

Gives Them Variety . . .

## O'Brien Attracts Big TV Following With New Ideas

**I**F ideas are what you are looking for to put over your TV show, there's no better source than Gene O'Brien, pro at Rolling Hills CC, Wichita, Ks. and one of golf's most successful video veterans.

Currently in the midst of a series of 26 half-hour shows that are channeled through Wichita's KAKE-TV on Sunday evenings, Gene continues to be a sparkling performer who, in a few years, has built up a following of 150,000 viewers and a waiting list of sponsors.

To do this a fellow has to inject a lot of life and a fair share of novelties into the show. Here are some of the ways Gene goes about it:

At the present time, O'Brien and the KAKE staff are arranging for a green to be constructed outside the studio's front door. When it is completed, local golfers will vie for prizes in a continuing hole-in-one and nearest-to-the-hole contest, shooting from a tee located about 100 yards from the green. Present plans call for conducting the competition on a team basis



Nothing like a plug for the pro shop operator. O'Brien starts each program by discussing equipment and apparel and telling listeners where it can be bought.



A golf show isn't a show unless there are ladies present. Here Gene O'Brien, Wichita pro, interviews two feminine contestants who took part in a contest he ran to select a woman golfer for a series of lessons on his KAKE-TV program.

with four players from courses in and around Wichita taking part in the show each week.

### Gets Women Interested

Shortly before he started his current series, O'Brien got practically all the women in the vicinity of Wichita who had ever thought of playing golf but never got around to it, interested in his show by inviting them to submit letters telling why they wanted to take up the game. After hundreds of letters poured in, one woman whose letter was adjudged best, was invited to appear regularly with O'Brien, taking weekly lessons and discussing golf from the novice's standpoint. This has been one of the highlights of the series.

All of the KAKE productions start in a "pro shop" with O'Brien leading off by discussing equipment and wearing apparel and pretty much pitching his lines to "beginners" who, according to surveys, make up about 95 per cent of his audience. Pro-shop items are discussed and displayed. As for plugs as to where they can be bought, Gene drops them in at convenient intervals.

Following this, from 10 to 15 minutes is  
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## Women Golfers Help Business

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The Dubuque pro also makes an extra bid for the women's support by allotting their accomplishments more space in his monthly "Chatten with Atten" publication, a four-page pamphlet, than those of the men. Besides this, the ladies have their own golf committees made up of weekly schedule, publicity, handicap and telephone departments and all are set up and ready to go by the end of April. Ladies' Days, which are monthly events, are another promotion used to advantage in bringing the women out to the course.

Women's interest being what it is at the Dubuque club, Howie Atten's only worry at the moment is that the golf widowers may some day start grumbling.

## Gene O'Brien Attracts Big TV Following

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spent on instruction with O'Brien's woman pupil, Jack Miller, KAKE sportscaster and various local players assisting Gene in demonstrating how the game should, and

in some cases, shouldn't be played. The show is wrapped up with O'Brien conducting interviews or discussing news of the golf world.

## Plenty of Prizes

O'Brien's sponsors will have given away about \$1,000 in golf merchandise before the present series is concluded. Players in the Wichita area who score holes-in-one the previous week are given a dozen balls and a similar award is made to the person who sends in the most unusual golf story for the week. Equipment and apparel also are given away on each program as awards for distinguished golfing.

In previous series, Gene O'Brien kept interest in his show at high pitch by coralling as many big name golfers as possible for interviews and by giving Juniors, Seniors, women, duffers, star local players and miscellaneous golfers attention in a variety of ways. One of his best tricks was to bring in six completely different physical types and demonstrate how each could go about overcoming whatever handicaps he had. Viewers couldn't help but appreciate this since practically all found their prototypes in at least one of the six different specimens who appeared on the show.

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