

PGA Teaching Clinic Studies

How to Improve Methods

Hope which springs eternal in the bosom of the golfer took a big spring at the PGA convention's instruction discussion. The duffer and his problems were in the spotlight at the session presided over by Eddie Duino and presenting, as a panel to handle instruction questions and answers, Horton Smith, Bill Wotherspoon, Frank Walsh, Bill Gordon, Graham Ross, Emil Beck and Harold Sargent.

Wm. T. Hearn, principal of Bowen high school, Chicago, and a former caddie who aspired to be a pro, told how he'd got 40 to 50 boys out in organizing his first high school team. His first two teams won Illinois state high school championships. He said that golf in the high school picture is much broader than the team basis and fits very well into the physical education program because it allows such pleasant opportunities for pupils learning to improve their skills. He said the instructor's job is primarily to make the pupil understand what is expected, then to arouse the desire of self-help in the pupil.

He advised that in group instruction the groups be divided into pupils of about the same ability. He said the golf instructor must always be mindful that pupils improve at different rates and not to be discouraged by the slow pupil who is sometimes very valuable to the instructor as a reminder for the instructor to check on his own knowledge of the learning process, the pupil, the instructor's own teaching capacity and the method of the lesson.

He advocated a balanced combination of lectures, demonstrations and slide films and movies, and emphasized the importance of teaching the pupil how to practice correctly.

Minnesota Prof. Tells Plan

Carl M. Nordly, prof. of physical education at the University of Minnesota, and one of the nation's foremost advocates of golf in P.E. programs, told of the growth of the U of Minn. golf program in which Nordly has been closely associated with Les Bolstad, the university's golf professional and Frank McCormick. McCormick when athletic director of Minnesota got a golf facilities, instruction and competitive program strongly established at the nation's second largest university. The program is developing as planned. Last year 14,847 students participated in the program, an increase of 82% over the previous year.

Nordly's outline of golf in a physical education program has previously appeared in *GOLFDOM* and is being used as the pattern at many universities and colleges.

The Minnesota students pay \$3 a year for use of golf, tennis and skating facilities. Play on the university's 18-hole course became so heavy a 9-hole short course, indoor practice and instruction facilities, and night lighted golf range were added.

Nordly said the development of ability to play is an essential of education and in the case of golf this needed education offers qualified and alert professionals tremendous opportunities. He urged pro attention to high schools' need of used clubs and old balls and pro help in getting programs under way. He also strongly recommended reduced rates for students in off-hours at public and semi-public courses and that rental sets of clubs be made available.

Nordly related that he and pro friends of his had observed that pros benefit from school instruction facilities by seeing how the school teachers handle difficult educational problems. He mentioned great possibilities of more golf research at the college level and remarked that pro golf needed to do an elemental job in organizing the game's instruction by standardizing nomenclature.

Take Golf to Coaches

Nordly said that there's a big field and a field of vast potential profits for pros in introducing golf into the programs of the college and high school athletic coaches' clinics. There are between 50 and 60 of these conducted each summer, assembling coaches for instruction in football, basketball, baseball, track and field sports, swimming and tennis but although most of the coaches at these schools play golf, golf instruction at these summer clinics is completely neglected.

GOLFDOM has been pointing to this for the past several years as a PGA job to be done, even though it comes at a time of the year when most pros are busy at their own clubs. The Nordly close-up on this situation was so impressive and informative that the PGA Educational committee and the National Golf Foundation are to enlist sectional PGA cooperation in attending to this field next summer.

Nordly's observations on golf instruc-

tion from the physical educator's viewpoint were of great interest to the pros. Among the points he brought out on the psychological and motor skill training aspects of golf instruction were that the young usually should have shorter practice sessions than older people, but all age groups must practice to get the motor skill organized. He spoke of the elements of fatigue and monotony and the ways of eliminating fear of failure. He said a common error in instruction in golf or any other motor skill is for the instructor to spend too much time talking. Verbal criticism must be constructive and accompanied by action.

He said that when the learner knows why as well as how, then the student is getting qualified to practice resultfully instead of practicing in a way that strengthens bad habits.

Tells of Golfer's "Machinery"

Dr. Randall M. O'Rourke, a low handicap member of Horton Smith's club, explained some of the anatomical factors of the golf swing, with Horton demonstrating as the doctor talked.

Dr. O'Rourke showed that some body turn and swing explanations as spoken and written by several professionals and which have had general acceptance as the gospel are anatomically impossible. His talk, although in details too advanced and covering too much ground for the intent professionals, brought out numerous points that the pros in later discussion agreed they wanted to talk over with their doctor members who are golf students.

Two valuable points that Dr. O'Rourke made concerned the structural validity of the stress Frank Walsh has been putting on the action of the little finger of the left hand in properly holding and manipulating the club, and the mistake many make in foot action. The doctor said that correct placement of the right hip at address, rather than primary emphasis on right foot position was the factor that facilitated correct body turn without the strain that sometimes is suffered by players.

Confused by Terms

Some confusion in golf nomenclature was straightened out but only after discussion that confirmed Prof. Nordly's statement about the necessity of the PGA agreeing upon the definition of many terms used in golf instruction. This matter certainly is one that should be given consideration when the PGA gets to work on its proposed instruction manual.

Some professionals asked for the definition of a "slider". Eventually a "slider" was described as a left to right wood shot with overspin and a lot of run. After

some discussion "the new American grip" was agreed to be one in which the V of the left hand pointed only slightly to the right of the chin instead of to the right shoulder, and which was O.K. for a golfer with big strong hands, but dangerous for the average player with slicing tendencies. There was some criticism of the grip as deadening hand action and requiring a muscular development that only tournament players could get.

Handling the various types of pupils—the beginner, the medium scorer and the low-handicap golfer—was discussed with the main point of agreement being that the player who'd been at the game for a while would have to hit enough shots to allow the pro to see what treatment the pupil needed before instruction really began. The playing lesson was agreed to be basic treatment for the low-handicap player who then could be told what he'd have to practice, and how.

In all cases of pupils pros recalled their results had been most satisfactory after they had been able to get across to the pupil a clear understanding of why and what the pro was trying to get the pupil to perform. This talking in the earlier stages of instruction made it possible to do less talking and get more action as the pupil got going.

First Senior Open to Follow PGA Seniors

From Jan. 7 thru 19 the PGA National course at Dunedin, Fla. will be the site of the biggest senior golf program ever presented. The program will start with the senior pro-pro Jan. 7 then calls for a senior-junior pro event Jan. 8 and the annual PGA seniors' meeting that night, a senior pro-pro (selective drive, alternate shots) on Jan. 9 with the PGA seniors' banquet that night, a senior clinic Jan. 10 and the PGA seniors' championship Jan. 11 and 12. Al Watrous will defend the title he won in a play-off with Jock Hutchison last year.

The first Seniors' Open championship will play 18 hole qualifying rounds Jan. 15 and 16, with the 54 hole medal play event (in six age brackets, starting with the 50-55 group) on Jan. 17, 18, 19.

The Senior Open is limited to a field of 250 pros and 250 amateurs, and probably will have a maximum field. Pro prize money for the Seniors' Open is expected to exceed \$6000.

Alec Watson, Charley Mayo, Charles McKenna and Carroll MacMaster are PGA members in charge of the senior program.

During the Senior program an entertainment schedule for pros' wives will be conducted by the PGA Seniors Ladies' Auxiliary, headed by Mrs. Tom Skipper.