

# Donovan Radio Program Has Most Queries in 5 Groups

By GENE SHUMATE

**W**E'VE DISCOVERED what the average golfer worries about the most. His biggest worry, briefly, is his golf game.

Each week during the past summer, Frank Donovan, pro and owner of Clover Hills Golf Course in West Des Moines, Iowa, has taken a golf club in hand, stepped up to a Radio Station KSO microphone and answered questions that had been stuffed into a question box in the pro shop.

The broadcast feature was recorded at the course, just off the first tee, and then played back on the air in the evening. Frank has made good use of the radio to promote the game of golf in general and his own course in particular. Among other things, he was a co-sponsor of the KSO broadcasts of the NCAA basketball tournament in Kansas City last March.

"Using one sport to help promote another is logical to me," said Frank. "Basketball in late March led sports fans into golf in early April."

By the end of some 20 weeks in the summer he had answered 99 questions on the air. All of the questions were saved and analyzed at the season's end. Judged by frequency of questions, it breaks down these are the five subjects most people wanted discussed:

1. The Approach
2. Pulling
3. Topping
4. Balance
5. Slicing

And the frequency was in the order listed.

**Approach.** This category topped all others by more than 2 to 1. Most questions had to do with how to use a wedge or 9 iron and how hard to hit the ball.

(Donovan's answer: How hard to hit the ball is something that you will have to find out for yourself by a lot of practice. As to how to hit the 9 iron or wedge, do the opposite of your normal desire. Hit down on the ball instead of scooping it. To hit down, stand with feet firmly close together, with the ball to the right of the middle. Put most of your weight on your left foot. This will permit you to hit down. Hit the ball first,

turf afterwards. You acquire backspin this way, too. And remember, hit down on the ball. The pitch of the club face takes care of the loft.)

Always the promoter of golf, Frank gives many demonstrations on Saturdays and Sundays when the players are stacked up on the first tee. These extemporaneous first-tee lessons serve a dual purpose. They improve the player's game and make him a more enthusiastic golfer. It also takes his mind off the fact that he's way down on the waiting list to tee off.

**Pulling.** What makes me pull shots to the left?

(Donovan's answer: The same thing that makes you slice with a wood makes you pull with an iron. You're hitting outside-in, instead of inside-out. If I had an hour, I could do more justice to the swing, since it's the basic part of your game. But in a short time, I can just give you a sketch. Don't sway with your body. Pivot instead.

And on the backswing, the shoulders should move horizontally and not vertically. On the downswing, they should be more vertical and not horizontal. Vertical backswing and horizontal downswing will make you "sweep" from outside-in, causing a pull with irons and slice with woods. Keep right elbow in on swing, not turning it loose until after you have hit the ball. Put weight on right foot on backswing, on left foot on downswing. Start downswing with lower part of body, but don't take the left hip beyond the original starting point. You have to hit against it. Getting your left hip completely out of the way is another cause for "sweeping" from outside-in.)

## Unanswerable Problem

Once in awhile Frank gets a question he can't answer; like the one in which a golfer was complaining about getting too much distance with his irons. He hits 4 irons 200 yds., he said. Frank shrugged when asked the solution and said, "I can't see where he has much of a problem."

Donovan's biggest problem came in talking the one time he had to broadcast in the studios. He felt lost without a golf stick in his hands. The difficulty was finally

solved when one of the engineers found a dust mop for him to hold.

During the series one woman signed her question "A housewife" and begged for help, "before I break up our happy home." Her trouble was topping the ball, the third most frequent question asked.

**Topping.** What makes me top the ball? Or, as one golfer wrote, "From a good true swing the #&\$%☆ &\*\$☆% ball cuts a #&\$%\* & \*%\$☆ groove in the ground and goes all of 30 or 40 lousy yards."

(Donovan's answer: For the most part, topping a ball comes from hitting in on the upswing, caused by keeping the weight on your right foot on the downswing.

Actually, sometimes golfers will reverse the proper procedure of weight-distribution and have the weight on the left foot on the backswing and on the right foot on the downswing. You should shift weight in a golf swing just as you do in walking . . . left, right, left, right.

(And, of course, a lot of topping trouble comes from the same thing that gives trouble on short irons like the wedge and 9 iron. You're not giving the clubhead a chance to work for you. You can't believe that hitting down on the ball will get the ball up in the air, so you scoop. It will get the ball in the air or the manufacturers wouldn't continue building clubs with loft.)

**Balance.** What makes me topple forward after swinging?

(Donovan's answer. An improper stance and swing. At the start of the swing, the weight of your body should be evenly distributed on both feet and on heels as well as toes. Bend your knees when you address the ball and keep them bent. Shift your weight . . . right on the backswing, left on the downswing . . . and follow through. And hit from the inside-out! An outside-in swing throws you off balance.)

**Slicing.** What makes me slice?

(Donovan's answer: Swinging outside-in instead of inside-out. Same basic reasons as to what makes you pull. I refer you to the discussion on pulling."

### Five Groups of Main Problems

Of course, there were many other questions asked besides those covered, but the five general classifications were dominant. Many radio listeners were interested in rules and regulations and what to do with a golf club found on the golf course, etc.

One player, who had seen Frank Donovan play, wrote, "Why does Frank have such a fast backswing?" The Irishman had an answer for that one, too.

"I used to have a slow backswing, just like I advocate for others," said Frank. "But once I was playing in Sioux City and on the fourteenth tee I started a backswing and a small boy ran over and grabbed the ball and took off. I made up my mind then and there that this would never happen again."

## Mississippi Valley Supts. Compare Planting Methods

**R**ALPH GUYER, sec.-treas., Mississippi Valley Golf Supts.' Assn., relays a report from Ralph Sehr, supt., Westwood CC (St. Louis dist.) on methods of incorporating U3 Bermuda into fairways which were employed at Westwood.

An area of about 1 acre in Westwood's No. 1 fairway was selected for the test of the following method: 500 lbs. of Verta Green 5-10-5 was applied to the area July 3 and 3 days later the plot was aerified with 1-in. spoons. After aerifying, 100 bushels of U3 Bermuda stolons from the Westwood nursery were applied by a manure spreader, then cut in with a seed drill and rolled. It was watered every 10 days, then as needed. Thirty days after planting it was fertilized again with 600 lbs. of Milorganite. Time for actual planting of the area was 12 man-hours.

When the Mississippi Valley supts. had their Field Day at Westwood last September the plot had 85 per cent coverage.

The other plot on No. 10 fairway was burned off with sodium arsenite (1 oz. to 1000 sq. ft.) prior to planting. On July 16 a strip 20 ft. wide and 300 yds. long which had been burned off was aerified 3 ways with 1-in. spoons and disced lightly. Same fertilization as used in the other method was applied.

U3 stolons were applied with a manure spreader. Six yards of very dry topsoil was applied with a lime drill. The same watering procedure as on the No. 1 fairway job was used.

The 10th fairway was left in play. A ball landing on the U3 strip could be dropped away. The No. 1 fairway also was left in play but was rough for a while.

In September the 10th fairway plot had 90 per cent coverage.

Both methods were successful. Al Linkogel, who was associated with Sehr in the work, said results showed it was not necessary to apply topsoil as was done in the 10th fairway work, as the 10th fairway only had 5 per cent more coverage than the first fairway area.