



Annual banquet for 148 caddies is climax to four-point program at Sunset CC, Sappington, Mo., that has members showing genuine interest in the welfare of every boy. Caddies in turn are proud to participate in strict training program and rewards received for high degree of proficiency.

Why Our Club Has Star Caddies

By JAMES D. FOGERTY

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The caddy problem is just the same as the over-all juvenile problem today. The older men talk about a slump in kid morality, energy and initiative and forget that the kids generally follow the pattern of their elders.

With caddies every club has the specific problems of getting youngsters to come out, training and disciplining them, and getting them to be happy with their work even if they don't get double-loads two rounds a day and wind up with about as much take-home pay as their fathers, in many instances.

Of course the pay incentive is important—just as it is to you and me—but the more I've studied our own club's experience with the lads the more I've come to the conclusion that money's a long, long way from being the whole answer with the sort of lads who make the best caddies. What the caddy program really amounts to is making the kid feel, as near as possible, like he's practically a member of the club.

Our program in this direction showed its success at our sixth annual caddy party held last Dec. 7 in the clubhouse. There were 148 boys there and they were a bunch of whom any club could be proud. Each boy was given a sweater which would retail for about \$15. I bought these sweaters and some shirts for the lads at close-out prices from one of the sports

goods stores. Many of the sweaters retailed at \$18 to \$20.

Besides the sweaters we had 18 attendance prizes, a set of clubs for the outstanding caddy and 12 Western Golf Assn. Honor Caddy badges which were presented by Missouri amateur champion Jim Jackson.

For entertainment we had an orchestra, a magician and the talks of the kids and a few of the officials.

Weekly Awards to Caddies

We announced that as a special prize for good service next summer there will be weekly awards of four seats to St. Louis Browns night games. The boys will be selected each week by the members as well as by the caddy chairmen. That idea, of course, will get the members more interested in the kids. Like every other pro at a good club I regard my members as the best bunch of fellows that could be collected but I know that they, also like every other club's membership, are inclined to think about caddies as caddies rather than boys.

To show you how our membership is thinking of the boys, one of the members is giving a two year scholarship to any university or college in the United States to the top caddy of the club, providing, of course, the kid's aptitude and determination as a scholar are up to the level of his performance as a caddy.

All of us—the club members and I—
are proud of the generally conceded rating
of Sunset caddies as the best in the St.
Louis district. There are four reasons
for this reputation:

4-Point Caddy Policy

- 1—The annual caddy party.
- 2—The courteous treatment by our members. All of us in pro golf have seen some clubs where the caddy problem actually is the member problem. It's not that way at Sunset.
- 3—Caddy selection.
- 4—Caddy training.

Three years ago when I became professional at Sunset I paid out of my own pocket the salary of a caddy trainer who started on the job until June 15 and worked until mid-September.

Each Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday he'd get the boys in the morning, take them out on the course and show them where to stand, on what holes to be out in front, how to repair divots, how to repair ball marks in greens and other details of the job.

These equivalents of members' playing lessons were given on the first and second nines of alternate days from about 9:30 to 11:30.

Saturday mornings they were taken to our large practice green and taught how to handle their duties around a green. Let me say that when members see some of this training in progress it has a good effect on them. They see that caddying is far more than bag-lugging and see, in some cases that the kid studies caddying more than some players study golf.

Caddies Must Be Schooled

Each new caddy, as well as many of the regulars, are required to attend at least ten of these training sessions. If, after ten lessons a boy can pass the test the trainer gives he is excused from classes, but if poor reports come in the boys are required to get back in class for refresher courses.

During the afternoons the trainer walks around the course watching the boys' performances and asking the members how the caddies are doing and what the members think about the kids. This impresses on the members that we have a superior group of caddies and that every kid is expected to qualify to belong to the outfit.

After I paid the trainer for two years the club decided to pay him as the club found it was the only way to develop good caddies and to have caddies that were standouts—as ours among those of the district's clubs—was a decided asset to the club.

Caddy training can be made a very interesting thing for the kids. They are

quick to see why a good caddy is a great help to every champion, and in a lot of cases far more of a help to the average player than the player himself realizes.

"The Old Army Game"

The caddy training at Sunset isn't a soft deal to which we invited every kid old enough to carry a bag around the course. It's got distinction to it. There's a touch of the military element in it. Many of us recall glorying in belonging to Army, Navy or Marine outfits where the discipline was tough but developed top men for dependability in combat. Every soldier, sailor and Marine bitched about the training he was getting, but on the outside let it be plainly known that it took a real guy to stand up and come through it. And as long as it showed him how to do his job well and was fairly and competently administered he saw that the job was one that separated the men from the boys.

The kids take the same view of a well conducted caddy training program. They have got the right idea—which is that they've got to be good or they wouldn't be there.

The result has been not only a first class spirit of mutual interest between Sunset caddies and players but development of caddying proficiency to the point where I am confident that you could take any one of 35 caddies at Sunset out to a course where a National Open or Amateur championship was going to be played, let the boy go around the course a couple of times to get a chance to study local conditions, and he'd be as perfect a caddy as a champion could want.

Our club members have the idea that is basic in putting across a good program, and that is while we may not have many of our members who could compete in a national championship we can brag that our caddies could do their work in such a championship perfectly.

Foundation Golf Rules Book Gets Big Distribution

Orders for more than 10,000 copies of "The Easy Way to Learn Golf Rules" have been received by the National Golf Foundation in advance of publication. The revised 1952 edition containing the major changes approved by the USGA and the R & A will be available for distribution April 1. Sixty cartoons and illustrations make the new 80 page edition entertaining as well as informative reading. The book, convenient size, (3" x 4") is an important item for every player and member. Single copies, 10 cents. Larger quantities, \$6.00 per 100 copies. Quantity orders should be directed to the National Golf Foundation, Chicago 5, Ill.