

PGA Has Business Training Course at Annual Meeting

By HERB GRAFFIS

PGA DELEGATES rated the business, educational and teaching programs presented at the association's 1953 annual meeting as the most definitely profitable of these annual sessions.

George Lake, chmn., Educational committee and Harold Sargent, Teaching committee chmn., arranged a program that was of great practical value to attending pros and to their clubs and players. The program, coming at the end of the meeting and adding a day to program calendar and expense was well worth the investment. Some delegates returned to their clubs before these programs were presented and due to competition of week-end football and previous accent of newspaper publicity on tournament bureau's problem in getting its \$15,000 minimum purse accepted, the effect of the excellent business school sessions was unfortunately limited.

Lake and Sargent are to be congratulated on a program that parallels the golf course maintenance short courses in value to clubs, golfers and to the professional businessmen involved.

The program opened with J. Victor East and Cliff Spencer of Fawick Flexi-Grip Co. lecturing and demonstrating on "Installing the Golf Club Grip." East, an authority on club design and construction, and Spencer, a highly competent technician, explained grip details in selling and play, and proper methods of applying grips.

Explains Maintenance Problems

O. J. Noer, Milwaukee Sewerage Commission agronomist and the man who gets around to hundreds of courses all over the country each year, with aid in solving maintenance problems, gave a slide-illustrated talk on "What the professional should know in the turf maintenance field." Noer's talk was very interesting and valuable not only for the pro who is a pro-supt., but for the pro who is cooperating with the supt. for the good of the club, and for increased play and pro shop traffic. Major turf problems of the past year and their treatment were covered by Noer in a good basic training way.

Ernie Sabayrac, manufacturers' representative, gave the pros a sales par for

apparel per member. In a very practical talk The Round Man suggested figuring what a member should spend per year for slacks, shirts, golf shoes, sox, caps and jackets and going after that quota.

Shop Volume Doubled

He emphasized that golf wear is golf equipment and cited instances of pros doubling shop volume by doing good jobs in merchandising apparel. He warned against consignment saying it has a tendency to ease interest in moving merchandise and in good credit rating. He said pro credit is good. Ernie told pros not to get in the habit of returning merchandise as that runs up costs and eventually could run them out of a competitive situation. He said that the excellent job pros are doing is bringing alert makers of excellent lines into pro distribution.

Sabayrac urged that pros show merchandise in open display, rather than behind glass and show plenty of stock plainly price-tagged. He advised that pros study the display methods of leading men's stores.

John Walter, Detroit News golf writer, gave PGA delegates a reminder that an important part of most pros' jobs is to keep the names of their clubs, members and themselves before the public as the annual 13% turnover of private club members requires publicity to enlist replacements.

Publicity Needs Pro Help

The difficulty of covering golf news due to its scattered locations requires that pros telephone or send in scores, and be sure to get names spelled properly, correct initials, and in the case of invitation tournament results, clubs and locations of out-of-town players.

Walter advised pros in smaller towns where there are no golf writers to telephone, or write and send in by messenger, golf scores and other news, and not to forget human interest stuff that may reach beyond the scope of golfers.

He reminded the pros that "names made news" and to get plenty of names in stories on club tournaments, junior and women promotion. He also counseled that sports departments be advised well in advance

when there were good picture possibilities.

John paid tribute to the way Lou Powers and Warren Orlick, particularly, co-operated with newspapers on the papers' Hole-in-One, golf school, and other promotions. He recited experiences of papers that had very poor response from pros in promoting golf and further said that when newspapers in some cases became aware that they were giving golf space possibly out of proportion to circulation interest of other sports and cut down on golf space for scores, neither pros or members made complaints to papers' managements.

Walter said that golf writers like their assignment and would welcome more pro activity in publicity beyond the point of scores in pro tournaments. The Walter talk was of pointed value to the club pros who saw in the local and national publicity given the PGA convention such extensive reference to tournament pro affairs that news of what the club pros were doing for golf and its players got little local and no nation-wide space.

Simplifies The Rules

Warren Orlick, subbing for Joe Dey of the USGA, spoke on The Rules of Golf, making clear many confusing cases in a way that showed Warren wouldn't be a bad guy to rewrite the rules away from lawyers' language. He cited cases of pros who didn't know the rules looking ridiculous as their violations were shown in TV broadcasts of tournaments. He also told of Dave Douglas' knowledge of the rules being a factor that got the US team out ahead in Ryder Cup matches.

Ewing Stumm, National Cash Register Detroit Branch mgr., gave a great short course in pro shop selling with his illustrated talk. Stumm, one of the NCR stars, said the pros might well bear in mind the Supreme Court definition of good will as "the attitude of the customer to return to the place where he has been well treated." He illustrated a number of cases in which selling would be better done if the pro would put himself in the place of the buyer.

"The Real Mr. Golf"

"The real Mr. Golf—the PGA's Man of Every Year—is the ordinary golfer," Stumm said, looking at the game from a business viewpoint.

Ernie Sabayrac and Floyd Linn, pinch-hitting for the ailing C. M. Wilcox of Field and Flint, gave a talk and demonstration on the shoe department of the pro shop.

They brought out that 80 per cent of all shoe sales are in comparatively few sizes. A pro won't be able to fit everybody from

stock but with properly selected stock of 36 to 40 pair can fit most of a club of 250 to 300 members. The older golfer's shoe size seldom changes but the younger golfer's foot always should be measured. Always measure the right foot. There is no difference in shoe sizes when wearing wool and silk hose. With gym sox there is difference. But nobody should wear gym sox on a golf course if he wants to save his feet, Linn remarked.

A demonstration of fitting with the Brannick fitting device was given. The device should be in every pro shop shoe dept., Linn said. It may be bought thru golf shoe makers for \$10.

Lessons of 45 Million Shafts

Gurdon Leslie, mgr., shaft dept., True Temper Corp., gave an interesting and informative talk on the development of the steel shaft and its processes of manufacture. Leslie told of the problems that had been met and solved in making 45,000,000 True Temper shafts and asked for pro suggestions in continuing the great progress that has been made in fitting the shafts to the players.

He referred to the tremendous amount of laboratory and field research that has been done in developing steel shafts that have required flexibility at the right place and which will keep the clubhead firm at the time of impact.

Thomas G. McMahan, chmn., Chicago District Golf Assn. Handicapping committee and member of the USGA Handicapping committee gave the pros the most complete and understandable talk any of them ever had heard on the new USGA handicapping system. Tom explained why it was the fairest system that could be devised and gave CDGA handicap booklets containing full description of the system and its operation to the pros in attendance.

Accent on Pupils

The Teaching program presided over by Harold Sargent, was a most successful innovation. Previously much of the teaching programs at PGA conventions have been stronger on teaching the pro listeners how to improve their own games than on how to teach their pupils.

This time the pros' students were certainly present by expert proxy. Walter Burkemo, Paul Hahn, Al Watrous, Bert Katzenmeyer, Fritz Crisler, Dr. Randall M. O'Rourke and Chris Brinke figured in a program that will have wide influence on golf teaching. Space limitations make necessary full coverage of the Teaching sessions in February GOLFDOM.