

Drives for Junior Golfers Recruiting Thousands

By REX McMORRIS

By a long way this is the biggest year in the history of junior golf in the United States. The USGA first national junior championship at the University of Michigan course, the Junior Chamber of Commerce national championship which will bring together qualifiers from at least 40 states, the third annual National Caddie championship at Columbus, O., the Hearst newspapers' national junior championship at Charles River (Mass.) CC and those long established Western GA and Women's Western GA junior championships give the youngsters a schedule of competitive events that should bring into the headlines new stars.

Locally competitive schedules have been arranged to provide lively interest, incentive and good seasoning for boys and girls in golf. The intramural high school competitive programs arranged by high school athletic directors using tournament material and prizes provided by the National Golf Foundation and the Athletic Journal are being conducted in 40 states, Hawaii and the Canal Zone at almost 400 schools.

Further promotion of high school golf has been given impetus by the series of "Beginning Golf" pictures produced by the National Golf Foundation and being distributed through high school athletic departments. First of these pictures received strong endorsement from more

than 2,000 physical educators at their annual convention at Kansas City in April.

PGA Junior Campaign

The PGA's junior promotion committee under the astute and energetic direction of George Lake, Long Beach (Calif.) Recreation Park pro, has shifted into high speed in coordinating and extending the extensive activities of pros in junior golf promotion.

Lake has appointed the president of each of the PGA's 30 sections chmn, of a national junior golf week program which is to be staged June 14-20. Every pro has been asked to conduct a lesson series, hold a junior tournament, show movies, have an exhibition or any other type of event to interest the youngsters.

What unquestionably will be a major result of this concerted effort will be to impress upon parents and club officials the merits and availability of golf for the youngsters. Providing facilities is a different problem. Many of the older clubs haven't been any too cordial to junior play. There's got to be education of the old officials and members and of the kids to work out a satisfactory solution of this problem.

Lake and Harry Moffitt and Bud Williamson of the PGA Junior Golf com-



Lake City high school instructor and golf coach, Pro Arlan Johnson, puts a class through swing exercises.

mittee, have written PGA presidents as follows: "During the war, the need was felt for golf and golf facilities for the servicemen. The PGA pros of America came to the front and under the leadership of the sectional presidents conducted the most worthwhile project ever undertaken by our association.

"As good as this job was, we cannot rest on our laurels and feel there is nothing more to do. We have another job now. The job of helping the youth of America.

"We are aware that this sport is the greatest game for all ages. It is our duty and privilege to interest and encourage our youth to become acquainted with it.

"Many pros are now, and have been, doing much work with the junior golfer, but that is not enough. The new Junior Golf committee of the National PGA wants every sectional president to act as the chairman in his area and induce every one of his members to help on the junior golf program. If your members have a program, have them make it bigger and better. If they don't have one, try to get them to start one. Our program not only calls for each pro to aid and assist in sectional, state, and national junior events. Our main thought and aim is to encourage more golf in the schools, conduct more free clinics and group lessons for the juveniles, to cooperate and lend help to established Jr. golf programs and to inaugurate the first National Junior Golf Week ever held in the United States.

"This is our game, but we shouldn't keep it to ourselves. Let us see that the kids of the country learn that it is the Game of a Lifetime."

Indication that the junior golf development work of previous years has begun to pay-off is plain in the great growth of the National Collegiate Athletic assn.'s

Intercollegiate championship. The event now draws a field that makes sectional qualifying rounds in 1949 a probability.

Minnesota Plan in Action

How effectively the promotion is being staged on the high school level can be seen in Minnesota where the program devised by Les Bolstad, golf coach of the state university, and the university's athletic director, Frank McCormick, is well under way.

At the Lake City (Minn.) high school is an excellent demonstration of the Minnesota program in action. Conducting the Lake City high school golf classes is Arlan Johnson who's pro at the Maple Grove GC, near La Crosse, Wis. in the summer. Johnson is industrial arts instructor, assistant football coach and co-track coach at the school and has added to that list of duties golf coaching.

Of the high school golf program at Lake City Johnson says:

"All Lake City high school students, grades nine through twelve, are invited to join the golf instruction class. The city, with a population of about 4,000 and only 150 students in school who were able to take instruction, had an enrollment of 75 students in golf with approximately 55 completing the course.

"In the spring of 1947, the first year it was tried, the golf program received favorable comment from students and townspeople alike who insisted it become a permanent feature.

"The classes are conducted at the Lake City CC and the students are given a special rate and the privilege of using the course during the summer.

"In 1947 the classes were held early in the morning using some pre-school time and about one-half hour of an activity



Lake City (Minn.) high school students learning now in classes that putting is easy. They'll learn how tough it is later.



ANNUAL SPRING MEETING, ILLINOIS SECTION, PGA

Annual spring meeting of the Ill. section of the PGA was held at the Morrison Hotel, Chicago, April 5. Those attending included, front row (L to R) Lou Strong, sec'y.; Frank Whiston, pres., Chicago dist. GA; Fred Bowman, vp, Wilson Sporting Goods Co.; Bill Gordon, pres., Ill. PGA; Tom Walsh, vp, PGA; and Jack Kennan, sec'y., WGA.

period. This year the school schedule of classes will be arranged so that the class will meet during the activity period and part of the noon hour. The school hot lunch program will prepare lunch for the students when they return from the golf course. Transportation to and from the golf course is provided by the school bus.

"Every student receives a copy of 'Golf Fundamentals,' an instruction folder published by the National Golf Foundation, that is used as a lesson guide and text. Instructional and entertaining golf films are shown to the entire student body in order to build up interest for enrollment in the class. This year a driving net is being installed in order to give the advanced student more individual practice and instruction.

"The objectives of the course are teaching the fundamentals and values of the game of golf.

"Each session is devoted to one lesson, keeping in mind only the fundamental involved. A demonstration by the instructor begins each session, followed by student participation in various exercises and procedures of practice. A group of assistant instructors (high school boys who are good golfers and briefed before hand on the lessons and exercises) correct and help individuals.

"The lessons covered are: grip, stance, swing (as a whole), short game, putting, common errors, etiquette, rules, and actual playing.

"Points of information covered are: values of the game, object of the game, description of a golf course, golf terminology, method of scoring, name and number of clubs used, and types of stroke made with each, elements of distance and control, the value of proper practice, rules, and procedure of play.

"Fundamentals covered: grip, stance, position of the ball, footwork, body pivot, wrist action, left hand arm and side control, arc of the swing, follow through, balance, rhythm, co-ordination, concentration, and relaxation.

"The daily instruction sessions are supplemented by contests—putting, approaching, and chipping—in order to stimulate student interest."

Junior Promotion at Top

Surveying the junior golf situation in the nation this year it is obvious that golf is doing a promotion job far ahead of anything it's done before. It is apparent that only lack of playing facilities will prevent vast achievement in market development.

Pros who were detailed to teach at military establishments during the war noted that there were countless thousands of lads who should be golfers but to whom the game was presented too late. This tardiness is being rectified by the junior program.

This market development far offsets in numbers the slump that has taken place

in the caddie field during the past eight years. Attention being given by the Western GA. and other organizations that have followed the Western's plan of attracting, training and rewarding caddies accounts for bringing the caddie slump to a halt and recruiting new youngsters. But the trend to bag carts because of economy and availability seems to put a limitation on the number of caddies in proportion to the adult golf-playing group.

However there is a large new army of potential caddies being brought in by the junior promotion programs, so golf's recruiting is progressing past the stage when the game was depending mainly on its bag-carrying youngsters for replacements.

Right now one of the problems of the junior program is the supply of equipment. High prices of raw materials and labor put the cost of clubs out of range of many youngsters. That'll be solved in due time, just as the problem of higher movie admission prices was solved—by the kids getting the money required.

What this development of the junior market means to the pro is putting him in on the ground floor with potential customers who some day in the not too distant future will greatly increase his market. The kids are going to stay with the man who brought them into "The Game of a Lifetime" in the right way.

Donald Ross, Architects' Dean, Dies at Pinehurst

Donald J. Ross, 75, dean of golf architects, died at Pinehurst, N.C., April 26, after a heart attack. Ross was born in Dornoch, Scotland. He was a carpenter's apprentice in boyhood and came to the U.S. in the late 90s to take a pro job at Boston.

Upon his arrival in the U.S., Ross immediately became active as a developer of golf among Harvard university faculty members and students. He was brought to Pinehurst in 1901 by Leonard Tufts, son of James W., Pinehurst's founder. From the start of a 9-hole sand green course which had been laid out in 1896 by Leonard Tufts and Dr. George Carver, Ross developed the great golf courses at Pinehurst. Pinehurst No. 2 many authorities believe in the finest example of golf architecture in the world although Ross himself considered his job at the Seminole GC at Palm Beach, Fla. in the same class as Pinehurst No. 2.

Ross was said to have designed between 600 and 800 courses in the United States and other countries. A few weeks prior to his death he was not certain of



Donald J. Ross, a builder of American golf.

the exact number but intended to go through his records to determine the precise count and to assemble other material for his memoirs which he planned to work on late this summer. He was honorary president of the Society of Golf Course Architects and was their host at their spring meeting this year.

The world-wide influence of Donald Ross developed not only from his genius but his geniality. He probably knew more active amateurs of local and national prominence during the past 50 years than any other man in golf and his acquaintance among pros also ran well into the hundreds. He managed the Pinehurst golf properties and with Frank Maples, Pinehurst greenkeeper, changed the picture of southern golf by making highly successful transformation from sand to grass greens at Pinehurst. He, Maples, William F. Gordon and J. B. McGovern pioneered together in effectively coordinating architecture and construction of golf courses for machine maintenance.

Donald Ross is survived by his widow; his brother, Alec, of Detroit, 1907 National Open champion; two sisters and a brother in Scotland; a daughter by his first marriage, and a stepson.

Interment was at Newton Center, Mass. Services were attended by many veterans of pro and amateur golf.

Of late years Ross had spent his summers at Little Compton, R.I., but was on the job at Pinehurst from before the season started until the curtain fell. Thousands were greeted by him at the clubhouse, at his pro shop and on the courses, and took away with them bright memories of a fine gentleman.

In the number of his golf courses and by the impress of his personality Donald J. Ross goes into the game's history as one who built golf to giant dimensions as an American delight and business.