

Group Instruction Program Must Be Wisely Organized

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Some time ago Bill Wotherspoon of Tulsa and Ken Tucker of Seattle, both top golf pros, wrote me for information about group instruction in golf. At the time I hadn't formed any definite conclusions and wasn't prepared to answer them, but their request was a prod for me to put some ideas for group golf instruction down on paper.

Teaching golf to groups is obviously a challenge. You have to organize your material and space it out over a given period such as a school quarter or a spring season. You have to operate on a plan so that you judiciously mix lectures, demonstrations, participation, correction sessions, etc. You have to devise tricks such as pairing golfers up to aid one another, golf exercises, correction sessions, observation training, the hit and stop technique, etc.

After four years of concentrated mass instruction, I find it hard to shift back to individual golf lessons. It seems pointless to be telling one person something which 20 or 30 might as well be hearing and absorbing. I find it difficult to stand with one person for half an hour after having been used to walking up and down a line of golfers and making suggestions and corrections as I go along. One point is about all a golfer can absorb at a time. If he is in a receptive frame of mind and has been trained in your line of reasoning, it doesn't take half an hour to get the point across.

In group golf procedure an opening lecture at each class session on the points you are going to stress strengthens the class feeling. Save for the first week where you are laying out your plan, these lectures should not be longer than 15 minutes. Repetition of points which have been previously brought up is very much in order. And it is well to warn the students that repetition is inevitable in the learning of a motor skill.

Demonstration Speaks for Itself

The demonstration of golf swings or of various types of shots covers ground that words could never approach. Often an instructor plays down this angle and becomes too self-effacing. Sometimes it's nice to have some of your better pupils demonstrate. When Beverly Hanson, now women's national amateur champion, made the University of Minnesota golf course her headquarters, I used to importune her to

give demonstrations while I interpolated. It conditioned her for the tournament situation and the class learned a great deal. The pupils saw a right way to swing a golf club.

The lecture and demonstration can be combined.

Never ignore or play down the demonstration. A golfer learns in devious ways and to see the golf swing carried out is a source of stimulation and interest to the beginner.

Tell the students, show them, and then have them do it. That procedure is good for the learning of golf as well as for other subjects.

When it comes to telling pupils, it is a good idea to stress the pattern of the entire swing first. When you have a conception of the whole performance, then you have a place to put hooks onto which to hang the details.

An introduction of swing pattern could well include:

A description of the swing track; of the wide sweeping arc of the swing which lies on an inclined plane and which feels like a big circle which you circumscribe around your head as a center. Allowing for the different arc of the upswing and the downswing due to the weightshift, the swing track should be as direct as possible. Indirection of swing or interference to the direct swing should be ruled out.

Emphasis on the swinging move as the life, the vitality of the golf stroke. A swing embodies smooth flow and rhythm. It has a beat or a cadence due to the momentary hesitation as the swing changes direction from the upswing to the downswing. A golfer whirls the club and builds up momentum. You are on safer ground teaching a forceful swing than an easy one. This swing also has a centrifugal pull which tends to tip you forward.

An emphasis must be made on body control and body movements; especially to young golfers. The body actions can be demonstrated as an aspect of the whole. If you build on a sound base, then it's not so hard to superimpose a swing on the base. Body movements for golf can be isolated and learned by exercise, then joined up with the swing.

The introduction of the short swing can well be done on the "whole" basis.

After the whole swing has been pictured then the details can be worked into the framework.

You introduce the pattern of the swing, then fill in the details, then go back to the big framework again. This is called whole-part-whole teaching.

Here then is part of the plan for group golf instruction. Tell them the problems, show them the swing, have them hit balls, then reapply. Introduce the broad outline of both big swing and short swing before working in the endless details.

Pulver Widow and Son Need Help. Quick!

Widow and son of P. C. Pulver, many years editor of the PGA magazine, are in acute financial need and the call has gone out for assistance from the many who knew Pulver. The widow and son are invalids and are having a very tough time of it in Manasquan, N. J. The Metropolitan PGA has helped but due to legal limitations has been compelled to stop its financial aid. Met PGA members are being appealed to individually by John R. Inglis, pres. of the section, to meet the critical situation.

Pulver, a pioneer newspaper golf writer, conducted a golf column in the New York Sun for 25 years. He became editor of the PGA magazine in 1930 and did a fine job for the pro organization in that capacity until his death several years ago. Remittances for aid to the Pulvers should be sent to J. R. Inglis, Metropolitan PGA, 307 Fifth av., New York 16.

Pro Shops Pretty If They Sell

Pros are finding that the ultra-fancy shops aren't sure-fire on selling because there's liable to be too much displayed against walls and out of the line of traffic. The pro shop isn't like a store into which customers are brought by advertising of sale prices or to which they come to "shop around." The pro shop has to catch customers by discreetly bumping them into attractive displays.

One pro said he used to display putters and utility clubs against a wall and sales were just so-so. He put the display stand in the line of traffic and his sales of these clubs jumped terrifically.

Keep the shop immaculately neat and change the displays often and people coming into the shop don't get so accustomed to the same merchandise being in the same place that they don't look at it.

SHELTERED DRIVING RANGE TEE FOR ALL-WEATHER PRACTICE



Roofed golf practice ranges are growing in number. The sheltered ranges get all-weather play that warrants expense in good location. This shows one of the first of them, the Lloyd range at Portland, Ore., now taken over by the subdividers. Moxel automatic slot-machine tees were first used at this range.