and the aspirants or others who'll make up the fields will solve that problem is something that's now being soberly considered. They'll either solve it or have a shortage in the golden egg market.

Changes in Prospect

There is talk of prevailing on the stars to accept fines in case of non-appearance at PGA events. That probably won't get very far. It is almost a sure thing that the tournament schedule will be curtailed. Fall events that clash with collegiate football publicity are most likely to be skipped. The players themselves, since the Corcoran-Metz affair, are realizing that their business is playing golf and not holding meetings of a debating society. The tournament players have a tough problem in sports business but not one to be ashamed of or to fear as are problems in sports that gamblers have dirtied. As regrettable as the Metz-Corcoran outburst was it didn't

have a public reaction that reflected adversely on any angle of tournament golf except the pardonable inability to keep strained nerves under control.

One of the exasperating situations with which the tournament players, the PGA tournament bureau and sponsors of events have to contend is that of invitation events. There was enough delicacy involved in invitation events when the Miami 4-ball, the Inverness invitation and the Goodall events were about the only fixtures of this sort but since invitation events have increased there are more problems of selecting fields and keeping calm and quiet those who are not invited.

Another factor that has to be kept under control while the tournament scheme is getting readjusted is loose lips. It did seem that they would get out of bounds following the clash at Carmel and Corcoran's suggestion to "forget it" undoubtedly halted further hot talk that would have done nothing to get tournament golf on a sound, serene business basis. The incident was an unfortunate element in tournament golf's growing pains, but nothing to split pro golf which has its greatest years ahead for the playing pros as well as for the fellows whose major—or sole—income is from their jobs at their clubs.

Care of Bent Greens

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tions connected with growth. It is the energy food for beneficial soil micro-organisms. As the organic matter undergoes decay by them carbonic acid is generated. It is the principal solvent in the soil solution and is responsible for the liberation of the mineral soil nutrients. Organic matter increases water-holding capacity and im-

parts other benefits of its colloidal nature.

Too much organic matter is bad from the standpoint of play and maintenance. When overdone greens become so soft that they foot mark badly. Humus or peat has a high water-boiling capacity and may retain 200 to over 300 percent of moisture. Both tend to resist wetting when dry. Greens with more than 30 percent by volume of organic matter become too wet during rainy weather, and dry-out too slowly

Depression on green holds snow and ice and invites snow mold and winter kill.

