

# Pro's Responsibility for Education of the New Member

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**T**HERE IS a phase of the professional's service as a teacher that is not getting required attention. That is his duty to teach golfers to become good club members.

In this period of great growth of private clubs, and particularly of the pronounced development of clubs as the nucleus of community development, the education of desirable club members is of prime importance.

The new member may be (and probably is) a person having sound financial rating, the normal social graces and a pleasant family.

He comes into a club as a member known only to a few of the older members and tacitly agrees to abide by club rules and regulations which he never will read any more than he will read the rules of golf.

In many cases the new member is becoming a golf club member for the first time. In a general way he and his wife think they are good members simply because they have been admitted to membership.

## Getting Adjusted

Yet, how many times have pros learned of the difficulties of these new members getting adjusted correctly and happily so they can thoroughly enjoy the club and contribute to its progress and (we may as well face it) be important factors in the pro's progress and prosperity?

The failure to take full advantage of belonging to a good club is mainly due to the lack of education in how to be a good club member.

Such education is a delicate job. The lack of it is the cause of most of the troubles in club operation.

The new member is presumed to know all about being a club member but rarely does.

Many times, professionals have seen new members come in with a bagfull of new clubs that were so ill-fitting they represented rank waste of money. The new member, coming from a public course

where he didn't happen to have the good fortune of getting acquainted with a pro who could have taken care of his equipment needs, had gone to a store and got trimmed. That was a pity because many public course professionals now are providing club-fitting service and stocks that are up to the standard of fine private clubs.

## Doesn't Know About Services

But the pro at the private club can't blame the new member for not doing business with him. In the majority of instances, this person hasn't an idea of the extent and character of the pro department service available at the club.

He doesn't know about outfitting himself and his wife and youngsters at the pro shop.

He doesn't know about the lesson and practice rates.

He doesn't know about the teaching ability of the head professional and members of his staff.

He doesn't know that there are free classes for children (and sometimes for women), that special attention is given beginners.

He doesn't know that the pro will be eager and happy to get the new member and his wife introduced to other members with whom the pro will arrange games.

The new member may not even know the name of the pro or his assistants, or the names of the mgr., supt. and the heads of club committees.

His wife may not know when women's play is permitted on the course.

He probably doesn't know, even in a general way, about the fixtures on the club's golf program — the ball sweepstakes, blind bogeys and special events.

He doesn't know about the handicapping at the club.

He probably doesn't know anybody in his locker row except, possibly, the member who proposed him for membership.

## He Has Paid for It

I have listed a few of the things the new member doesn't know — but should know — about the golf operations at the club where he has paid an initiation fee and dues. His wife knows less than he does about golf at his club.

About club operations, the social program, pool operation, tennis activities and other benefits of membership the new member probably knows as little or less as he does about golf at his club.

It certainly isn't his fault that he is not informed, or to put it bluntly, educated.

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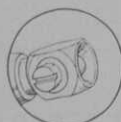
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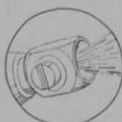
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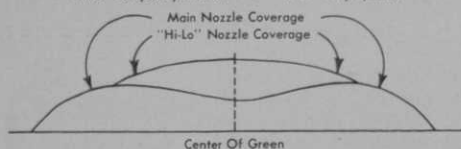
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ment, if necessary, that clubs of a certain weight and length, a certain low-compression ball, even a particular bag (which will fit easily on a cart when no caddies are available) are the ones for them.

It takes a judicious blend of diplomacy, wisdom, and, I suppose you could call it just plain honesty, to keep women customers happy. But it is well worth the trouble.

Golf professionals from coast to coast are missing hundreds of thousands of dollars yearly in sales lost to department or sporting goods stores. Why? Because the clerks there have no superiority complex, and the woman customer finds herself treated like a "Person Who Matters."

It's as simple as that.

### Educating New Members

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Members who propose and second him for membership can't diplomatically undertake his education. There is the possibility that they themselves do not know all that the new person should know.

So the professional should have the definite duty of welcoming and schooling the new member.

The chairman of the membership committee and the professional should work out a program for tactfully acquainting the new member with the benefits and obligations of membership.

#### Pro Knows the Ropes

The diplomacy required in the educational work is of a kind the pro has learned over the years in handling his job.

General policy and details of the procedure of getting the new member and the professional acquainted and having the pro be the greeter and teacher are matters that club officials and the pro can arrange.

The fact is that the club owes to the new member a reception and information program far ahead of what usually is done to welcome the newcomer.

I have a hunch that real estate experts, who are promoting a lot of the new clubs as centers of community development, will make valuable use of the pro's services in educating the new member.

### Schneider Heads Kentuckiana

Ernest Schneider, Big Spring GC, Louisville, has been reelected pres. of Kentuckiana GCSA. Other officers are Charles Oller, vp and Morgan Boggs, secy-treas. Directors are Eugene Morehead, Joy Oller, Addis Lynn and Alfred Jones.